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The Complete Works of William Shakespeare

by William Shakespeare

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THE SONNETS

1

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the ripener should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory:
But thou contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel:
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament,
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content,
And, tender churl, mak'st waste in niggarding:
Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

2

When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery so gazed on now,
Will be a tattered weed of small worth held:
Then being asked, where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days;
To say, within thine own deep sunken eyes,
Were an all-eating shame, and thriftless praise.
How much more praise deserv'd thy beauty's use,
If thou couldst answer 'This fair child of mine
Shall sum my count, and make my old excuse,'
Proving his beauty by succession thine.
This were to be new made when thou art old,
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

3

Look in thy glass and tell the face thou viewest,
Now is the time that face should form another,
Whose fresh repair if now thou not renewest,
Thou dost beguile the world, unbless some mother.
For where is she so fair whose unear'd womb
Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?
Or who is he so fond will be the tomb
Of his self-love to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mother's glass and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime,
So thou through windows of thine age shalt see,

Despite of wrinkles this thy golden time.
But if thou live remembered not to be,
Die single and thine image dies with thee.

4

Unthrifty loveliness why dost thou spend,
Upon thyself thy beauty's legacy?
Nature's bequest gives nothing but doth lend,
And being frank she lends to those are free:
Then beauteous niggard why dost thou abuse,
The bounteous largess given thee to give?
Profitless usurer why dost thou use
So great a sum of sums yet canst not live?
For having traffic with thyself alone,
Thou of thyself thy sweet self dost deceive,
Then how when nature calls thee to be gone,
What acceptable audit canst thou leave?
Thy unused beauty must be tomb'd with thee,
Which used lives th' executor to be.

5

Those hours that with gentle work did frame
The lovely gaze where every eye doth dwell
Will play the tyrants to the very same,
And that unfair which fairly doth excel:
For never-resting time leads summer on
To hideous winter and confounds him there,
Sap checked with frost and lusty leaves quite gone,
Beauty o'er-snowed and bareness every where:
Then were not summer's distillation left
A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass,
Beauty's effect with beauty were bereft,
Nor it nor no remembrance what it was.
But flowers distilled though they with winter meet,
Leese but their show, their substance still lives sweet.

6

Then let not winter's ragged hand deface,
In thee thy summer ere thou be distilled:
Make sweet some vial; treasure thou some place,
With beauty's treasure ere it be self-killed:
That use is not forbidden usury,
Which happies those that pay the willing loan;
That's for thyself to breed another thee,
Or ten times happier be it ten for one,
Ten times thyself were happier than thou art,
If ten of thine ten times refigured thee:
Then what could death do if thou shouldst depart,

Leaving thee living in posterity?

Be not self-willed for thou art much too fair,
To be death's conquest and make worms thine heir.

7

Lo in the orient when the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye
Doth homage to his new-appearing sight,
Serving with looks his sacred majesty,
And having climbed the steep-up heavenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,
Attending on his golden pilgrimage:
But when from highmost pitch with weary car,
Like feeble age he reeleth from the day,
The eyes (fore duteous) now converted are
From his low tract and look another way:
So thou, thyself out-going in thy noon:
Unlooked on diest unless thou get a son.

8

Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?
Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in joy:
Why lov'st thou that which thou receiv'st not gladly,
Or else receiv'st with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well-tuned sounds,
By unions married do offend thine ear,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear:
Mark how one string sweet husband to another,
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering;
Resembling sire, and child, and happy mother,
Who all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
Whose speechless song being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee, 'Thou single wilt prove none?.'

9

Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye,
That thou consum'st thyself in single life?
Ah, if thou issueless shalt hap to die,
The world will wail thee like a makeless wife,
The world will be thy widow and still weep,
That thou no form of thee hast left behind,
When every private widow well may keep,
By children's eyes, her husband's shape in mind:
Look what an unthrift in the world doth spend
Shifts but his place, for still the world enjoys it;
But beauty's waste hath in the world an end,

And kept unused the user so destroys it:
No love toward others in that bosom sits
That on himself such murd'rous shame commits.

10

For shame deny that thou bear'st love to any
Who for thyself art so unprovident.
Grant if thou wilt, thou art beloved of many,
But that thou none lov'st is most evident:
For thou art so possessed with murd'rous hate,
That 'gainst thyself thou stick'st not to conspire,
Seeking that beauteous roof to ruinate
Which to repair should be thy chief desire:
O change thy thought, that I may change my mind,
Shall hate be fairer lodged than gentle love?
Be as thy presence is gracious and kind,
Or to thyself at least kind-hearted prove,
Make thee another self for love of me,
That beauty still may live in thine or thee.

11

As fast as thou shalt wane so fast thou grow'st,
In one of thine, from that which thou departest,
And that fresh blood which youngly thou bestow'st,
Thou mayst call thine, when thou from youth convertest,
Herein lives wisdom, beauty, and increase,
Without this folly, age, and cold decay,
If all were minded so, the times should cease,
And threescore year would make the world away:
Let those whom nature hath not made for store,
Harsh, featureless, and rude, barrenly perish:
Look whom she best endowed, she gave thee more;
Which bounteous gift thou shouldst in bounty cherish:
She carved thee for her seal, and meant thereby,
Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.

12

When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brave day sunk in hideous night,
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls all silvered o'er with white:
When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,
Which erst from heat did canopy the herd
And summer's green all girded up in sheaves
Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard:
Then of thy beauty do I question make
That thou among the wastes of time must go,
Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake,

And die as fast as they see others grow,
And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence
Save breed to brave him, when he takes thee hence.

13

O that you were your self, but love you are
No longer yours, than you yourself here live,
Against this coming end you should prepare,
And your sweet semblance to some other give.
So should that beauty which you hold in lease
Find no determination, then you were
Yourself again after yourself's decease,
When your sweet issue your sweet form should bear.
Who lets so fair a house fall to decay,
Which husbandry in honour might uphold,
Against the stormy gusts of winter's day
And barren rage of death's eternal cold?
O none but unthrifths, dear my love you know,
You had a father, let your son say so.

14

Not from the stars do I my judgement pluck,
And yet methinks I have astronomy,
But not to tell of good, or evil luck,
Of plagues, of dearths, or seasons' quality,
Nor can I fortune to brief minutes tell;
Pointing to each his thunder, rain and wind,
Or say with princes if it shall go well
By oft predict that I in heaven find.
But from thine eyes my knowledge I derive,
And constant stars in them I read such art
As truth and beauty shall together thrive
If from thyself, to store thou wouldst convert:
Or else of thee this I prognosticate,
Thy end is truth's and beauty's doom and date.

15

When I consider everything that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment.
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment.
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered and checked even by the self-same sky:
Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory.
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay,
Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,
Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay

To change your day of youth to sullied night,
And all in war with Time for love of you,
As he takes from you, I engraft you new.

16

But wherefore do not you a mightier way
Make war upon this bloody tyrant Time?
And fortify yourself in your decay
With means more blessed than my barren rhyme?
Now stand you on the top of happy hours,
And many maiden gardens yet unset,
With virtuous wish would bear you living flowers,
Much liker than your painted counterfeit:
So should the lines of life that life repair
Which this (Time's pencil) or my pupil pen
Neither in inward worth nor outward fair
Can make you live yourself in eyes of men.
To give away yourself, keeps yourself still,
And you must live drawn by your own sweet skill.

17

Who will believe my verse in time to come
If it were filled with your most high deserts?
Though yet heaven knows it is but as a tomb
Which hides your life, and shows not half your parts:
If I could write the beauty of your eyes,
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say this poet lies,
Such heavenly touches ne'er touched earthly faces.
So should my papers (yellowed with their age)
Be scorned, like old men of less truth than tongue,
And your true rights be termed a poet's rage,
And stretched metre of an antique song.
But were some child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice, in it, and in my rhyme.

18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed,
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimmed:
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
Nor shall death brag thou wand'rest in his shade,

When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st,
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

19

Devouring Time blunt thou the lion's paws,
And make the earth devour her own sweet brood,
Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,
And burn the long-lived phoenix, in her blood,
Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,
And do whatever thou wilt swift-footed Time
To the wide world and all her fading sweets:
But I forbid thee one most heinous crime,
O carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,
Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen,
Him in thy course untainted do allow,
For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.
Yet do thy worst, old Time; despite thy wrong,
My love shall in my verse ever live young.

20

A woman's face with nature's own hand painted,
Hast thou the master mistress of my passion,
A woman's gentle heart but not acquainted
With shifting change as is false women's fashion,
An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling:
Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth,
A man in hue all hues in his controlling,
Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.
And for a woman wert thou first created,
Till nature as she wrought thee fell a-doting,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
But since she pricked thee out for women's pleasure,
Mine be thy love and thy love's use their treasure.

21

So is it not with me as with that muse,
Stirred by a painted beauty to his verse,
Who heaven it self for ornament doth use,
And every fair with his fair doth rehearse,
Making a couplement of proud compare
With sun and moon, with earth and sea's rich gems:
With April's first-born flowers and all things rare,
That heaven's air in this huge rondure hems.
O let me true in love but truly write,
And then believe me, my love is as fair,
As any mother's child, though not so bright

As those gold candles fixed in heaven's air:
Let them say more that like of hearsay well,
I will not praise that purpose not to sell.

22

My glass shall not persuade me I am old,
So long as youth and thou are of one date,
But when in thee time's furrows I behold,
Then look I death my days should exiate.
For all that beauty that doth cover thee,
Is but the seemly raiment of my heart,
Which in thy breast doth live, as thine in me,
How can I then be elder than thou art?
O therefore love be of thyself so wary,
As I not for my self, but for thee will,
Bearing thy heart which I will keep so chary
As tender nurse her babe from faring ill.
Presume not on thy heart when mine is slain,
Thou gav'st me thine not to give back again.

23

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his fear is put beside his part,
Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart;
So I for fear of trust, forget to say,
The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
O'ercharged with burthen of mine own love's might:
O let my looks be then the eloquence,
And dumb presagers of my speaking breast,
Who plead for love, and look for recompense,
More than that tongue that more hath more expressed.
O learn to read what silent love hath writ,
To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

24

Mine eye hath played the painter and hath stelled,
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart,
My body is the frame wherein 'tis held,
And perspective it is best painter's art.
For through the painter must you see his skill,
To find where your true image pictured lies,
Which in my bosom's shop is hanging still,
That hath his windows glazed with thine eyes:
Now see what good turns eyes for eyes have done,
Mine eyes have drawn thy shape, and thine for me
Are windows to my breast, where-through the sun

Delights to peep, to gaze therein on thee;
Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art,
They draw but what they see, know not the heart.

25

Let those who are in favour with their stars,
Of public honour and proud titles boast,
Whilst I whom fortune of such triumph bars
Unlooked for joy in that I honour most;
Great princes' favourites their fair leaves spread,
But as the marigold at the sun's eye,
And in themselves their pride lies buried,
For at a frown they in their glory die.
The painful warrior famoused for fight,
After a thousand victories once foiled,
Is from the book of honour razed quite,
And all the rest forgot for which he toiled:
Then happy I that love and am beloved
Where I may not remove nor be removed.

26

Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage
Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit;
To thee I send this written embassy
To witness duty, not to show my wit.
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in wanting words to show it;
But that I hope some good conceit of thine
In thy soul's thought (all naked) will bestow it:
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving,
Points on me graciously with fair aspect,
And puts apparel on my tattered loving,
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect,
Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee,
Till then, not show my head where thou mayst prove me.

27

Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired,
But then begins a journey in my head
To work my mind, when body's work's expired.
For then my thoughts, from far where I abide,
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see.
Save that my soul's imaginary sight
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,
Which like a jewel (hung in ghastly night)

Makes black night beautiful, and her old face new.
Lo thus by day my limbs, by night my mind,
For thee, and for my self, no quiet find.

28

How can I then return in happy plight
That am debarred the benefit of rest?
When day's oppression is not eased by night,
But day by night and night by day oppressed.
And each (though enemies to either's reign)
Do in consent shake hands to torture me,
The one by toil, the other to complain
How far I toil, still farther off from thee.
I tell the day to please him thou art bright,
And dost him grace when clouds do blot the heaven:
So flatter I the swart-complexioned night,
When sparkling stars twire not thou gild'st the even.
But day doth daily draw my sorrows longer,
And night doth nightly make grief's length seem stronger

29

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon my self and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least,
Yet in these thoughts my self almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
(Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth) sings hymns at heaven's gate,
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings,
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

30

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought,
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye (unused to flow)
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancelled woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight.
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,

Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee (dear friend)
All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

31

Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts,
Which I by lacking have supposed dead,
And there reigns love and all love's loving parts,
And all those friends which I thought buried.
How many a holy and obsequious tear
Hath dear religious love stol'n from mine eye,
As interest of the dead, which now appear,
But things removed that hidden in thee lie.
Thou art the grave where buried love doth live,
Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,
Who all their parts of me to thee did give,
That due of many, now is thine alone.
Their images I loved, I view in thee,
And thou, all they, hast all the all of me.

32

If thou survive my well-contented day,
When that churl death my bones with dust shall cover
And shalt by fortune once more re-survey
These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover:
Compare them with the bettering of the time,
And though they be outstripped by every pen,
Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme,
Exceeded by the height of happier men.
O then vouchsafe me but this loving thought,
?Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing age,
A dearer birth than this his love had brought
To march in ranks of better equipage:
But since he died and poets better prove,
Theirs for their style I'll read, his for his love?.

33

Full many a glorious morning have I seen,
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green;
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy:
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride,
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine,
With all triumphant splendour on my brow,
But out alack, he was but one hour mine,

The region cloud hath masked him from me now.
Yet him for this, my love no whit disdaineth,
Suns of the world may stain, when heaven's sun staineth.

34

Why didst thou promise such a beautiful day,
And make me travel forth without my cloak,
To let base clouds o'ertake me in my way,
Hiding thy bravery in their rotten smoke?
'Tis not enough that through the cloud thou break,
To dry the rain on my storm-beaten face,
For no man well of such a salve can speak,
That heals the wound, and cures not the disgrace:
Nor can thy shame give physic to my grief,
Though thou repent, yet I have still the loss,
Thy offender's sorrow lends but weak relief
To him that bears the strong offence's cross.
Ah but those tears are pearls which thy love sheds,
And they are rich, and ransom all ill deeds.

35

No more be grieved at that which thou hast done,
Roses have thorns, and silver fountains mud,
Clouds and eclipses stain both moon and sun,
And loathsome canker lives in sweetest bud.
All men make faults, and even I in this,
Authorizing thy trespass with compare,
My self corrupting salving thy amiss,
Excusing thy sins more than thy sins are:
For to thy sensual fault I bring in sense;
Thy adverse party is thy advocate,
And 'gainst my self a lawful plea commence:
Such civil war is in my love and hate,
That I an accessory needs must be,
To that sweet thief which sourly robs from me.

36

Let me confess that we two must be twain,
Although our undivided loves are one:
So shall those blots that do with me remain,
Without thy help, by me be borne alone.
In our two loves there is but one respect,
Though in our lives a separable spite,
Which though it alter not love's sole effect,
Yet doth it steal sweet hours from love's delight.
I may not evermore acknowledge thee,
Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame,
Nor thou with public kindness honour me,

Unless thou take that honour from thy name:
But do not so, I love thee in such sort,
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

37

As a decrepit father takes delight,
To see his active child do deeds of youth,
So I, made lame by Fortune's dearest spite
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth.
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more
Entitled in thy parts, do crowned sit,
I make my love engrafted to this store:
So then I am not lame, poor, nor despised,
Whilst that this shadow doth such substance give,
That I in thy abundance am sufficed,
And by a part of all thy glory live:
Look what is best, that best I wish in thee,
This wish I have, then ten times happy me.

38

How can my Muse want subject to invent
While thou dost breathe that pour'st into my verse,
Thine own sweet argument, too excellent,
For every vulgar paper to rehearse?
O give thyself the thanks if aught in me,
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight,
For who's so dumb that cannot write to thee,
When thou thyself dost give invention light?
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine which rhymers invoke,
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.
If my slight Muse do please these curious days,
The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise.

39

O how thy worth with manners may I sing,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine own praise to mine own self bring:
And what is't but mine own when I praise thee?
Even for this, let us divided live,
And our dear love lose name of single one,
That by this separation I may give:
That due to thee which thou deserv'st alone:
O absence what a torment wouldst thou prove,
Were it not thy sour leisure gave sweet leave,
To entertain the time with thoughts of love,

Which time and thoughts so sweetly doth deceive.
And that thou teachest how to make one twain,
By praising him here who doth hence remain.

40

Take all my loves, my love, yea take them all,
What hast thou then more than thou hadst before?
No love, my love, that thou mayst true love call,
All mine was thine, before thou hadst this more:
Then if for my love, thou my love receivest,
I cannot blame thee, for my love thou usest,
But yet be blamed, if thou thyself deceivest
By wilful taste of what thyself refusest.
I do forgive thy robbery gentle thief
Although thou steal thee all my poverty:
And yet love knows it is a greater grief
To bear greater wrong, than hate's known injury.
Lascivious grace, in whom all ill well shows,
Kill me with spites yet we must not be foes.

41

Those pretty wrongs that liberty commits,
When I am sometime absent from thy heart,
Thy beauty, and thy years full well befits,
For still temptation follows where thou art.
Gentle thou art, and therefore to be won,
Beauteous thou art, therefore to be assailed.
And when a woman woos, what woman's son,
Will sourly leave her till he have prevailed?
Ay me, but yet thou mightst my seat forbear,
And chide thy beauty, and thy straying youth,
Who lead thee in their riot even there
Where thou art forced to break a twofold truth:
Hers by thy beauty tempting her to thee,
Thine by thy beauty being false to me.

42

That thou hast her it is not all my grief,
And yet it may be said I loved her dearly,
That she hath thee is of my wailing chief,
A loss in love that touches me more nearly.
Loving offenders thus I will excuse ye,
Thou dost love her, because thou know'st I love her,
And for my sake even so doth she abuse me,
Suff'ring my friend for my sake to approve her.
If I lose thee, my loss is my love's gain,
And losing her, my friend hath found that loss,
Both find each other, and I lose both twain,

And both for my sake lay on me this cross,
But here's the joy, my friend and I are one,
Sweet flattery, then she loves but me alone.

43

When most I wink then do mine eyes best see,
For all the day they view things unrespected,
But when I sleep, in dreams they look on thee,
And darkly bright, are bright in dark directed.
Then thou whose shadow shadows doth make bright
How would thy shadow's form, form happy show,
To the clear day with thy much clearer light,
When to unseeing eyes thy shade shines so!
How would (I say) mine eyes be blessed made,
By looking on thee in the living day,
When in dead night thy fair imperfect shade,
Through heavy sleep on sightless eyes doth stay!
All days are nights to see till I see thee,
And nights bright days when dreams do show thee me.

44

If the dull substance of my flesh were thought,
Injurious distance should not stop my way,
For then despite of space I would be brought,
From limits far remote, where thou dost stay,
No matter then although my foot did stand
Upon the farthest earth removed from thee,
For nimble thought can jump both sea and land,
As soon as think the place where he would be.
But ah, thought kills me that I am not thought
To leap large lengths of miles when thou art gone,
But that so much of earth and water wrought,
I must attend, time's leisure with my moan.
Receiving nought by elements so slow,
But heavy tears, badges of either's woe.

45

The other two, slight air, and purging fire,
Are both with thee, wherever I abide,
The first my thought, the other my desire,
These present-absent with swift motion slide.
For when these quicker elements are gone
In tender embassy of love to thee,
My life being made of four, with two alone,
Sinks down to death, oppressed with melancholy.
Until life's composition be recured,
By those swift messengers returned from thee,
Who even but now come back again assured,

Of thy fair health, recounting it to me.
This told, I joy, but then no longer glad,
I send them back again and straight grow sad.

46

Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war,
How to divide the conquest of thy sight,
Mine eye, my heart thy picture's sight would bar,
My heart, mine eye the freedom of that right,
My heart doth plead that thou in him dost lie,
A closet never pierced with crystal eyes;
But the defendant doth that plea deny,
And says in him thy fair appearance lies.
To side this title is impanelled
A quest of thoughts, all tenants to the heart,
And by their verdict is determined
The clear eye's moiety, and the dear heart's part.
As thus, mine eye's due is thy outward part,
And my heart's right, thy inward love of heart.

47

Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is took,
And each doth good turns now unto the other,
When that mine eye is famished for a look,
Or heart in love with sighs himself doth smother;
With my love's picture then my eye doth feast,
And to the painted banquet bids my heart:
Another time mine eye is my heart's guest,
And in his thoughts of love doth share a part.
So either by thy picture or my love,
Thyself away, art present still with me,
For thou not farther than my thoughts canst move,
And I am still with them, and they with thee.
Or if they sleep, thy picture in my sight
Awakes my heart, to heart's and eye's delight.

48

How careful was I when I took my way,
Each trifle under truest bars to thrust,
That to my use it might unused stay
From hands of falsehood, in sure wards of trust!
But thou, to whom my jewels trifles are,
Most worthy comfort, now my greatest grief,
Thou best of dearest, and mine only care,
Art left the prey of every vulgar thief.
Thee have I not locked up in any chest,
Save where thou art not, though I feel thou art,
Within the gentle closure of my breast,

From whence at pleasure thou mayst come and part,
And even thence thou wilt be stol'n I fear,
For truth proves thievish for a prize so dear.

49

Against that time (if ever that time come)
When I shall see thee frown on my defects,
When as thy love hath cast his utmost sum,
Called to that audit by advised respects,
Against that time when thou shalt strangely pass,
And scarcely greet me with that sun thine eye,
When love converted from the thing it was
Shall reasons find of settled gravity;
Against that time do I ensconce me here
Within the knowledge of mine own desert,
And this my hand, against my self uprear,
To guard the lawful reasons on thy part,
To leave poor me, thou hast the strength of laws,
Since why to love, I can allege no cause.

50

How heavy do I journey on the way,
When what I seek (my weary travel's end)
Doth teach that case and that repose to say
?Thus far the miles are measured from thy friend.?
The beast that bears me, tired with my woe,
Plods dully on, to bear that weight in me,
As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider loved not speed being made from thee:
The bloody spur cannot provoke him on,
That sometimes anger thrusts into his hide,
Which heavily he answers with a groan,
More sharp to me than spurring to his side,
For that same groan doth put this in my mind,
My grief lies onward and my joy behind.

51

Thus can my love excuse the slow offence,
Of my dull bearer, when from thee I speed,
From where thou art, why should I haste me thence?
Till I return of posting is no need.
O what excuse will my poor beast then find,
When swift extremity can seem but slow?
Then should I spur though mounted on the wind,
In winged speed no motion shall I know,
Then can no horse with my desire keep pace,
Therefore desire (of perfect'st love being made)
Shall neigh no dull flesh in his fiery race,

But love, for love, thus shall excuse my jade:
Since from thee going, he went wilful-slow,
Towards thee I'll run, and give him leave to go.

52

So am I as the rich whose blessed key,
Can bring him to his sweet up-locked treasure,
The which he will not every hour survey,
For blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure.
Therefore are feasts so solemn and so rare,
Since seldom coming in that long year set,
Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
Or captain jewels in the carcanet.
So is the time that keeps you as my chest
Or as the wardrobe which the robe doth hide,
To make some special instant special-blest,
By new unfolding his imprisoned pride.
Blessed are you whose worthiness gives scope,
Being had to triumph, being lacked to hope.

53

What is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shadows on you tend?
Since every one, hath every one, one shade,
And you but one, can every shadow lend:
Describe Adonis and the counterfeit,
Is poorly imitated after you,
On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set,
And you in Grecian tires are painted new:
Speak of the spring, and foison of the year,
The one doth shadow of your beauty show,
The other as your bounty doth appear,
And you in every blessed shape we know.
In all external grace you have some part,
But you like none, none you for constant heart.

54

O how much more doth beauty beauteous seem,
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give!
The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet odour, which doth in it live:
The canker blooms have full as deep a dye,
As the perfumed tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns, and play as wantonly,
When summer's breath their masked buds discloses:
But for their virtue only is their show,
They live unwooed, and unrespected fade,
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so,

Of their sweet deaths, are sweetest odours made:
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall fade, my verse distills your truth.

55

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme,
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword, nor war's quick fire shall burn:
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death, and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth, your praise shall still find room,
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So till the judgement that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

56

Sweet love renew thy force, be it not said
Thy edge should blunter be than appetite,
Which but to-day by feeding is allayed,
To-morrow sharpened in his former might.
So love be thou, although to-day thou fill
Thy hungry eyes, even till they wink with fulness,
To-morrow see again, and do not kill
The spirit of love, with a perpetual dulness:
Let this sad interim like the ocean be
Which parts the shore, where two contracted new,
Come daily to the banks, that when they see:
Return of love, more blest may be the view.
Or call it winter, which being full of care,
Makes summer's welcome, thrice more wished, more rare.

57

Being your slave what should I do but tend,
Upon the hours, and times of your desire?
I have no precious time at all to spend;
Nor services to do till you require.
Nor dare I chide the world-without-end hour,
Whilst I (my sovereign) watch the clock for you,
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour,
When you have bid your servant once adieu.
Nor dare I question with my jealous thought,
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,
But like a sad slave stay and think of nought

Save where you are, how happy you make those.
So true a fool is love, that in your will,
(Though you do any thing) he thinks no ill.

58

That god forbid, that made me first your slave,
I should in thought control your times of pleasure,
Or at your hand th? account of hours to crave,
Being your vassal bound to stay your leisure.
O let me suffer (being at your beck)
Th? imprisoned absence of your liberty,
And patience tame to sufferance bide each check,
Without accusing you of injury.
Be where you list, your charter is so strong,
That you yourself may privilege your time
To what you will, to you it doth belong,
Yourself to pardon of self-doing crime.
I am to wait, though waiting so be hell,
Not blame your pleasure be it ill or well.

59

If there be nothing new, but that which is,
Hath been before, how are our brains beguiled,
Which labouring for invention bear amiss
The second burthen of a former child!
O that record could with a backward look,
Even of five hundred courses of the sun,
Show me your image in some antique book,
Since mind at first in character was done.
That I might see what the old world could say,
To this composed wonder of your frame,
Whether we are mended, or whether better they,
Or whether revolution be the same.
O sure I am the wits of former days,
To subjects worse have given admiring praise.

60

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end,
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crowned,
Crooked eclipses ?gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave, doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
And delves the parallels in beauty?s brow,
Feeds on the rarities of nature?s truth,

And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow.
And yet to times in hope, my verse shall stand
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

61

Is it thy will, thy image should keep open
My heavy eyelids to the weary night?
Dost thou desire my slumbers should be broken,
While shadows like to thee do mock my sight?
Is it thy spirit that thou send'st from thee
So far from home into my deeds to pry,
To find out shames and idle hours in me,
The scope and tenure of thy jealousy?
O no, thy love though much, is not so great,
It is my love that keeps mine eye awake,
Mine own true love that doth my rest defeat,
To play the watchman ever for thy sake.
For thee watch I, whilst thou dost wake elsewhere,
From me far off, with others all too near.

62

Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye,
And all my soul, and all my every part;
And for this sin there is no remedy,
It is so grounded inward in my heart.
Methinks no face so gracious is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account,
And for my self mine own worth do define,
As I all other in all worths surmount.
But when my glass shows me my self indeed
beated and chopt with tanned antiquity,
Mine own self-love quite contrary I read:
Self, so self-loving were iniquity.
'Tis thee, myself, that for myself I praise,
Painting my age with beauty of thy days.

63

Against my love shall be as I am now
With Time's injurious hand crushed and o'erworn,
When hours have drained his blood and filled his brow
With lines and wrinkles, when his youthful morn
Hath travelled on to age's steepy night,
And all those beauties whereof now he's king
Are vanishing, or vanished out of sight,
Stealing away the treasure of his spring:
For such a time do I now fortify
Against confounding age's cruel knife,
That he shall never cut from memory

My sweet love's beauty, though my lover's life.
His beauty shall in these black lines be seen,
And they shall live, and he in them still green.

64

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
The rich-proud cost of outworn buried age,
When sometime lofty towers I see down-raised,
And brass eternal slave to mortal rage.
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
And the firm soil win of the watery main,
Increasing store with loss, and loss with store.
When I have seen such interchange of State,
Or state it self confounded, to decay,
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminat:
That Time will come and take my love away.
This thought is as a death which cannot choose
But weep to have, that which it fears to lose.

65

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
But sad mortality o'ersways their power,
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
O how shall summer's honey breath hold out,
Against the wrackful siege of batt'ring days,
When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
Nor gates of steel so strong but time decays?
O fearful meditation, where alack,
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back,
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
O none, unless this miracle have might,
That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

66

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry:
As to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimmed in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscalled simplicity,

And captive good attending captain ill.
Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that to die, I leave my love alone.

67

Ah wherefore with infection should he live,
And with his presence grace impiety,
That sin by him advantage should achieve,
And lace it self with his society?
Why should false painting imitate his cheek,
And steal dead seeming of his living hue?
Why should poor beauty indirectly seek,
Roses of shadow, since his rose is true?
Why should he live, now nature bankrupt is,
Beggared of blood to blush through lively veins,
For she hath no exchequer now but his,
And proud of many, lives upon his gains?
O him she stores, to show what wealth she had,
In days long since, before these last so bad.

68

Thus is his cheek the map of days outworn,
When beauty lived and died as flowers do now,
Before these bastard signs of fair were born,
Or durst inhabit on a living brow:
Before the golden tresses of the dead,
The right of sepulchres, were shorn away,
To live a second life on second head,
Ere beauty's dead fleece made another gay:
In him those holy antique hours are seen,
Without all ornament, it self and true,
Making no summer of another's green,
Robbing no old to dress his beauty new,
And him as for a map doth Nature store,
To show false Art what beauty was of yore.

69

Those parts of thee that the world's eye doth view,
Want nothing that the thought of hearts can mend:
All tongues, the voice of souls, give thee that due,
Uttering bare truth, even so as foes commend.
Thy outward thus with outward praise is crowned,
But those same tongues that give thee so thine own,
In other accents do this praise confound
By seeing farther than the eye hath shown.
They look into the beauty of thy mind,
And that in guess they measure by thy deeds,
Then churls their thoughts (although their eyes were kind)

To thy fair flower add the rank smell of weeds:
But why thy odour matcheth not thy show,
The soil is this, that thou dost common grow.

70

That thou art blamed shall not be thy defect,
For slander's mark was ever yet the fair,
The ornament of beauty is suspect,
A crow that flies in heaven's sweetest air.
So thou be good, slander doth but approve,
Thy worth the greater being wooed of time,
For canker vice the sweetest buds doth love,
And thou present'st a pure unstained prime.
Thou hast passed by the ambush of young days,
Either not assailed, or victor being charged,
Yet this thy praise cannot be so thy praise,
To tie up envy, evermore enlarged,
If some suspect of ill masked not thy show,
Then thou alone kingdoms of hearts shouldst owe.

71

No longer mourn for me when I am dead,
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world with vilest worms to dwell:
Nay if you read this line, remember not,
The hand that writ it, for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O if, I say, you look upon this verse,
When I (perhaps) compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse;
But let your love even with my life decay.
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone.

72

O lest the world should task you to recite,
What merit lived in me that you should love
After my death, dear love, forget me quite,
For you in me can nothing worthy prove.
Unless you would devise some virtuous lie,
To do more for me than mine own desert,
And hang more praise upon deceased I,
Than niggard truth would willingly impart:
O lest your true love may seem false in this,
That you for love speak well of me untrue,
My name be buried where my body is,

And live no more to shame nor me, nor you.
For I am shamed by that which I bring forth,
And so should you, to love things nothing worth.

73

That time of year thou mayst in me behold,
When yellow leaves, or none, or few do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou seest the twilight of such day,
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self that seals up all in rest.
In me thou seest the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed, whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well, which thou must leave ere long.

74

But be contented when that fell arrest,
Without all bail shall carry me away,
My life hath in this line some interest,
Which for memorial still with thee shall stay.
When thou reviewest this, thou dost review,
The very part was consecrate to thee,
The earth can have but earth, which is his due,
My spirit is thine the better part of me,
So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life,
The prey of worms, my body being dead,
The coward conquest of a wretch's knife,
Too base of thee to be remembered,
The worth of that, is that which it contains,
And that is this, and this with thee remains.

75

So are you to my thoughts as food to life,
Or as sweet-seasoned showers are to the ground;
And for the peace of you I hold such strife
As 'twixt a miser and his wealth is found.
Now proud as an enjoyer, and anon
Doubting the filching age will steal his treasure,
Now counting best to be with you alone,
Then bettered that the world may see my pleasure,
Sometime all full with feasting on your sight,
And by and by clean starved for a look,
Possessing or pursuing no delight

Save what is had, or must from you be took.
Thus do I pine and surfeit day by day,
Or gluttoning on all, or all away.

76

Why is my verse so barren of new pride?
So far from variation or quick change?
Why with the time do I not glance aside
To new-found methods, and to compounds strange?
Why write I still all one, ever the same,
And keep invention in a noted weed,
That every word doth almost tell my name,
Showing their birth, and where they did proceed?
O know sweet love I always write of you,
And you and love are still my argument:
So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending again what is already spent:
For as the sun is daily new and old,
So is my love still telling what is told.

77

Thy glass will show thee how thy beauties wear,
Thy dial how thy precious minutes waste,
These vacant leaves thy mind's imprint will bear,
And of this book, this learning mayst thou taste.
The wrinkles which thy glass will truly show,
Of mouthed graves will give thee memory,
Thou by thy dial's shady stealth mayst know,
Time's thievish progress to eternity.
Look what thy memory cannot contain,
Commit to these waste blanks, and thou shalt find
Those children nursed, delivered from thy brain,
To take a new acquaintance of thy mind.
These offices, so oft as thou wilt look,
Shall profit thee, and much enrich thy book.

78

So oft have I invoked thee for my muse,
And found such fair assistance in my verse,
As every alien pen hath got my use,
And under thee their poesy disperse.
Thine eyes, that taught the dumb on high to sing,
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,
Have added feathers to the learned's wing,
And given grace a double majesty.
Yet be most proud of that which I compile,
Whose influence is thine, and born of thee,
In others' works thou dost but mend the style,

And arts with thy sweet graces graced be.
But thou art all my art, and dost advance
As high as learning, my rude ignorance.

79

Whilst I alone did call upon thy aid,
My verse alone had all thy gentle grace,
But now my gracious numbers are decayed,
And my sick muse doth give an other place.
I grant (sweet love) thy lovely argument
Deserves the travail of a worthier pen,
Yet what of thee thy poet doth invent,
He robs thee of, and pays it thee again,
He lends thee virtue, and he stole that word,
From thy behaviour, beauty doth he give
And found it in thy cheek: he can afford
No praise to thee, but what in thee doth live.
Then thank him not for that which he doth say,
Since what he owes thee, thou thyself dost pay.

80

O how I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better spirit doth use your name,
And in the praise thereof spends all his might,
To make me tongue-tied speaking of your fame.
But since your worth, wide as the ocean is,
The humble as the proudest sail doth bear,
My saucy bark (inferior far to his)
On your broad main doth wilfully appear.
Your shallowest help will hold me up afloat,
Whilst he upon your soundless deep doth ride,
Or (being wrecked) I am a worthless boat,
He of tall building, and of goodly pride.
Then if he thrive and I be cast away,
The worst was this: my love was my decay.

81

Or I shall live your epitaph to make,
Or you survive when I in earth am rotten,
From hence your memory death cannot take,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortal life shall have,
Though I (once gone) to all the world must die,
The earth can yield me but a common grave,
When you entombed in men's eyes shall lie,
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read,
And tongues to be, your being shall rehearse,

When all the breathers of this world are dead,
You still shall live, such virtue hath my pen,
Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths of men.

82

I grant thou wert not married to my muse,
And therefore mayst without attaint o'erlook
The dedicated words which writers use
Of their fair subject, blessing every book.
Thou art as fair in knowledge as in hue,
Finding thy worth a limit past my praise,
And therefore art enforced to seek anew,
Some fresher stamp of the time-bettering days.
And do so love, yet when they have devised,
What strained touches rhetoric can lend,
Thou truly fair, wert truly sympathized,
In true plain words, by thy true-telling friend.
And their gross painting might be better used,
Where cheeks need blood, in thee it is abused.

83

I never saw that you did painting need,
And therefore to your fair no painting set,
I found (or thought I found) you did exceed,
That barren tender of a poet's debt:
And therefore have I slept in your report,
That you yourself being extant well might show,
How far a modern quill doth come too short,
Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow.
This silence for my sin you did impute,
Which shall be most my glory being dumb,
For I impair not beauty being mute,
When others would give life, and bring a tomb.
There lives more life in one of your fair eyes,
Than both your poets can in praise devise.

84

Who is it that says most, which can say more,
Than this rich praise: that you alone are you,
In whose confine immured is the store,
Which should example where your equal grew.
Lean penury within that pen doth dwell,
That to his subject lends not some small glory,
But he that writes of you, if he can tell,
That you are you, so dignifies his story.
Let him but copy what in you is writ,
Not making worse what nature made so clear,
And such a counterpart shall fame his wit,

Making his style admired every where.

You to your beauteous blessings add a curse,
Being fond on praise, which makes your praises worse.

85

My tongue-tied muse in manners holds her still,
While comments of your praise richly compiled,
Reserve their character with golden quill,
And precious phrase by all the Muses filed.
I think good thoughts, whilst other write good words,
And like unlettered clerk still cry Amen,
To every hymn that able spirit affords,
In polished form of well refined pen.
Hearing you praised, I say 'tis so, 'tis true,
And to the most of praise add something more,
But that is in my thought, whose love to you
(Though words come hindmost) holds his rank before,
Then others, for the breath of words respect,
Me for my dumb thoughts, speaking in effect.

86

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of (all too precious) you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?
Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write,
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
He nor that affable familiar ghost
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors of my silence cannot boast,
I was not sick of any fear from thence.
But when your countenance filled up his line,
Then lacked I matter, that enfeebled mine.

87

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate,
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing:
My bonds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting,
And for that riches where is my deserving?
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
And so my patent back again is swerving.
Thyself thou gav'st, thy own worth then not knowing,
Or me to whom thou gav'st it, else mistaking,
So thy great gift upon misprision growing,

Comes home again, on better judgement making.
Thus have I had thee as a dream doth flatter,
In sleep a king, but waking no such matter.

88

When thou shalt be disposed to set me light,
And place my merit in the eye of scorn,
Upon thy side, against my self I'll fight,
And prove thee virtuous, though thou art forsworn:
With mine own weakness being best acquainted,
Upon thy part I can set down a story
Of faults concealed, wherein I am attained:
That thou in losing me, shalt win much glory:
And I by this will be a gainer too,
For bending all my loving thoughts on thee,
The injuries that to my self I do,
Doing thee vantage, double-vantage me.
Such is my love, to thee I so belong,
That for thy right, my self will bear all wrong.

89

Say that thou didst forsake me for some fault,
And I will comment upon that offence,
Speak of my lameness, and I straight will halt:
Against thy reasons making no defence.
Thou canst not (love) disgrace me half so ill,
To set a form upon desired change,
As I'll my self disgrace, knowing thy will,
I will acquaintance strangle and look strange:
Be absent from thy walks and in my tongue,
Thy sweet beloved name no more shall dwell,
Lest I, too much profane, should do it wrong,
And haply of our old acquaintance tell.
For thee, against my self I'll vow debate,
For I must never love him whom thou dost hate.

90

Then hate me when thou wilt, if ever, now,
Now while the world is bent my deeds to cross,
Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,
And do not drop in for an after-loss:
Ah do not, when my heart hath escaped this sorrow,
Come in the rearward of a conquered woe,
Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,
To linger out a purposed overthrow.
If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last,
When other petty griefs have done their spite,
But in the onset come, so shall I taste

At first the very worst of fortune?s might.
And other strains of woe, which now seem woe,
Compared with loss of thee, will not seem so.

91

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill,
Some in their wealth, some in their body?s force,
Some in their garments though new-fangled ill:
Some in their hawks and hounds, some in their horse.
And every humour hath his adjunct pleasure,
Wherein it finds a joy above the rest,
But these particulars are not my measure,
All these I better in one general best.
Thy love is better than high birth to me,
Richer than wealth, prouder than garments? costs,
Of more delight than hawks and horses be:
And having thee, of all men?s pride I boast.
Wretched in this alone, that thou mayst take,
All this away, and me most wretched make.

92

But do thy worst to steal thyself away,
For term of life thou art assured mine,
And life no longer than thy love will stay,
For it depends upon that love of thine.
Then need I not to fear the worst of wrongs,
When in the least of them my life hath end,
I see, a better state to me belongs
Than that, which on thy humour doth depend.
Thou canst not vex me with inconstant mind,
Since that my life on thy revolt doth lie,
O what a happy title do I find,
Happy to have thy love, happy to die!
But what?s so blessed-fair that fears no blot?
Thou mayst be false, and yet I know it not.

93

So shall I live, supposing thou art true,
Like a deceived husband, so love?s face,
May still seem love to me, though altered new:
Thy looks with me, thy heart in other place.
For there can live no hatred in thine eye,
Therefore in that I cannot know thy change,
In many?s looks, the false heart?s history
Is writ in moods and frowns and wrinkles strange.
But heaven in thy creation did decree,
That in thy face sweet love should ever dwell,
Whate?er thy thoughts, or thy heart?s workings be,

Thy looks should nothing thence, but sweetness tell.
How like Eve's apple doth thy beauty grow,
If thy sweet virtue answer not thy show.

94

They that have power to hurt, and will do none,
That do not do the thing, they most do show,
Who moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow:
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces,
And husband nature's riches from expense,
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others, but stewards of their excellence:
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to it self, it only live and die,
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds,
Lilies that fester, smell far worse than weeds.

95

How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame,
Which like a canker in the fragrant rose,
Doth spot the beauty of thy budding name!
O in what sweets dost thou thy sins enclose!
That tongue that tells the story of thy days,
(Making lascivious comments on thy sport)
Cannot dispraise, but in a kind of praise,
Naming thy name, blesses an ill report.
O what a mansion have those vices got,
Which for their habitation chose out thee,
Where beauty's veil doth cover every blot,
And all things turns to fair, that eyes can see!
Take heed (dear heart) of this large privilege,
The hardest knife ill-used doth lose his edge.

96

Some say thy fault is youth, some wantonness,
Some say thy grace is youth and gentle sport,
Both grace and faults are loved of more and less:
Thou mak'st faults graces, that to thee resort:
As on the finger of a throned queen,
The basest jewel will be well esteemed:
So are those errors that in thee are seen,
To truths translated, and for true things deemed.
How many lambs might the stern wolf betray,
If like a lamb he could his looks translate!
How many gazers mightst thou lead away,

If thou wouldst use the strength of all thy state!
But do not so, I love thee in such sort,
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

97

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness everywhere!
And yet this time removed was summer's time,
The teeming autumn big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,
Like widowed wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seemed to me
But hope of orphans, and unfathered fruit,
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And thou away, the very birds are mute.
Or if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer,
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

98

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April (dressed in all his trim)
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing:
That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell:
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose,
They were but sweet, but figures of delight:
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seemed it winter still, and you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

99

The forward violet thus did I chide,
Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that smells,
If not from my love's breath? The purple pride
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells,
In my love's veins thou hast too grossly dyed.
The lily I condemned for thy hand,
And buds of marjoram had stol'n thy hair,
The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,
One blushing shame, another white despair:
A third nor red, nor white, had stol'n of both,
And to his robbery had annexed thy breath,

But for his theft in pride of all his growth
A vengeful canker eat him up to death.
More flowers I noted, yet I none could see,
But sweet, or colour it had stol'n from thee.

100

Where art thou Muse that thou forget'st so long,
To speak of that which gives thee all thy might?
Spend'st thou thy fury on some worthless song,
Darkening thy power to lend base subjects light?
Return forgetful Muse, and straight redeem,
In gentle numbers time so idly spent,
Sing to the ear that doth thy lays esteem,
And gives thy pen both skill and argument.
Rise resty Muse, my love's sweet face survey,
If time have any wrinkle graven there,
If any, be a satire to decay,
And make time's spoils despised everywhere.
Give my love fame faster than Time wastes life,
So thou prevent'st his scythe, and crooked knife.

101

O truant Muse what shall be thy amends,
For thy neglect of truth in beauty dyed?
Both truth and beauty on my love depends:
So dost thou too, and therein dignified:
Make answer Muse, wilt thou not haply say,
?Truth needs no colour with his colour fixed,
Beauty no pencil, beauty's truth to lay:
But best is best, if never intermixed??
Because he needs no praise, wilt thou be dumb?
Excuse not silence so, for't lies in thee,
To make him much outlive a gilded tomb:
And to be praised of ages yet to be.
Then do thy office Muse, I teach thee how,
To make him seem long hence, as he shows now.

102

My love is strengthened though more weak in seeming,
I love not less, though less the show appear,
That love is merchandized, whose rich esteeming,
The owner's tongue doth publish every where.
Our love was new, and then but in the spring,
When I was wont to greet it with my lays,
As Philomel in summer's front doth sing,
And stops her pipe in growth of riper days:
Not that the summer is less pleasant now
Than when her mournful hymns did hush the night,

But that wild music burthens every bough,
And sweets grown common lose their dear delight.
Therefore like her, I sometime hold my tongue:
Because I would not dull you with my song.

103

Alack what poverty my muse brings forth,
That having such a scope to show her pride,
The argument all bare is of more worth
Than when it hath my added praise beside.
O blame me not if I no more can write!
Look in your glass and there appears a face,
That over-goes my blunt invention quite,
Dulling my lines, and doing me disgrace.
Were it not sinful then striving to mend,
To mar the subject that before was well?
For to no other pass my verses tend,
Than of your graces and your gifts to tell.
And more, much more than in my verse can sit,
Your own glass shows you, when you look in it.

104

To me fair friend you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still: three winters cold,
Have from the forests shook three summers? pride,
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turned,
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burned,
Since first I saw you fresh which yet are green.
Ah yet doth beauty like a dial hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived,
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived.
For fear of which, hear this thou age unbred,
Ere you were born was beauty?s summer dead.

105

Let not my love be called idolatry,
Nor my beloved as an idol show,
Since all alike my songs and praises be
To one, of one, still such, and ever so.
Kind is my love to-day, to-morrow kind,
Still constant in a wondrous excellence,
Therefore my verse to constancy confined,
One thing expressing, leaves out difference.
Fair, kind, and true, is all my argument,
Fair, kind, and true, varying to other words,

And in this change is my invention spent,
Three themes in one, which wondrous scope affords.
Fair, kind, and true, have often lived alone.
Which three till now, never kept seat in one.

106

When in the chronicle of wasted time,
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme,
In praise of ladies dead, and lovely knights,
Then in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have expressed,
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring,
And for they looked but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
For we which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

107

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul,
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love control,
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.
The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured,
And the sad augurs mock their own presage,
Incertainties now crown themselves assured,
And peace proclaims olives of endless age.
Now with the drops of this most balmy time,
My love looks fresh, and death to me subscribes,
Since spite of him I'll live in this poor rhyme,
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes.
And thou in this shalt find thy monument,
When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent.

108

What's in the brain that ink may character,
Which hath not figured to thee my true spirit,
What's new to speak, what now to register,
That may express my love, or thy dear merit?
Nothing sweet boy, but yet like prayers divine,
I must each day say o'er the very same,
Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,
Even as when first I hallowed thy fair name.
So that eternal love in love's fresh case,
Weighs not the dust and injury of age,

Nor gives to necessary wrinkles place,
But makes antiquity for aye his page,
Finding the first conceit of love there bred,
Where time and outward form would show it dead.

109

O never say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seemed my flame to qualify,
As easy might I from my self depart,
As from my soul which in thy breast doth lie:
That is my home of love, if I have ranged,
Like him that travels I return again,
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that my self bring water for my stain,
Never believe though in my nature reigned,
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stained,
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good:
For nothing this wide universe I call,
Save thou my rose, in it thou art my all.

110

Alas 'tis true, I have gone here and there,
And made my self a motley to the view,
Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,
Made old offences of affections new.
Most true it is, that I have looked on truth
Askance and strangely: but by all above,
These blenches gave my heart another youth,
And worse essays proved thee my best of love.
Now all is done, have what shall have no end,
Mine appetite I never more will grind
On newer proof, to try an older friend,
A god in love, to whom I am confined.
Then give me welcome, next my heaven the best,
Even to thy pure and most most loving breast.

111

O for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
That did not better for my life provide,
Than public means which public manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
And almost thence my nature is subdued
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand:
Pity me then, and wish I were renewed,
Whilst like a willing patient I will drink,
Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection,

No bitterness that I will bitter think,
Nor double penance to correct correction.
Pity me then dear friend, and I assure ye,
Even that your pity is enough to cure me.

112

Your love and pity doth th? impression fill,
Which vulgar scandal stamped upon my brow,
For what care I who calls me well or ill,
So you o?er-green my bad, my good allow?
You are my all the world, and I must strive,
To know my shames and praises from your tongue,
None else to me, nor I to none alive,
That my steeled sense or changes right or wrong.
In so profound abysm I throw all care
Of others? voices, that my adder?s sense,
To critic and to flatterer stopped are:
Mark how with my neglect I do dispense.
You are so strongly in my purpose bred,
That all the world besides methinks are dead.

113

Since I left you, mine eye is in my mind,
And that which governs me to go about,
Doth part his function, and is partly blind,
Seems seeing, but effectually is out:
For it no form delivers to the heart
Of bird, of flower, or shape which it doth latch,
Of his quick objects hath the mind no part,
Nor his own vision holds what it doth catch:
For if it see the rud?st or gentlest sight,
The most sweet favour or deformed?st creature,
The mountain, or the sea, the day, or night:
The crow, or dove, it shapes them to your feature.
Incapable of more, replete with you,
My most true mind thus maketh mine untrue.

114

Or whether doth my mind being crowned with you
Drink up the monarch?s plague this flattery?
Or whether shall I say mine eye saith true,
And that your love taught it this alchemy?
To make of monsters, and things indigest,
Such cherubins as your sweet self resemble,
Creating every bad a perfect best
As fast as objects to his beams assemble:
O ?tis the first, ?tis flattery in my seeing,
And my great mind most kingly drinks it up,

Mine eye well knows what with his gust is ?greeing,
And to his palate doth prepare the cup.
If it be poisoned, ?tis the lesser sin,
That mine eye loves it and doth first begin.

115

Those lines that I before have writ do lie,
Even those that said I could not love you dearer,
Yet then my judgement knew no reason why,
My most full flame should afterwards burn clearer,
But reckoning time, whose millioned accidents
Creep in ?twixt vows, and change decrees of kings,
Tan sacred beauty, blunt the sharp?st intents,
Divert strong minds to the course of alt?ring things:
Alas why fearing of time?s tyranny,
Might I not then say ?Now I love you best,?
When I was certain o?er uncertainty,
Crowning the present, doubting of the rest?
Love is a babe, then might I not say so
To give full growth to that which still doth grow.

116

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments, love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.
O no, it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wand?ring bark,
Whose worth?s unknown, although his height be taken.
Love?s not Time?s fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle?s compass come,
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom:
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

117

Accuse me thus, that I have scanted all,
Wherein I should your great deserts repay,
Forgot upon your dearest love to call,
Where to all bonds do tie me day by day,
That I have frequent been with unknown minds,
And given to time your own dear-purchased right,
That I have hoisted sail to all the winds
Which should transport me farthest from your sight.
Book both my wilfulness and errors down,
And on just proof surmise, accumulate,

Bring me within the level of your frown,
But shoot not at me in your wakened hate:
 Since my appeal says I did strive to prove
 The constancy and virtue of your love.

118

Like as to make our appetite more keen
With eager compounds we our palate urge,
As to prevent our maladies unseen,
We sicken to shun sickness when we purge.
Even so being full of your never-cloying sweetness,
To bitter sauces did I frame my feeding;
And sick of welfare found a kind of meetness,
To be diseased ere that there was true needing.
Thus policy in love t^e anticipate
The ills that were not, grew to faults assured,
And brought to medicine a healthful state
Which rank of goodness would by ill be cured.
 But thence I learn and find the lesson true,
 Drugs poison him that so fell sick of you.

119

What potions have I drunk of Siren tears
Distilled from limbecks foul as hell within,
Applying fears to hopes, and hopes to fears,
Still losing when I saw my self to win!
What wretched errors hath my heart committed,
Whilst it hath thought it self so blessed never!
How have mine eyes out of their spheres been fitted
In the distraction of this madding fever!
O benefit of ill, now I find true
That better is, by evil still made better.
And ruined love when it is built anew
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater.
 So I return rebuked to my content,
 And gain by ills thrice more than I have spent.

120

That you were once unkind befriends me now,
And for that sorrow, which I then did feel,
Needs must I under my transgression bow,
Unless my nerves were brass or hammered steel.
For if you were by my unkindness shaken
As I by yours, y^e have passed a hell of time,
And I a tyrant have no leisure taken
To weigh how once I suffered in your crime.
O that our night of woe might have remembered
My deepest sense, how hard true sorrow hits,

And soon to you, as you to me then tendered
The humble salve, which wounded bosoms fits!
But that your trespass now becomes a fee,
Mine ransoms yours, and yours must ransom me.

121

?Tis better to be vile than vile esteemed,
When not to be, receives reproach of being,
And the just pleasure lost, which is so deemed,
Not by our feeling, but by others? seeing.
For why should others? false adulterate eyes
Give salutation to my sportive blood?
Or on my frailties why are frailer spies,
Which in their wills count bad what I think good?
No, I am that I am, and they that level
At my abuses, reckon up their own,
I may be straight though they themselves be bevel;
By their rank thoughts, my deeds must not be shown
Unless this general evil they maintain,
All men are bad and in their badness reign.

122

Thy gift, thy tables, are within my brain
Full characterized with lasting memory,
Which shall above that idle rank remain
Beyond all date even to eternity.
Or at the least, so long as brain and heart
Have faculty by nature to subsist,
Till each to razed oblivion yield his part
Of thee, thy record never can be missed:
That poor retention could not so much hold,
Nor need I tallies thy dear love to score,
Therefore to give them from me was I bold,
To trust those tables that receive thee more:
To keep an adjunct to remember thee
Were to import forgetfulness in me.

123

No! Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change,
Thy pyramids built up with newer might
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange,
They are but dressings of a former sight:
Our dates are brief, and therefore we admire,
What thou dost foist upon us that is old,
And rather make them born to our desire,
Than think that we before have heard them told:
Thy registers and thee I both defy,
Not wond?ring at the present, nor the past,

For thy records, and what we see doth lie,
Made more or less by thy continual haste:
This I do vow and this shall ever be,
I will be true despite thy scythe and thee.

124

If my dear love were but the child of state,
It might for Fortune's bastard be unfathered,
As subject to time's love or to time's hate,
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gathered.
No it was builded far from accident,
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls
Under the blow of thrall'd discontent,
Whereto th' inviting time our fashion calls:
It fears not policy that heretic,
Which works on leases of short-numbered hours,
But all alone stands hugely politic,
That it nor grows with heat, nor drowns with showers.
To this I witness call the fools of time,
Which die for goodness, who have lived for crime.

125

Were't aught to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honouring,
Or laid great bases for eternity,
Which proves more short than waste or ruining?
Have I not seen dwellers on form and favour
Lose all, and more by paying too much rent
For compound sweet; forgoing simple savour,
Pitiful thrivers in their gazing spent?
No, let me be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblation, poor but free,
Which is not mixed with seconds, knows no art,
But mutual render, only me for thee.
Hence, thou suborned informer, a true soul
When most impeached, stands least in thy control.

126

O thou my lovely boy who in thy power,
Dost hold Time's fickle glass his fickle hour:
Who hast by waning grown, and therein show'st,
Thy lovers withering, as thy sweet self grow'st.
If Nature (sovereign mistress over wrack)
As thou goest onwards still will pluck thee back,
She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill
May time disgrace, and wretched minutes kill.
Yet fear her O thou minion of her pleasure,
She may detain, but not still keep her treasure!

Her audit (though delayed) answered must be,
And her quietus is to render thee.

127

In the old age black was not counted fair,
Or if it were it bore not beauty's name:
But now is black beauty's successive heir,
And beauty slandered with a bastard shame,
For since each hand hath put on nature's power,
Fairing the foul with art's false borrowed face,
Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy bower,
But is profaned, if not lives in disgrace.
Therefore my mistress' eyes are raven black,
Her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem
At such who not born fair no beauty lack,
Slandering creation with a false esteem,
Yet so they mourn becoming of their woe,
That every tongue says beauty should look so.

128

How oft when thou, my music, music play'st,
Upon that blessed wood whose motion sounds
With thy sweet fingers when thou gently sway'st
The wiry concord that mine ear confounds,
Do I envy those jacks that nimble leap,
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand,
Whilst my poor lips which should that harvest reap,
At the wood's boldness by thee blushing stand.
To be so tickled they would change their state
And situation with those dancing chips,
O'er whom thy fingers walk with gentle gait,
Making dead wood more blest than living lips,
Since saucy jacks so happy are in this,
Give them thy fingers, me thy lips to kiss.

129

Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action, and till action, lust
Is perjured, murderous, bloody full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust,
Enjoyed no sooner but despised straight,
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had
Past reason hated as a swallowed bait,
On purpose laid to make the taker mad.
Mad in pursuit and in possession so,
Had, having, and in quest, to have extreme,
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;
Before a joy proposed behind a dream.

All this the world well knows yet none knows well,
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

130

My mistress? eyes are nothing like the sun,
Coral is far more red, than her lips red,
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun:
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head:
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks,
And in some perfumes is there more delight,
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know,
That music hath a far more pleasing sound:
I grant I never saw a goddess go;
My mistress when she walks treads on the ground.
And yet by heaven I think my love as rare,
As any she belied with false compare.

131

Thou art as tyrannous, so as thou art,
As those whose beauties proudly make them cruel;
For well thou know'st to my dear dotting heart
Thou art the fairest and most precious jewel.
Yet in good faith some say that thee behold,
Thy face hath not the power to make love groan;
To say they err, I dare not be so bold,
Although I swear it to my self alone.
And to be sure that is not false I swear,
A thousand groans but thinking on thy face,
One on another's neck do witness bear
Thy black is fairest in my judgement's place.
In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds,
And thence this slander as I think proceeds.

132

Thine eyes I love, and they as pitying me,
Knowing thy heart torment me with disdain,
Have put on black, and loving mourners be,
Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain.
And truly not the morning sun of heaven
Better becomes the grey cheeks of the east,
Nor that full star that ushers in the even
Doth half that glory to the sober west
As those two mourning eyes become thy face:
O let it then as well beseem thy heart
To mourn for me since mourning doth thee grace,
And suit thy pity like in every part.

Then will I swear beauty herself is black,
And all they foul that thy complexion lack.

133

Beshrew that heart that makes my heart to groan
For that deep wound it gives my friend and me;
Is't not enough to torture me alone,
But slave to slavery my sweetest friend must be?
Me from my self thy cruel eye hath taken,
And my next self thou harder hast engrossed,
Of him, my self, and thee I am forsaken,
A torment thrice three-fold thus to be crossed:
Prison my heart in thy steel bosom's ward,
But then my friend's heart let my poor heart bail,
Whoever keeps me, let my heart be his guard,
Thou canst not then use rigour in my gaol.
And yet thou wilt, for I being pent in thee,
Perforce am thine and all that is in me.

134

So now I have confessed that he is thine,
And I my self am mortgaged to thy will,
My self I'll forfeit, so that other mine,
Thou wilt restore to be my comfort still:
But thou wilt not, nor he will not be free,
For thou art covetous, and he is kind,
He learned but surety-like to write for me,
Under that bond that him as fist doth bind.
The statute of thy beauty thou wilt take,
Thou usurer that putt'st forth all to use,
And sue a friend, came debtor for my sake,
So him I lose through my unkind abuse.
Him have I lost, thou hast both him and me,
He pays the whole, and yet am I not free.

135

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy will,
And Will to boot, and Will in overplus,
More than enough am I that vex thee still,
To thy sweet will making addition thus.
Wilt thou whose will is large and spacious,
Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?
Shall will in others seem right gracious,
And in my will no fair acceptance shine?
The sea all water, yet receives rain still,
And in abundance addeth to his store,
So thou being rich in will add to thy will
One will of mine to make thy large will more.

Let no unkind, no fair beseechers kill,
Think all but one, and me in that one Will.

136

If thy soul check thee that I come so near,
Swear to thy blind soul that I was thy Will,
And will thy soul knows is admitted there,
Thus far for love, my love-suit sweet fulfil.
Will will fulfil the treasure of thy love,
Ay, fill it full with wills, and my will one,
In things of great receipt with case we prove,
Among a number one is reckoned none.
Then in the number let me pass untold,
Though in thy store's account I one must be,
For nothing hold me, so it please thee hold,
That nothing me, a something sweet to thee.
Make but my name thy love, and love that still,
And then thou lov'st me for my name is Will.

137

Thou blind fool Love, what dost thou to mine eyes,
That they behold and see not what they see?
They know what beauty is, see where it lies,
Yet what the best is, take the worst to be.
If eyes corrupt by over-partial looks,
Be anchored in the bay where all men ride,
Why of eyes? falsehood hast thou forged hooks,
Whereto the judgement of my heart is tied?
Why should my heart think that a several plot,
Which my heart knows the wide world's common place?
Or mine eyes seeing this, say this is not
To put fair truth upon so foul a face?
In things right true my heart and eyes have erred,
And to this false plague are they now transferred.

138

When my love swears that she is made of truth,
I do believe, her though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutored youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best,
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue;
On both sides thus is simple truth suppressed.
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love loves not to have years told.

Therefore I lie with her, and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flattered be.

139

O call not me to justify the wrong,
That thy unkindness lays upon my heart,
Wound me not with thine eye but with thy tongue,
Use power with power, and slay me not by art,
Tell me thou lov'st elsewhere; but in my sight,
Dear heart forbear to glance thine eye aside,
What need'st thou wound with cunning when thy might
Is more than my o'erpressed defence can bide?
Let me excuse thee, ah my love well knows,
Her pretty looks have been mine enemies,
And therefore from my face she turns my foes,
That they elsewhere might dart their injuries:
Yet do not so, but since I am near slain,
Kill me outright with looks, and rid my pain.

140

Be wise as thou art cruel, do not press
My tongue-tied patience with too much disdain:
Lest sorrow lend me words and words express,
The manner of my pity-wanting pain.
If I might teach thee wit better it were,
Though not to love, yet love to tell me so,
As testy sick men when their deaths be near,
No news but health from their physicians know.
For if I should despair I should grow mad,
And in my madness might speak ill of thee,
Now this ill-wresting world is grown so bad,
Mad slanderers by mad ears believed be.
That I may not be so, nor thou belied,
Bear thine eyes straight, though thy proud heart go wide.

141

In faith I do not love thee with mine eyes,
For they in thee a thousand errors note,
But 'tis my heart that loves what they despise,
Who in despite of view is pleased to dote.
Nor are mine ears with thy tongue's tune delighted,
Nor tender feeling to base touches prone,
Nor taste, nor smell, desire to be invited
To any sensual feast with thee alone:
But my five wits, nor my five senses can
Dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee,
Who leaves unswayed the likeness of a man,
Thy proud heart's slave and vassal wretch to be:

Only my plague thus far I count my gain,
That she that makes me sin, awards me pain.

142

Love is my sin, and thy dear virtue hate,
Hate of my sin, grounded on sinful loving,
O but with mine, compare thou thine own state,
And thou shalt find it merits not reproving,
Or if it do, not from those lips of thine,
That have profaned their scarlet ornaments,
And sealed false bonds of love as oft as mine,
Robbed others? beds? revenues of their rents.
Be it lawful I love thee as thou lov'st those,
Whom thine eyes woo as mine importune thee,
Root pity in thy heart that when it grows,
Thy pity may deserve to pitied be.
If thou dost seek to have what thou dost hide,
By self-example mayst thou be denied.

143

Lo as a careful huswife runs to catch,
One of her feathered creatures broke away,
Sets down her babe and makes all swift dispatch
In pursuit of the thing she would have stay:
Whilst her neglected child holds her in chase,
Cries to catch her whose busy care is bent,
To follow that which flies before her face:
Not prizing her poor infant's discontent;
So run'st thou after that which flies from thee,
Whilst I thy babe chase thee afar behind,
But if thou catch thy hope turn back to me:
And play the mother's part, kiss me, be kind.
So will I pray that thou mayst have thy Will,
If thou turn back and my loud crying still.

144

Two loves I have, of comfort and despair,
Which, like two spirits, do suggest me still:
The better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman coloured ill.
To win me soon to hell my female evil
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
And whether that my angel be turned fiend
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell;
But being both from me both to each friend,
I guess one angel in another's hell.

Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

145

Those lips that Love's own hand did make,
Breathed forth the sound that said 'I hate',
To me that languished for her sake:
But when she saw my woeful state,
Straight in her heart did mercy come,
Chiding that tongue that ever sweet,
Was used in giving gentle doom:
And taught it thus anew to greet:
'I hate' she altered with an end,
That followed it as gentle day,
Doth follow night who like a fiend
From heaven to hell is flown away.
'I hate', from hate away she threw,
And saved my life saying 'not you'.

146

Poor soul the centre of my sinful earth,
My sinful earth these rebel powers array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms inheritors of this excess
Eat up thy charge? is this thy body's end?
Then soul live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more,
So shall thou feed on death, that feeds on men,
And death once dead, there's no more dying then.

147

My love is as a fever longing still,
For that which longer nurseth the disease,
Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,
Th' uncertain sickly appetite to please:
My reason the physician to my love,
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept
Hath left me, and I desperate now approve,
Desire is death, which physic did except.
Past cure I am, now reason is past care,
And frantic-mad with evermore unrest,
My thoughts and my discourse as mad men's are,
At random from the truth vainly expressed.

For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee bright,
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.

148

O me! what eyes hath love put in my head,
Which have no correspondence with true sight,
Or if they have, where is my judgement fled,
That censures falsely what they see aright?
If that be fair whereon my false eyes dote,
What means the world to say it is not so?
If it be not, then love doth well denote,
Love's eye is not so true as all men's: no,
How can it? O how can love's eye be true,
That is so vexed with watching and with tears?
No marvel then though I mistake my view,
The sun it self sees not, till heaven clears.
O cunning love, with tears thou keep'st me blind,
Lest eyes well-seeing thy foul faults should find.

149

Canst thou O cruel, say I love thee not,
When I against my self with thee partake?
Do I not think on thee when I forgot
Am of my self, all-tyrant, for thy sake?
Who hateth thee that I do call my friend,
On whom frown'st thou that I do fawn upon,
Nay if thou lour'st on me do I not spend
Revenge upon my self with present moan?
What merit do I in my self respect,
That is so proud thy service to despise,
When all my best doth worship thy defect,
Commanded by the motion of thine eyes?
But love hate on for now I know thy mind,
Those that can see thou lov'st, and I am blind.

150

O from what power hast thou this powerful might,
With insufficiency my heart to sway,
To make me give the lie to my true sight,
And swear that brightness doth not grace the day?
Whence hast thou this becoming of things ill,
That in the very refuse of thy deeds,
There is such strength and warrantise of skill,
That in my mind thy worst all best exceeds?
Who taught thee how to make me love thee more,
The more I hear and see just cause of hate?
O though I love what others do abhor,
With others thou shouldst not abhor my state.

If thy unworthiness raised love in me,
More worthy I to be beloved of thee.

151

Love is too young to know what conscience is,
Yet who knows not conscience is born of love?
Then gentle cheater urge not my amiss,
Lest guilty of my faults thy sweet self prove.
For thou betraying me, I do betray
My nobler part to my gross body's treason,
My soul doth tell my body that he may,
Triumph in love, flesh stays no farther reason,
But rising at thy name doth point out thee,
As his triumphant prize, proud of this pride,
He is contented thy poor drudge to be,
To stand in thy affairs, fall by thy side.
No want of conscience hold it that I call,
Her love, for whose dear love I rise and fall.

152

In loving thee thou know'st I am forsworn,
But thou art twice forsworn to me love swearing,
In act thy bed-vow broke and new faith torn,
In vowing new hate after new love bearing:
But why of two oaths? breach do I accuse thee,
When I break twenty? I am perjured most,
For all my vows are oaths but to misuse thee:
And all my honest faith in thee is lost.
For I have sworn deep oaths of thy deep kindness:
Oaths of thy love, thy truth, thy constancy,
And to enlighten thee gave eyes to blindness,
Or made them swear against the thing they see.
For I have sworn thee fair: more perjured I,
To swear against the truth so foul a lie.

153

Cupid laid by his brand and fell asleep,
A maid of Dian's this advantage found,
And his love-kindling fire did quickly steep
In a cold valley-fountain of that ground:
Which borrowed from this holy fire of Love,
A dateless lively heat still to endure,
And grew a seething bath which yet men prove,
Against strange maladies a sovereign cure:
But at my mistress' eye Love's brand new-fired,
The boy for trial needs would touch my breast,
I sick withal the help of bath desired,
And thither hied a sad distempered guest.

But found no cure, the bath for my help lies,
Where Cupid got new fire; my mistress? eyes.

154

The little Love-god lying once asleep,
Laid by his side his heart-inflaming brand,
Whilst many nymphs that vowed chaste life to keep,
Came tripping by, but in her maiden hand,
The fairest votary took up that fire,
Which many legions of true hearts had warmed,
And so the general of hot desire,
Was sleeping by a virgin hand disarmed.
This brand she quenched in a cool well by,
Which from Love?s fire took heat perpetual,
Growing a bath and healthful remedy,
For men diseased; but I, my mistress? thrall,
Came there for cure and this by that I prove,
Love?s fire heats water, water cools not love.

THE END

ALL?S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

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Dramatis Personæ

KING OF FRANCE.

THE DUKE OF FLORENCE.

BERTRAM, Count of Rossillon.

LAFEW, an old Lord.

PAROLLES, a follower of Bertram.

Several young French Lords, that serve with Bertram in the Florentine War.

RYNALDO, servant to the Countess of Rossillon.

Clown, servant to the Countess of Rossillon.

A Page, servant to the Countess of Rossillon.

COUNTESS OF ROSSILLON, mother to Bertram.

HELENA, a Gentlewoman protected by the Countess.

An old WIDOW of Florence.

DIANA, daughter to the Widow.

VIOLENTA, neighbour and friend to the Widow.

MARIANA, neighbour and friend to the Widow.

Lords attending on the KING; Officers; Soldiers, &c., French and Florentine.

SCENE: Partly in France, and partly in Tuscany.

ACT I

SCENE I. Rossillon. A room in the Countess's palace.

Enter Bertram, the Countess of Rossillon, Helena, and Lafew, all in black.

COUNTESS.

In delivering my son from me, I bury a second husband.

BERTRAM.

And I in going, madam, weep o'er my father's death anew; but I must attend his majesty's command, to whom I am now in ward, evermore in

subjection.

LAFEW.

You shall find of the king a husband, madam; you, sir, a father. He that so generally is at all times good, must of necessity hold his virtue to you, whose worthiness would stir it up where it wanted, rather than lack it where there is such abundance.

COUNTESS.

What hope is there of his majesty's amendment?

LAFEW.

He hath abandon'd his physicians, madam; under whose practices he hath persecuted time with hope, and finds no other advantage in the process but only the losing of hope by time.

COUNTESS.

This young gentlewoman had a father?O that 'had!', how sad a passage 'tis! whose skill was almost as great as his honesty; had it stretch'd so far, would have made nature immortal, and death should have play for lack of work. Would for the king's sake he were living! I think it would be the death of the king's disease.

LAFEW.

How called you the man you speak of, madam?

COUNTESS.

He was famous, sir, in his profession, and it was his great right to be so: Gerard de Narbon.

LAFEW.

He was excellent indeed, madam; the king very lately spoke of him admiringly, and mourningly; he was skilful enough to have liv'd still, if knowledge could be set up against mortality.

BERTRAM.

What is it, my good lord, the king languishes of?

LAFEW.

A fistula, my lord.

BERTRAM.

I heard not of it before.

LAFEW.

I would it were not notorious. Was this gentlewoman the daughter of Gerard de Narbon?

COUNTESS.

His sole child, my lord, and bequeathed to my overlooking. I have those hopes of her good that her education promises her dispositions she inherits, which makes fair gifts fairer; for where an unclean mind carries virtuous qualities, there commendations go with pity, they are virtues and traitors too. In her they are the better for their

simpleness; she derives her honesty, and achieves her goodness.

LAFEW.

Your commendations, madam, get from her tears.

COUNTESS.

'Tis the best brine a maiden can season her praise in. The remembrance of her father never approaches her heart but the tyranny of her sorrows takes all livelihood from her cheek. No more of this, Helena; go to, no more, lest it be rather thought you affect a sorrow than to have.

HELENA.

I do affect a sorrow indeed, but I have it too.

LAFEW.

Moderate lamentation is the right of the dead; excessive grief the enemy to the living.

COUNTESS.

If the living be enemy to the grief, the excess makes it soon mortal.

BERTRAM.

Madam, I desire your holy wishes.

LAFEW.

How understand we that?

COUNTESS.

Be thou blest, Bertram, and succeed thy father
In manners, as in shape! Thy blood and virtue
Contend for empire in thee, and thy goodness
Share with thy birthright! Love all, trust a few,
Do wrong to none. Be able for thine enemy
Rather in power than use; and keep thy friend
Under thy own life's key. Be check'd for silence,
But never tax'd for speech. What heaven more will,
That thee may furnish and my prayers pluck down,
Fall on thy head! Farewell. My lord,
'Tis an unseason'd courtier; good my lord,
Advise him.

LAFEW.

He cannot want the best
That shall attend his love.

COUNTESS.

Heaven bless him! Farewell, Bertram.

[_Exit Countess._]

BERTRAM.

The best wishes that can be forg'd in your thoughts be servants to you!
[_To Helena._] Be comfortable to my mother, your mistress, and make
much of her.

LAFEW.

Farewell, pretty lady, you must hold the credit of your father.

[_Exeunt Bertram and Lafew._]

HELENA.

O, were that all! I think not on my father,
And these great tears grace his remembrance more
Than those I shed for him. What was he like?
I have forgot him; my imagination
Carries no favour in't but Bertram's.
I am undone: there is no living, none,
If Bertram be away. 'Twere all one
That I should love a bright particular star,
And think to wed it, he is so above me.
In his bright radiance and collateral light
Must I be comforted, not in his sphere.
Th'ambition in my love thus plagues itself:
The hind that would be mated by the lion
Must die for love. 'Twas pretty, though a plague,
To see him every hour; to sit and draw
His arched brows, his hawking eye, his curls,
In our heart's table, 'heart too capable
Of every line and trick of his sweet favour.
But now he's gone, and my idolatrous fancy
Must sanctify his relics. Who comes here?

Enter Parolles.

One that goes with him: I love him for his sake,
And yet I know him a notorious liar,
Think him a great way fool, solely a coward;
Yet these fix'd evils sit so fit in him
That they take place when virtue's steely bones
Looks bleak i' th' cold wind: withal, full oft we see
Cold wisdom waiting on superfluous folly.

PAROLLES.

Save you, fair queen!

HELENA.

And you, monarch!

PAROLLES.

No.

HELENA.

And no.

PAROLLES.

Are you meditating on virginity?

HELENA.

Ay. You have some stain of soldier in you; let me ask you a question.
Man is enemy to virginity; how may we barricado it against him?

PAROLLES.
Keep him out.

HELENA.
But he assails; and our virginity, though valiant, in the defence, yet
is weak. Unfold to us some warlike resistance.

PAROLLES.
There is none. Man setting down before you will undermine you and blow
you up.

HELENA.
Bless our poor virginity from underminers and blowers-up! Is there no
military policy how virgins might blow up men?

PAROLLES.
Virginity being blown down, man will quicklier be blown up; marry, in
blowing him down again, with the breach yourselves made, you lose your
city. It is not politic in the commonwealth of nature to preserve
virginity. Loss of virginity is rational increase, and there was never
virgin got till virginity was first lost. That you were made of is
metal to make virgins. Virginity, by being once lost, may be ten times
found; by being ever kept, it is ever lost. 'Tis too cold a companion.
Away with it!

HELENA.
I will stand for't a little, though therefore I die a virgin.

PAROLLES.
There's little can be said in't; 'tis against the rule of nature. To
speak on the part of virginity is to accuse your mothers; which is most
infallible disobedience. He that hangs himself is a virgin: virginity
murders itself, and should be buried in highways out of all sanctified
limit, as a desperate offendress against nature. Virginity breeds
mites, much like a cheese; consumes itself to the very paring, and so
dies with feeding his own stomach. Besides, virginity is peevish,
proud, idle, made of self-love, which is the most inhibited sin in the
canon. Keep it not; you cannot choose but lose by't. Out with't! Within
the year it will make itself two, which is a goodly increase, and the
principal itself not much the worse. Away with it!

HELENA.
How might one do, sir, to lose it to her own liking?

PAROLLES.
Let me see. Marry, ill, to like him that ne'er it likes. 'Tis a
commodity will lose the gloss with lying; the longer kept, the less
worth. Off with't while 'tis vendible; answer the time of request.
Virginity, like an old courtier, wears her cap out of fashion, richly
suited, but unsuitable, just like the brooch and the toothpick, which
wear not now. Your date is better in your pie and your porridge than in

your cheek. And your virginity, your old virginity, is like one of our French wither'd pears; it looks ill, it eats drily; marry, 'tis a wither'd pear; it was formerly better; marry, yet 'tis a wither'd pear. Will you anything with it?

HELENA.

Not my virginity yet.

There shall your master have a thousand loves,
A mother, and a mistress, and a friend,
A phoenix, captain, and an enemy,
A guide, a goddess, and a sovereign,
A counsellor, a traitress, and a dear:
His humble ambition, proud humility,
His jarring concord, and his discord dulcet,
His faith, his sweet disaster; with a world
Of pretty, fond, adoptious christendoms
That blinking Cupid gossips. Now shall he?
I know not what he shall. God send him well!
The court's a learning-place; and he is one.

PAROLLES.

What one, i' faith?

HELENA.

That I wish well. 'Tis pity?

PAROLLES.

What's pity?

HELENA.

That wishing well had not a body in't
Which might be felt, that we, the poorer born,
Whose baser stars do shut us up in wishes,
Might with effects of them follow our friends,
And show what we alone must think, which never
Returns us thanks.

Enter a Page.

PAGE.

Monsieur Parolles, my lord calls for you.

[_Exit Page._]

PAROLLES.

Little Helen, farewell. If I can remember thee, I will think of thee at court.

HELENA.

Monsieur Parolles, you were born under a charitable star.

PAROLLES.

Under Mars, I.

HELENA.

I especially think, under Mars.

PAROLLES.

Why under Mars?

HELENA.

The wars hath so kept you under, that you must needs be born under Mars.

PAROLLES.

When he was predominant.

HELENA.

When he was retrograde, I think rather.

PAROLLES.

Why think you so?

HELENA.

You go so much backward when you fight.

PAROLLES.

That's for advantage.

HELENA.

So is running away, when fear proposes the safety: but the composition that your valour and fear makes in you is a virtue of a good wing, and I like the wear well.

PAROLLES.

I am so full of business I cannot answer thee acutely. I will return perfect courtier; in the which my instruction shall serve to naturalize thee, so thou wilt be capable of a courtier's counsel, and understand what advice shall thrust upon thee; else thou diest in thine unthankfulness, and thine ignorance makes thee away. Farewell. When thou hast leisure, say thy prayers; when thou hast none, remember thy friends. Get thee a good husband, and use him as he uses thee. So, farewell.

[_Exit._]

HELENA.

Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,
Which we ascribe to heaven: the fated sky
Gives us free scope; only doth backward pull
Our slow designs when we ourselves are dull.
What power is it which mounts my love so high,
That makes me see, and cannot feed mine eye?
The mightiest space in fortune nature brings
To join like likes, and kiss like native things.
Impossible be strange attempts to those
That weigh their pains in sense, and do suppose
What hath been cannot be. Who ever strove

To show her merit that did miss her love?
The king's disease, my project may deceive me,
But my intents are fix'd, and will not leave me.

[_Exit._]

SCENE II. Paris. A room in the King's palace.

Flourish of cornets. Enter the King of France, with letters; Lords and others attending.

KING.
The Florentines and Senoys are by th' ears;
Have fought with equal fortune, and continue
A braving war.

FIRST LORD.
So 'tis reported, sir.

KING.
Nay, 'tis most credible, we here receive it,
A certainty, vouch'd from our cousin Austria,
With caution, that the Florentine will move us
For speedy aid; wherein our dearest friend
Prejudicates the business, and would seem
To have us make denial.

FIRST LORD.
His love and wisdom,
Approv'd so to your majesty, may plead
For amplest credence.

KING.
He hath arm'd our answer,
And Florence is denied before he comes:
Yet, for our gentlemen that mean to see
The Tuscan service, freely have they leave
To stand on either part.

SECOND LORD.
It well may serve
A nursery to our gentry, who are sick
For breathing and exploit.

KING.
What's he comes here?

Enter Bertram, Lafew and Parolles.

FIRST LORD.
It is the Count Rossillon, my good lord,
Young Bertram.

KING.

Youth, thou bear'st thy father's face;
Frank nature, rather curious than in haste,
Hath well compos'd thee. Thy father's moral parts
Mayst thou inherit too! Welcome to Paris.

BERTRAM.

My thanks and duty are your majesty's.

KING.

I would I had that corporal soundness now,
As when thy father and myself in friendship
First tried our soldiership. He did look far
Into the service of the time, and was
Disciplin'd of the bravest. He lasted long,
But on us both did haggish age steal on,
And wore us out of act. It much repairs me
To talk of your good father; in his youth
He had the wit which I can well observe
Today in our young lords; but they may jest
Till their own scorn return to them unnoted
Ere they can hide their levity in honour
So like a courtier, contempt nor bitterness
Were in his pride or sharpness; if they were,
His equal had awak'd them, and his honour,
Clock to itself, knew the true minute when
Exception bid him speak, and at this time
His tongue obey'd his hand. Who were below him
He us'd as creatures of another place,
And bow'd his eminent top to their low ranks,
Making them proud of his humility,
In their poor praise he humbled. Such a man
Might be a copy to these younger times;
Which, followed well, would demonstrate them now
But goes backward.

BERTRAM.

His good remembrance, sir,
Lies richer in your thoughts than on his tomb;
So in approval lives not his epitaph
As in your royal speech.

KING.

Would I were with him! He would always say,
Methinks I hear him now; his plausible words
He scatter'd not in ears, but grafted them
To grow there and to bear, 'Let me not live,
This his good melancholy oft began
On the catastrophe and heel of pastime,
When it was out, 'Let me not live' quoth he,
'After my flame lacks oil, to be the snuff
Of younger spirits, whose apprehensive senses
All but new things disdain; whose judgments are
Mere fathers of their garments; whose constancies
Expire before their fashions.' This he wish'd.

I, after him, do after him wish too,
Since I nor wax nor honey can bring home,
I quickly were dissolved from my hive
To give some labourers room.

SECOND LORD.

You're lov'd, sir;
They that least lend it you shall lack you first.

KING.

I fill a place, I know't. How long is't, Count,
Since the physician at your father's died?
He was much fam'd.

BERTRAM.

Some six months since, my lord.

KING.

If he were living, I would try him yet;
Lend me an arm; the rest have worn me out
With several applications; nature and sickness
Debate it at their leisure. Welcome, Count;
My son's no dearer.

BERTRAM.

Thank your majesty.

[_Exeunt. Flourish._]

SCENE III. Rossillon. A Room in the Palace.

Enter Countess, Steward and Clown.

COUNTESS.

I will now hear. What say you of this gentlewoman?

STEWARD.

Madam, the care I have had to even your content, I wish might be found
in the calendar of my past endeavours; for then we wound our modesty,
and make foul the clearness of our deservings, when of ourselves we
publish them.

COUNTESS.

What does this knave here? Get you gone, sirrah. The complaints I have
heard of you I do not all believe; 'tis my slowness that I do not; for
I know you lack not folly to commit them, and have ability enough to
make such knaveries yours.

CLOWN.

'Tis not unknown to you, madam, I am a poor fellow.

COUNTESS.

Well, sir.

CLOWN.

No, madam, 'tis not so well that I am poor, though many of the rich are damned; but if I may have your ladyship's good will to go to the world, Isbel the woman and I will do as we may.

COUNTESS.

Wilt thou needs be a beggar?

CLOWN.

I do beg your good will in this case.

COUNTESS.

In what case?

CLOWN.

In Isbel's case and mine own. Service is no heritage, and I think I shall never have the blessing of God till I have issue of my body; for they say barnes are blessings.

COUNTESS.

Tell me thy reason why thou wilt marry.

CLOWN.

My poor body, madam, requires it; I am driven on by the flesh, and he must needs go that the devil drives.

COUNTESS.

Is this all your worship's reason?

CLOWN.

Faith, madam, I have other holy reasons, such as they are.

COUNTESS.

May the world know them?

CLOWN.

I have been, madam, a wicked creature, as you and all flesh and blood are; and indeed I do marry that I may repent.

COUNTESS.

Thy marriage, sooner than thy wickedness.

CLOWN.

I am out of friends, madam, and I hope to have friends for my wife's sake.

COUNTESS.

Such friends are thine enemies, knave.

CLOWN.

Y^eare shallow, madam, in great friends; for the knaves come to do that for me which I am a-weary of. He that ears my land spares my team, and gives me leave to in the crop: if I be his cuckold, he's my drudge. He that comforts my wife is the cherisher of my flesh and blood; he that

cherishes my flesh and blood loves my flesh and blood; he that loves my flesh and blood is my friend; ergo, he that kisses my wife is my friend. If men could be contented to be what they are, there were no fear in marriage; for young Charbon the puritan and old Poysam the papist, howsome'er their hearts are sever'd in religion, their heads are both one; they may jowl horns together like any deer i' the herd.

COUNTESS.

Wilt thou ever be a foul-mouth'd and calumnious knave?

CLOWN.

A prophet I, madam; and I speak the truth the next way:

_For I the ballad will repeat,
Which men full true shall find;
Your marriage comes by destiny,
Your cuckoo sings by kind._

COUNTESS.

Get you gone, sir; I'll talk with you more anon.

STEWARD.

May it please you, madam, that he bid Helen come to you; of her I am to speak.

COUNTESS.

Sirrah, tell my gentlewoman I would speak with her; Helen I mean.

CLOWN.

[_Sings._]

_ Was this fair face the cause, quoth she,
Why the Grecians sacked Troy?
Fond done, done fond,
Was this King Priam's joy?
With that she sighed as she stood,
With that she sighed as she stood,
And gave this sentence then:
Among nine bad if one be good,
Among nine bad if one be good,
There's yet one good in ten._

COUNTESS.

What, one good in ten? You corrupt the song, sirrah.

CLOWN.

One good woman in ten, madam, which is a purifying o' the song. Would God would serve the world so all the year! We'd find no fault with the tithe-woman, if I were the parson. One in ten, quoth 'a! And we might have a good woman born but or every blazing star, or at an earthquake, 'twould mend the lottery well; a man may draw his heart out ere he pluck one.

COUNTESS.

You'll be gone, sir knave, and do as I command you!

CLOWN.

That man should be at woman's command, and yet no hurt done! Though honesty be no puritan, yet it will do no hurt; it will wear the surplice of humility over the black gown of a big heart. I am going, forsooth; the business is for Helen to come hither.

[_Exit._]

COUNTESS.

Well, now.

STEWARD.

I know, madam, you love your gentlewoman entirely.

COUNTESS.

Faith I do. Her father bequeath'd her to me, and she herself, without other advantage, may lawfully make title to as much love as she finds; there is more owing her than is paid, and more shall be paid her than she'll demand.

STEWARD.

Madam, I was very late more near her than I think she wish'd me; alone she was, and did communicate to herself her own words to her own ears; she thought, I dare vow for her, they touch'd not any stranger sense. Her matter was, she loved your son. Fortune, she said, was no goddess, that had put such difference betwixt their two estates; Love no god, that would not extend his might only where qualities were level; Diana no queen of virgins, that would suffer her poor knight surpris'd, without rescue in the first assault or ransom afterward. This she deliver'd in the most bitter touch of sorrow that e'er I heard virgin exclaim in, which I held my duty speedily to acquaint you withal; sithence, in the loss that may happen, it concerns you something to know it.

COUNTESS.

You have discharg'd this honestly; keep it to yourself; many likelihoods inform'd me of this before, which hung so tottering in the balance that I could neither believe nor misdoubt. Pray you leave me; stall this in your bosom; and I thank you for your honest care. I will speak with you further anon.

[_Exit Steward._]

Enter Helena.

Even so it was with me when I was young;
If ever we are nature's, these are ours; this thorn
Doth to our rose of youth rightly belong;
Our blood to us, this to our blood is born;
It is the show and seal of nature's truth,
Where love's strong passion is impress'd in youth.
By our remembrances of days foregone,
Such were our faults, or then we thought them none.
Her eye is sick on't; I observe her now.

HELENA.

What is your pleasure, madam?

COUNTESS.

You know, Helen,
I am a mother to you.

HELENA.

Mine honourable mistress.

COUNTESS.

Nay, a mother.
Why not a mother? When I said a mother,
Methought you saw a serpent. What's in mother,
That you start at it? I say I am your mother,
And put you in the catalogue of those
That were enwomb'd mine. 'Tis often seen
Adoption strives with nature, and choice breeds
A native slip to us from foreign seeds.
You ne'er oppress'd me with a mother's groan,
Yet I express to you a mother's care.
God's mercy, maiden! does it curd thy blood
To say I am thy mother? What's the matter,
That this distemper'd messenger of wet,
The many-colour'd Iris, rounds thine eye?
'Why, that you are my daughter?

HELENA.

That I am not.

COUNTESS.

I say, I am your mother.

HELENA.

Pardon, madam;
The Count Rossillon cannot be my brother.
I am from humble, he from honoured name;
No note upon my parents, his all noble,
My master, my dear lord he is; and I
His servant live, and will his vassal die.
He must not be my brother.

COUNTESS.

Nor I your mother?

HELENA.

You are my mother, madam; would you were?
So that my lord your son were not my brother,
Indeed my mother! or were you both our mothers,
I care no more for than I do for heaven,
So I were not his sister. Can't no other,
But, I your daughter, he must be my brother?

COUNTESS.

Yes, Helen, you might be my daughter-in-law.
God shield you mean it not! daughter and mother
So strive upon your pulse. What! pale again?
My fear hath catch'd your fondness; now I see
The mystery of your loneliness, and find
Your salt tears? head. Now to all sense 'tis gross
You love my son; invention is ashamed,
Against the proclamation of thy passion
To say thou dost not. Therefore tell me true;
But tell me then, 'tis so; for, look, thy cheeks
Confess it, t'one to th'other; and thine eyes
See it so grossly shown in thy behaviours,
That in their kind they speak it; only sin
And hellish obstinacy tie thy tongue,
That truth should be suspected. Speak, is't so?
If it be so, you have wound a goodly clew;
If it be not, forswear't: howe'er, I charge thee,
As heaven shall work in me for thine avail,
To tell me truly.

HELENA.

Good madam, pardon me.

COUNTESS.

Do you love my son?

HELENA.

Your pardon, noble mistress.

COUNTESS.

Love you my son?

HELENA.

Do not you love him, madam?

COUNTESS.

Go not about; my love hath in't a bond
Whereof the world takes note. Come, come, disclose
The state of your affection, for your passions
Have to the full appeach'd.

HELENA.

Then I confess,
Here on my knee, before high heaven and you,
That before you, and next unto high heaven,
I love your son.
My friends were poor, but honest; so's my love.
Be not offended; for it hurts not him
That he is lov'd of me; I follow him not
By any token of presumptuous suit,
Nor would I have him till I do deserve him;
Yet never know how that desert should be.
I know I love in vain, strive against hope;

Yet in this captious and intemperate sieve
I still pour in the waters of my love
And lack not to lose still. Thus, Indian-like,
Religious in mine error, I adore
The sun that looks upon his worshipper,
But knows of him no more. My dearest madam,
Let not your hate encounter with my love,
For loving where you do; but if yourself,
Whose aged honour cites a virtuous youth,
Did ever, in so true a flame of liking,
Wish chastely, and love dearly, that your Dian
Was both herself and love; O then, give pity
To her whose state is such that cannot choose
But lend and give where she is sure to lose;
That seeks not to find that her search implies,
But riddle-like, lives sweetly where she dies!

COUNTESS.

Had you not lately an intent, 'speak truly,
To go to Paris?

HELENA.

Madam, I had.

COUNTESS.

Wherefore? tell true.

HELENA.

I will tell truth; by grace itself I swear.
You know my father left me some prescriptions
Of rare and proved effects, such as his reading
And manifest experience had collected
For general sovereignty; and that he would me
In heedfullest reservation to bestow them,
As notes whose faculties inclusive were
More than they were in note. Amongst the rest
There is a remedy, approved, set down,
To cure the desperate languishings whereof
The king is rendered lost.

COUNTESS.

This was your motive
For Paris, was it? Speak.

HELENA.

My lord your son made me to think of this;
Else Paris, and the medicine, and the king,
Had from the conversation of my thoughts
Happily been absent then.

COUNTESS.

But think you, Helen,
If you should tender your supposed aid,
He would receive it? He and his physicians

Are of a mind; he, that they cannot help him;
They, that they cannot help. How shall they credit
A poor unlearned virgin, when the schools,
Embowell'd of their doctrine, have let off
The danger to itself?

HELENA.

There's something in't
More than my father's skill, which was the great'st
Of his profession, that his good receipt
Shall for my legacy be sanctified
By th' luckiest stars in heaven; and would your honour
But give me leave to try success, I'd venture
The well-lost life of mine on his grace's cure.
By such a day, an hour.

COUNTESS.

Dost thou believe't?

HELENA.

Ay, madam, knowingly.

COUNTESS.

Why, Helen, thou shalt have my leave and love,
Means and attendants, and my loving greetings
To those of mine in court. I'll stay at home,
And pray God's blessing into thy attempt.
Be gone tomorrow; and be sure of this,
What I can help thee to, thou shalt not miss.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT II.

SCENE I. Paris. A room in the King's palace.

Flourish. Enter the King with young Lords taking leave for the
Florentine war; Bertram, Parolles and Attendants.

KING.

Farewell, young lords; these warlike principles
Do not throw from you; and you, my lords, farewell;
Share the advice betwixt you; if both gain all,
The gift doth stretch itself as 'tis receiv'd,
And is enough for both.

FIRST LORD.

'Tis our hope, sir,
After well-ent'red soldiers, to return
And find your grace in health.

KING.

No, no, it cannot be; and yet my heart

Will not confess he owes the malady
That doth my life besiege. Farewell, young lords.
Whether I live or die, be you the sons
Of worthy Frenchmen; let higher Italy,
Those bated that inherit but the fall
Of the last monarchy?see that you come
Not to woo honour, but to wed it, when
The bravest questant shrinks: find what you seek,
That fame may cry you loud. I say farewell.

SECOND LORD.

Health, at your bidding serve your majesty!

KING.

Those girls of Italy, take heed of them;
They say our French lack language to deny
If they demand; beware of being captives
Before you serve.

BOTH.

Our hearts receive your warnings.

KING.

Farewell.?Come hither to me.

[_The King retires to a couch._]

FIRST LORD.

O my sweet lord, that you will stay behind us!

PAROLLES.

?Tis not his fault; the spark.

SECOND LORD.

O, ?tis brave wars!

PAROLLES.

Most admirable! I have seen those wars.

BERTRAM.

I am commanded here, and kept a coil with,
?Too young?, and ?the next year? and ??tis too early?.

PAROLLES.

An thy mind stand to?t, boy, steal away bravely.

BERTRAM.

I shall stay here the forehorse to a smock,
Creaking my shoes on the plain masonry,
Till honour be bought up, and no sword worn
But one to dance with. By heaven, I'll steal away.

FIRST LORD.

There?s honour in the theft.

PAROLLES.

Commit it, count.

SECOND LORD.

I am your accessory; and so farewell.

BERTRAM.

I grow to you, and our parting is a tortur'd body.

FIRST LORD.

Farewell, captain.

SECOND LORD.

Sweet Monsieur Parolles!

PAROLLES.

Noble heroes, my sword and yours are kin. Good sparks and lustrous, a word, good metals. You shall find in the regiment of the Spinii one Captain Spurio, with his cicatrice, an emblem of war, here on his sinister cheek; it was this very sword entrench'd it. Say to him I live; and observe his reports for me.

FIRST LORD.

We shall, noble captain.

PAROLLES.

Mars dote on you for his novices!

[_Exeunt Lords._]

What will ye do?

BERTRAM.

Stay the king.

PAROLLES.

Use a more spacious ceremony to the noble lords; you have restrain'd yourself within the list of too cold an adieu. Be more expressive to them; for they wear themselves in the cap of the time; there do muster true gait; eat, speak, and move, under the influence of the most receiv'd star; and though the devil lead the measure, such are to be followed. After them, and take a more dilated farewell.

BERTRAM.

And I will do so.

PAROLLES.

Worthy fellows, and like to prove most sinewy sword-men.

[_Exeunt Bertram and Parolles._]

Enter Lafew.

LAFEW.

Pardon, my lord [_kneeling_], for me and for my tidings.

KING.

I'll fee thee to stand up.

LAFEW.

Then here's a man stands that has brought his pardon.

I would you had kneel'd, my lord, to ask me mercy,

And that at my bidding you could so stand up.

KING.

I would I had; so I had broke thy pate,

And ask'd thee mercy for't.

LAFEW.

Good faith, across;

But, my good lord, 'tis thus: will you be cur'd

Of your infirmity?

KING.

No.

LAFEW.

O, will you eat

No grapes, my royal fox? Yes, but you will

My noble grapes, and if my royal fox

Could reach them. I have seen a medicine

That's able to breathe life into a stone,

Quicken a rock, and make you dance canary

With sprightly fire and motion; whose simple touch

Is powerful to araise King Pippen, nay,

To give great Charlemain a pen in's hand

And write to her a love-line.

KING.

What 'her' is this?

LAFEW.

Why, doctor 'she'?! My lord, there's one arriv'd,

If you will see her. Now, by my faith and honour,

If seriously I may convey my thoughts

In this my light deliverance, I have spoke

With one that in her sex, her years, profession,

Wisdom, and constancy, hath amaz'd me more

Than I dare blame my weakness. Will you see her,

For that is her demand, and know her business?

That done, laugh well at me.

KING.

Now, good Lafew,

Bring in the admiration; that we with thee

May spend our wonder too, or take off thine

By wond'ring how thou took'st it.

LAFEW.

Nay, I'll fit you,
And not be all day neither.

[_Exit Lafew._]

KING.

Thus he his special nothing ever prologues.

Enter Lafew with Helena.

LAFEW.

Nay, come your ways.

KING.

This haste hath wings indeed.

LAFEW.

Nay, come your ways.

This is his majesty, say your mind to him.
A traitor you do look like, but such traitors
His majesty seldom fears; I am Cressid's uncle,
That dare leave two together. Fare you well.

[_Exit._]

KING.

Now, fair one, does your business follow us?

HELENA.

Ay, my good lord.
Gerard de Narbon was my father,
In what he did profess, well found.

KING.

I knew him.

HELENA.

The rather will I spare my praises towards him.
Knowing him is enough. On his bed of death
Many receipts he gave me; chiefly one,
Which, as the dearest issue of his practice,
And of his old experience the only darling,
He bade me store up as a triple eye,
Safer than mine own two; more dear I have so,
And hearing your high majesty is touch'd
With that malignant cause, wherein the honour
Of my dear father's gift stands chief in power,
I come to tender it, and my appliance,
With all bound humbleness.

KING.

We thank you, maiden,

But may not be so credulous of cure,
When our most learned doctors leave us, and
The congregated college have concluded
That labouring art can never ransom nature
From her inaidable estate. I say we must not
So stain our judgment, or corrupt our hope,
To prostitute our past-cure malady
To empirics, or to dissever so
Our great self and our credit, to esteem
A senseless help, when help past sense we deem.

HELENA.

My duty then shall pay me for my pains.
I will no more enforce mine office on you,
Humbly entreating from your royal thoughts
A modest one to bear me back again.

KING.

I cannot give thee less, to be call'd grateful.
Thou thought'st to help me; and such thanks I give
As one near death to those that wish him live.
But what at full I know, thou know'st no part;
I knowing all my peril, thou no art.

HELENA.

What I can do can do no hurt to try,
Since you set up your rest 'gainst remedy.
He that of greatest works is finisher
Oft does them by the weakest minister.
So holy writ in babes hath judgment shown,
When judges have been babes. Great floods have flown
From simple sources, and great seas have dried
When miracles have by the great'st been denied.
Oft expectation fails, and most oft there
Where most it promises; and oft it hits
Where hope is coldest, and despair most fits.

KING.

I must not hear thee. Fare thee well, kind maid.
Thy pains, not us'd, must by thyself be paid;
Proffers, not took, reap thanks for their reward.

HELENA.

Inspired merit so by breath is barr'd.
It is not so with Him that all things knows
As 'tis with us that square our guess by shows;
But most it is presumption in us when
The help of heaven we count the act of men.
Dear sir, to my endeavours give consent;
Of heaven, not me, make an experiment.
I am not an impostor, that proclaim
Myself against the level of mine aim,
But know I think, and think I know most sure,
My art is not past power nor you past cure.

KING.

Art thou so confident? Within what space
Hop'st thou my cure?

HELENA.

The greatest grace lending grace.
Ere twice the horses of the sun shall bring
Their fiery torcher his diurnal ring,
Ere twice in murk and occidental damp
Moist Hesperus hath quenched her sleepy lamp;
Or four and twenty times the pilot's glass
Hath told the thievish minutes how they pass;
What is infirm from your sound parts shall fly,
Health shall live free, and sickness freely die.

KING.

Upon thy certainty and confidence
What dar'st thou venture?

HELENA.

Tax of impudence,
A strumpet's boldness, a divulged shame,
Traduced by odious ballads; my maiden's name
Sear'd otherwise; nay worse of worst extended
With vilest torture, let my life be ended.

KING.

Methinks in thee some blessed spirit doth speak
His powerful sound within an organ weak;
And what impossibility would slay
In common sense, sense saves another way.
Thy life is dear, for all that life can rate
Worth name of life in thee hath estimate:
Youth, beauty, wisdom, courage, all
That happiness and prime can happy call.
Thou this to hazard needs must intimate
Skill infinite, or monstrous desperate.
Sweet practiser, thy physic I will try,
That ministers thine own death if I die.

HELENA.

If I break time, or flinch in property
Of what I spoke, unpitied let me die,
And well deserved. Not helping, death's my fee;
But if I help, what do you promise me?

KING.

Make thy demand.

HELENA.

But will you make it even?

KING.

Ay, by my sceptre and my hopes of heaven.

HELENA.

Then shalt thou give me, with thy kingly hand
What husband in thy power I will command:
Exempted be from me the arrogance
To choose from forth the royal blood of France,
My low and humble name to propagate
With any branch or image of thy state;
But such a one, thy vassal, whom I know
Is free for me to ask, thee to bestow.

KING.

Here is my hand; the premises observ'd,
Thy will by my performance shall be serv'd;
So make the choice of thy own time, for I,
Thy resolv'd patient, on thee still rely.
More should I question thee, and more I must,
Though more to know could not be more to trust:
From whence thou cam'st, how tended on; but rest
Unquestion'd welcome, and undoubted bless'd.
Give me some help here, ho! If thou proceed
As high as word, my deed shall match thy deed.

[_Flourish. Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Rossillon. A room in the Countess's palace.

Enter Countess and Clown.

COUNTESS.

Come on, sir; I shall now put you to the height of your breeding.

CLOWN.

I will show myself highly fed and lowly taught. I know my business is
but to the court.

COUNTESS.

To the court! Why, what place make you special, when you put off that
with such contempt? But to the court!

CLOWN.

Truly, madam, if God have lent a man any manners, he may easily put it
off at court: he that cannot make a leg, put off's cap, kiss his hand,
and say nothing, has neither leg, hands, lip, nor cap; and indeed such
a fellow, to say precisely, were not for the court; but for me, I have
an answer will serve all men.

COUNTESS.

Marry, that's a bountiful answer that fits all questions.

CLOWN.

It is like a barber's chair, that fits all buttocks?the pin-buttock,
the quatch-buttock, the brawn-buttock, or any buttock.

COUNTESS.

Will your answer serve fit to all questions?

CLOWN.

As fit as ten groats is for the hand of an attorney, as your French crown for your taffety punk, as Tib's rush for Tom's forefinger, as a pancake for Shrove-Tuesday, a morris for May-day, as the nail to his hole, the cuckold to his horn, as a scolding quean to a wrangling knave, as the nun's lip to the friar's mouth; nay, as the pudding to his skin.

COUNTESS.

Have you, I say, an answer of such fitness for all questions?

CLOWN.

From below your duke to beneath your constable, it will fit any question.

COUNTESS.

It must be an answer of most monstrous size that must fit all demands.

CLOWN.

But a trifle neither, in good faith, if the learned should speak truth of it. Here it is, and all that belongs to't. Ask me if I am a courtier; it shall do you no harm to learn.

COUNTESS.

To be young again, if we could: I will be a fool in question, hoping to be the wiser by your answer. I pray you, sir, are you a courtier?

CLOWN.

O Lord, sir! There's a simple putting off. More, more, a hundred of them.

COUNTESS.

Sir, I am a poor friend of yours, that loves you.

CLOWN.

O Lord, sir! Thick, thick; spare not me.

COUNTESS.

I think, sir, you can eat none of this homely meat.

CLOWN.

O Lord, sir! Nay, put me to't, I warrant you.

COUNTESS.

You were lately whipp'd, sir, as I think.

CLOWN.

O Lord, sir! Spare not me.

COUNTESS.

Do you cry ?O Lord, sir!? at your whipping, and ?spare not me?? Indeed your ?O Lord, sir!? is very sequent to your whipping. You would answer very well to a whipping, if you were but bound to?t.

CLOWN.

I ne?er had worse luck in my life in my ?O Lord, sir!? I see things may serve long, but not serve ever.

COUNTESS.

I play the noble housewife with the time, to entertain it so merrily with a fool.

CLOWN.

O Lord, sir! Why, there?t serves well again.

COUNTESS.

An end, sir! To your business. Give Helen this,
And urge her to a present answer back.
Commend me to my kinsmen and my son.
This is not much.

CLOWN.

Not much commendation to them?

COUNTESS.

Not much employment for you. You understand me?

CLOWN.

Most fruitfully. I am there before my legs.

COUNTESS.

Haste you again.

[_Exeunt severally._]

SCENE III. Paris. The King?s palace.

Enter Bertram, Lafew and Parolles.

LAFEW.

They say miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons to make modern and familiar things supernatural and causeless. Hence is it that we make trifles of terrors, ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear.

PAROLLES.

Why, ?tis the rarest argument of wonder that hath shot out in our latter times.

BERTRAM.

And so ?tis.

LAFEW.

To be relinquish?d of the artists,?

PAROLLES.

So I say; both of Galen and Paracelsus.

LAFEW.

Of all the learned and authentic fellows,?

PAROLLES.

Right; so I say.

LAFEW.

That gave him out incurable,?

PAROLLES.

Why, there 'tis; so say I too.

LAFEW.

Not to be helped.

PAROLLES.

Right; as 'twere a man assur'd of a?

LAFEW.

Uncertain life and sure death.

PAROLLES.

Just; you say well. So would I have said.

LAFEW.

I may truly say, it is a novelty to the world.

PAROLLES.

It is indeed; if you will have it in showing, you shall read it in what do you call there?

LAFEW.

A showing of a heavenly effect in an earthly actor.

PAROLLES.

That's it; I would have said the very same.

LAFEW.

Why, your dolphin is not lustier; fore me, I speak in respect?

PAROLLES.

Nay, 'tis strange, 'tis very strange; that is the brief and the tedious of it; and he's of a most facinorous spirit that will not acknowledge it to be the?

LAFEW.

Very hand of heaven.

PAROLLES.

Ay, so I say.

LAFEW.

In a most weak?

PAROLLES.

And debile minister, great power, great transcendence, which should indeed give us a further use to be made than alone the recovery of the king, as to be?

LAFEW.

Generally thankful.

PAROLLES.

I would have said it; you say well. Here comes the king.

Enter King, Helena and Attendants.

LAFEW.

Lustique, as the Dutchman says. I'll like a maid the better, whilst I have a tooth in my head. Why, he's able to lead her a coranto.

PAROLLES.

Mor du vinager! is not this Helen?

LAFEW.

Fore God, I think so.

KING.

Go, call before me all the lords in court.

[_Exit an Attendant._]

Sit, my preserver, by thy patient's side,
And with this healthful hand, whose banish'd sense
Thou has repeal'd, a second time receive
The confirmation of my promis'd gift,
Which but attends thy naming.

Enter several Lords.

Fair maid, send forth thine eye. This youthful parcel
Of noble bachelors stand at my bestowing,
O'er whom both sovereign power and father's voice
I have to use. Thy frank election make;
Thou hast power to choose, and they none to forsake.

HELENA.

To each of you one fair and virtuous mistress
Fall, when love please! Marry, to each but one!

LAFEW.

I'd give bay curtal and his furniture
My mouth no more were broken than these boys?,
And writ as little beard.

KING.

Peruse them well.

Not one of those but had a noble father.

She addresses her to a Lord.

HELENA.

Gentlemen,

Heaven hath through me restor'd the king to health.

ALL.

We understand it, and thank heaven for you.

HELENA.

I am a simple maid, and therein wealthiest

That I protest I simply am a maid.

Please it, your majesty, I have done already.

The blushes in my cheeks thus whisper me:

'We blush that thou shouldst choose; but, be refused,

Let the white death sit on thy cheek for ever,

We'll ne'er come there again.'

KING.

Make choice; and, see,

Who shuns thy love shuns all his love in me.

HELENA.

Now, Dian, from thy altar do I fly,

And to imperial Love, that god most high,

Do my sighs stream. [_To first Lord._] Sir, will you hear my suit?

FIRST LORD.

And grant it.

HELENA.

Thanks, sir; all the rest is mute.

LAFEW.

I had rather be in this choice than throw ames-ace for my life.

HELENA.

[_To second Lord._] The honour, sir, that flames in your fair eyes,

Before I speak, too threat'ningly replies.

Love make your fortunes twenty times above

Her that so wishes, and her humble love!

SECOND LORD.

No better, if you please.

HELENA.

My wish receive,

Which great Love grant; and so I take my leave.

LAFEW.

Do all they deny her? An they were sons of mine I?d have them whipp?d;
or I would send them to th? Turk to make eunuchs of.

HELENA.

[_To third Lord._] Be not afraid that I your hand should take;
I?ll never do you wrong for your own sake.
Blessing upon your vows, and in your bed
Find fairer fortune, if you ever wed!

LAFEW.

These boys are boys of ice, they?ll none have her. Sure, they are
bastards to the English; the French ne?er got ?em.

HELENA.

[_To fourth Lord._] You are too young, too happy, and too good,
To make yourself a son out of my blood.

FOURTH LORD.

Fair one, I think not so.

LAFEW.

There?s one grape yet. I am sure thy father drank wine. But if thou
beest not an ass, I am a youth of fourteen; I have known thee already.

HELENA.

[_To Bertram._] I dare not say I take you, but I give
Me and my service, ever whilst I live,
Into your guiding power. This is the man.

KING.

Why, then, young Bertram, take her; she?s thy wife.

BERTRAM.

My wife, my liege! I shall beseech your highness,
In such a business give me leave to use
The help of mine own eyes.

KING.

Know?st thou not, Bertram,
What she has done for me?

BERTRAM.

Yes, my good lord,
But never hope to know why I should marry her.

KING.

Thou know?st she has rais?d me from my sickly bed.

BERTRAM.

But follows it, my lord, to bring me down
Must answer for your raising? I know her well;
She had her breeding at my father?s charge:
A poor physician?s daughter my wife! Disdain

Rather corrupt me ever!

KING.

'Tis only title thou disdain'st in her, the which
I can build up. Strange is it that our bloods,
Of colour, weight, and heat, pour'd all together,
Would quite confound distinction, yet stands off
In differences so mighty. If she be
All that is virtuous, save what thou dislikest,
A poor physician's daughter, 'thou dislikest
Of virtue for the name. But do not so.
From lowest place when virtuous things proceed,
The place is dignified by the doer's deed.
Where great additions swell's, and virtue none,
It is a drossied honour. Good alone
Is good without a name; vileness is so:
The property by what it is should go,
Not by the title. She is young, wise, fair;
In these to nature she's immediate heir;
And these breed honour: that is honour's scorn
Which challenges itself as honour's born,
And is not like the sire. Honours thrive
When rather from our acts we them derive
Than our fore-goers. The mere word's a slave,
Debauch'd on every tomb, on every grave
A lying trophy, and as oft is dumb
Where dust and damn'd oblivion is the tomb
Of honour'd bones indeed. What should be said?
If thou canst like this creature as a maid,
I can create the rest. Virtue and she
Is her own dower; honour and wealth from me.

BERTRAM.

I cannot love her, nor will strive to do 't.

KING.

Thou wrong'st thyself, if thou shouldst strive to choose.

HELENA.

That you are well restor'd, my lord, I am glad.
Let the rest go.

KING.

My honour's at the stake, which to defeat,
I must produce my power. Here, take her hand,
Proud scornful boy, unworthy this good gift,
That dost in vile misprision shackle up
My love and her desert; that canst not dream
We, poisoning us in her defective scale,
Shall weigh thee to the beam; that wilt not know
It is in us to plant thine honour where
We please to have it grow. Check thy contempt;
Obey our will, which travails in thy good;
Believe not thy disdain, but presently

Do thine own fortunes that obedient right
Which both thy duty owes and our power claims;
Or I will throw thee from my care for ever
Into the staggers and the careless lapse
Of youth and ignorance; both my revenge and hate
Loosing upon thee in the name of justice,
Without all terms of pity. Speak! Thine answer!

BERTRAM.

Pardon, my gracious lord; for I submit
My fancy to your eyes. When I consider
What great creation, and what dole of honour
Flies where you bid it, I find that she, which late
Was in my nobler thoughts most base, is now
The praised of the king; who, so ennobled,
Is as 'twere born so.

KING.

Take her by the hand,
And tell her she is thine; to whom I promise
A counterpoise; if not to thy estate,
A balance more replete.

BERTRAM.

I take her hand.

KING.

Good fortune and the favour of the king
Smile upon this contract; whose ceremony
Shall seem expedient on the now-born brief,
And be perform'd tonight. The solemn feast
Shall more attend upon the coming space,
Expecting absent friends. As thou lov'st her,
Thy love's to me religious; else, does err.

[_Exeunt King, Bertram, Helena, Lords, and Attendants._]

LAFEW.

Do you hear, monsieur? A word with you.

PAROLLES.

Your pleasure, sir.

LAFEW.

Your lord and master did well to make his recantation.

PAROLLES.

Recantation! My lord! My master!

LAFEW.

Ay. Is it not a language I speak?

PAROLLES.

A most harsh one, and not to be understood without bloody succeeding.

My master!

LAFEW.

Are you companion to the Count Rossillon?

PAROLLES.

To any count; to all counts; to what is man.

LAFEW.

To what is count's man: count's master is of another style.

PAROLLES.

You are too old, sir; let it satisfy you, you are too old.

LAFEW.

I must tell thee, sirrah, I write man; to which title age cannot bring thee.

PAROLLES.

What I dare too well do, I dare not do.

LAFEW.

I did think thee, for two ordinaries, to be a pretty wise fellow; thou didst make tolerable vent of thy travel; it might pass. Yet the scarfs and the bannerets about thee did manifoldly dissuade me from believing thee a vessel of too great a burden. I have now found thee; when I lose thee again I care not. Yet art thou good for nothing but taking up, and that thou art scarce worth.

PAROLLES.

Hadst thou not the privilege of antiquity upon thee?

LAFEW.

Do not plunge thyself too far in anger, lest thou hasten thy trial; which if?Lord have mercy on thee for a hen! So, my good window of lattice, fare thee well; thy casement I need not open, for I look through thee. Give me thy hand.

PAROLLES.

My lord, you give me most egregious indignity.

LAFEW.

Ay, with all my heart; and thou art worthy of it.

PAROLLES.

I have not, my lord, deserved it.

LAFEW.

Yes, good faith, every dram of it; and I will not bate thee a scruple.

PAROLLES.

Well, I shall be wiser.

LAFEW.

Ev'n as soon as thou canst, for thou hast to pull at a smack o' th' contrary. If ever thou beest bound in thy scarf and beaten, thou shalt find what it is to be proud of thy bondage. I have a desire to hold my acquaintance with thee, or rather my knowledge, that I may say in the default, 'He is a man I know.'

PAROLLES.

My lord, you do me most insupportable vexation.

LAFEW.

I would it were hell-pains for thy sake, and my poor doing eternal; for doing I am past, as I will by thee, in what motion age will give me leave.

[_Exit._]

PAROLLES.

Well, thou hast a son shall take this disgrace off me; scurvy, old, filthy, scurvy lord! Well, I must be patient; there is no fettering of authority. I'll beat him, by my life, if I can meet him with any convenience, an he were double and double a lord. I'll have no more pity of his age than I would have of I'll beat him, and if I could but meet him again.

Enter Lafew.

LAFEW.

Sirrah, your lord and master's married; there's news for you; you have a new mistress.

PAROLLES.

I most unfeignedly beseech your lordship to make some reservation of your wrongs. He is my good lord; whom I serve above is my master.

LAFEW.

Who? God?

PAROLLES.

Ay, sir.

LAFEW.

The devil it is that's thy master. Why dost thou garter up thy arms o' this fashion? Dost make hose of thy sleeves? Do other servants so? Thou wert best set thy lower part where thy nose stands. By mine honour, if I were but two hours younger, I'd beat thee. Methink'st thou art a general offence, and every man should beat thee. I think thou wast created for men to breathe themselves upon thee.

PAROLLES.

This is hard and undeserved measure, my lord.

LAFEW.

Go to, sir; you were beaten in Italy for picking a kernel out of a pomegranate; you are a vagabond, and no true traveller. You are more

saucy with lords and honourable personages than the commission of your birth and virtue gives you heraldry. You are not worth another word, else I?d call you knave. I leave you.

[_Exit._]

Enter Bertram.

PAROLLES.

Good, very good, it is so then. Good, very good; let it be conceal?d awhile.

BERTRAM.

Undone, and forfeited to cares for ever!

PAROLLES.

What?s the matter, sweetheart?

BERTRAM.

Although before the solemn priest I have sworn,
I will not bed her.

PAROLLES.

What, what, sweetheart?

BERTRAM.

O my Parolles, they have married me!
I?ll to the Tuscan wars, and never bed her.

PAROLLES.

France is a dog-hole, and it no more merits
The tread of a man?s foot: to the wars!

BERTRAM.

There?s letters from my mother; what th? import is
I know not yet.

PAROLLES.

Ay, that would be known. To th? wars, my boy, to th? wars!
He wears his honour in a box unseen
That hugs his kicky-wicky here at home,
Spending his manly marrow in her arms,
Which should sustain the bound and high curvet
Of Mars?s fiery steed. To other regions!
France is a stable; we that dwell in?t, jades,
Therefore, to th? war!

BERTRAM.

It shall be so; I?ll send her to my house,
Acquaint my mother with my hate to her,
And wherefore I am fled; write to the king
That which I durst not speak. His present gift
Shall furnish me to those Italian fields
Where noble fellows strike. War is no strife

To the dark house and the detested wife.

PAROLLES.

Will this caprichio hold in thee, art sure?

BERTRAM.

Go with me to my chamber and advise me.

I'll send her straight away. Tomorrow

I'll to the wars, she to her single sorrow.

PAROLLES.

Why, these balls bound; there's noise in it. 'Tis hard:

A young man married is a man that's marr'd.

Therefore away, and leave her bravely; go.

The king has done you wrong; but hush 'tis so.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IV. Paris. The King's palace.

Enter Helena and Clown.

HELENA.

My mother greets me kindly: is she well?

CLOWN.

She is not well, but yet she has her health; she's very merry, but yet she is not well. But thanks be given, she's very well, and wants nothing i' the world; but yet she is not well.

HELENA.

If she be very well, what does she ail that she's not very well?

CLOWN.

Truly, she's very well indeed, but for two things.

HELENA.

What two things?

CLOWN.

One, that she's not in heaven, whither God send her quickly! The other, that she's in earth, from whence God send her quickly!

Enter Parolles.

PAROLLES.

Bless you, my fortunate lady!

HELENA.

I hope, sir, I have your good will to have mine own good fortune.

PAROLLES.

You had my prayers to lead them on; and to keep them on, have them still. O, my knave how does my old lady?

CLOWN.

So that you had her wrinkles and I her money, I would she did as you say.

PAROLLES.

Why, I say nothing.

CLOWN.

Marry, you are the wiser man; for many a man's tongue shakes out his master's undoing. To say nothing, to do nothing, to know nothing, and to have nothing, is to be a great part of your title; which is within a very little of nothing.

PAROLLES.

Away! Thou art a knave.

CLOWN.

You should have said, sir, before a knave thou art a knave; that is before me thou art a knave. This had been truth, sir.

PAROLLES.

Go to, thou art a witty fool; I have found thee.

CLOWN.

Did you find me in yourself, sir? or were you taught to find me? The search, sir, was profitable; and much fool may you find in you, even to the world's pleasure and the increase of laughter.

PAROLLES.

A good knave, i' faith, and well fed.
Madam, my lord will go away tonight;
A very serious business calls on him.
The great prerogative and right of love,
Which, as your due, time claims, he does acknowledge;
But puts it off to a compell'd restraint;
Whose want, and whose delay, is strew'd with sweets;
Which they distil now in the curbed time,
To make the coming hour overflow with joy
And pleasure drown the brim.

HELENA.

What's his will else?

PAROLLES.

That you will take your instant leave o' the king,
And make this haste as your own good proceeding,
Strengthen'd with what apology you think
May make it probable need.

HELENA.

What more commands he?

PAROLLES.

That, having this obtain'd, you presently
Attend his further pleasure.

HELENA.

In everything I wait upon his will.

PAROLLES.

I shall report it so.

HELENA.

I pray you. Come, sirrah.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE V. Another room in the same.

Enter Lafew and Bertram.

LAFEW.

But I hope your lordship thinks not him a soldier.

BERTRAM.

Yes, my lord, and of very valiant approof.

LAFEW.

You have it from his own deliverance.

BERTRAM.

And by other warranted testimony.

LAFEW.

Then my dial goes not true; I took this lark for a bunting.

BERTRAM.

I do assure you, my lord, he is very great in knowledge, and
accordingly valiant.

LAFEW.

I have, then, sinned against his experience and transgressed against
his valour; and my state that way is dangerous, since I cannot yet find
in my heart to repent. Here he comes; I pray you make us friends; I
will pursue the amity.

Enter Parolles.

PAROLLES.

[_To Bertram._] These things shall be done, sir.

LAFEW.

Pray you, sir, who's his tailor?

PAROLLES.

Sir!

LAFEW.

O, I know him well, I, sir; he, sir, is a good workman, a very good tailor.

BERTRAM.

[_Aside to Parolles._] Is she gone to the king?

PAROLLES.

She is.

BERTRAM.

Will she away tonight?

PAROLLES.

As you?ll have her.

BERTRAM.

I have writ my letters, casketed my treasure,
Given order for our horses; and tonight,
When I should take possession of the bride,
End ere I do begin.

LAFEW.

A good traveller is something at the latter end of a dinner; but one that lies three-thirds and uses a known truth to pass a thousand nothings with, should be once heard and thrice beaten.? God save you, Captain.

BERTRAM.

Is there any unkindness between my lord and you, monsieur?

PAROLLES.

I know not how I have deserved to run into my lord?s displeasure.

LAFEW.

You have made shift to run into ?t, boots and spurs and all, like him that leapt into the custard; and out of it you?ll run again, rather than suffer question for your residence.

BERTRAM.

It may be you have mistaken him, my lord.

LAFEW.

And shall do so ever, though I took him at his prayers. Fare you well, my lord; and believe this of me, there can be no kernal in this light nut; the soul of this man is his clothes; trust him not in matter of heavy consequence; I have kept of them tame, and know their natures. Farewell, monsieur; I have spoken better of you than you have or will to deserve at my hand; but we must do good against evil.

[_Exit._]

PAROLLES.

An idle lord, I swear.

BERTRAM.

I think so.

PAROLLES.

Why, do you not know him?

BERTRAM.

Yes, I do know him well; and common speech
Gives him a worthy pass. Here comes my clog.

Enter Helena.

HELENA.

I have, sir, as I was commanded from you,
Spoke with the king, and have procur'd his leave
For present parting; only he desires
Some private speech with you.

BERTRAM.

I shall obey his will.
You must not marvel, Helen, at my course,
Which holds not colour with the time, nor does
The ministration and required office
On my particular. Prepared I was not
For such a business; therefore am I found
So much unsettled: this drives me to entreat you;
That presently you take your way for home,
And rather muse than ask why I entreat you:
For my respects are better than they seem;
And my appointments have in them a need
Greater than shows itself at the first view
To you that know them not. This to my mother.

[_Giving a letter._]

?Twill be two days ere I shall see you; so
I leave you to your wisdom.

HELENA.

Sir, I can nothing say
But that I am your most obedient servant.

BERTRAM.

Come, come, no more of that.

HELENA.

And ever shall
With true observance seek to eke out that
Wherein toward me my homely stars have fail'd
To equal my great fortune.

BERTRAM.

Let that go.

My haste is very great. Farewell; hie home.

HELENA.

Pray, sir, your pardon.

BERTRAM.

Well, what would you say?

HELENA.

I am not worthy of the wealth I owe;
Nor dare I say 'tis mine, and yet it is;
But, like a timorous thief, most fain would steal
What law does vouch mine own.

BERTRAM.

What would you have?

HELENA.

Something; and scarce so much; nothing indeed.
I would not tell you what I would, my lord. Faith, yes,
Strangers and foes do sunder and not kiss.

BERTRAM.

I pray you, stay not, but in haste to horse.

HELENA.

I shall not break your bidding, good my lord.
Where are my other men, monsieur?
Farewell,

[_Exit Helena._]

BERTRAM.

Go thou toward home, where I will never come
Whilst I can shake my sword or hear the drum.
Away, and for our flight.

PAROLLES.

Bravely, coragio!

[_Exeunt._]

ACT III.

SCENE I. Florence. A room in the Duke's palace.

Flourish. Enter the Duke of Florence attended; two French Lords, and
Soldiers.

DUKE.

So that, from point to point, now have you heard
The fundamental reasons of this war,
Whose great decision hath much blood let forth,

And more thirsts after.

FIRST LORD.

Holy seems the quarrel
Upon your Grace's part; black and fearful
On the opposer.

DUKE.

Therefore we marvel much our cousin France
Would, in so just a business, shut his bosom
Against our borrowing prayers.

SECOND LORD.

Good my lord,
The reasons of our state I cannot yield,
But like a common and an outward man
That the great figure of a council frames
By self-unable motion; therefore dare not
Say what I think of it, since I have found
Myself in my incertain grounds to fail
As often as I guess'd.

DUKE.

Be it his pleasure.

FIRST LORD.

But I am sure the younger of our nature,
That surfeit on their ease, will day by day
Come here for physic.

DUKE.

Welcome shall they be;
And all the honours that can fly from us
Shall on them settle. You know your places well;
When better fall, for your avails they fell.
Tomorrow to the field.

[_Flourish. Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Rossillon. A room in the Countess's palace.

Enter Countess and Clown.

COUNTESS.

It hath happen'd all as I would have had it, save that he comes not
along with her.

CLOWN.

By my troth, I take my young lord to be a very melancholy man.

COUNTESS.

By what observance, I pray you?

CLOWN.

Why, he will look upon his boot and sing; mend the ruff and sing; ask questions and sing; pick his teeth and sing. I know a man that had this trick of melancholy sold a goodly manor for a song.

COUNTESS.

Let me see what he writes, and when he means to come.

[_Opening a letter._]

CLOWN.

I have no mind to Isbel since I was at court. Our old lings and our Isbels o? th? country are nothing like your old ling and your Isbels o? th? court. The brains of my Cupid?s knock?d out, and I begin to love, as an old man loves money, with no stomach.

COUNTESS.

What have we here?

CLOWN.

E?en that you have there.

[_Exit._]

COUNTESS.

[_Reads._] _I have sent you a daughter-in-law; she hath recovered the king and undone me. I have wedded her, not bedded her, and sworn to make the ?not? eternal. You shall hear I am run away; know it before the report come. If there be breadth enough in the world, I will hold a long distance. My duty to you.

Your unfortunate son, _

BERTRAM.

This is not well, rash and unbridled boy,
To fly the favours of so good a king,
To pluck his indignation on thy head
By the misprizing of a maid too virtuous
For the contempt of empire.

Enter Clown.

CLOWN.

O madam, yonder is heavy news within between two soldiers and my young lady.

COUNTESS.

What is the matter?

CLOWN.

Nay, there is some comfort in the news, some comfort; your son will not be kill?d so soon as I thought he would.

COUNTESS.

Why should he be kill?d?

CLOWN.

So say I, madam, if he run away, as I hear he does; the danger is in standing to't; that's the loss of men, though it be the getting of children. Here they come will tell you more. For my part, I only hear your son was run away.

[_Exit._]

Enter Helena and the two Gentlemen.

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

Save you, good madam.

HELENA.

Madam, my lord is gone, for ever gone.

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

Do not say so.

COUNTESS.

Think upon patience. Pray you, gentlemen,
I have felt so many quirks of joy and grief
That the first face of neither on the start
Can woman me unto 't. Where is my son, I pray you?

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

Madam, he's gone to serve the Duke of Florence;
We met him thitherward, for thence we came,
And, after some despatch in hand at court,
Thither we bend again.

HELENA.

Look on this letter, madam; here's my passport.

[_Reads._] _When thou canst get the ring upon my finger, which never shall come off, and show me a child begotten of thy body that I am father to, then call me husband; but in such a 'then' I write a 'never'._

This is a dreadful sentence.

COUNTESS.

Brought you this letter, gentlemen?

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

Ay, madam; And for the contents' sake, are sorry for our pains.

COUNTESS.

I pr'ythee, lady, have a better cheer;
If thou engrossest all the griefs are thine,
Thou robb'st me of a moiety. He was my son,
But I do wash his name out of my blood,
And thou art all my child. Towards Florence is he?

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

Ay, madam.

COUNTESS.

And to be a soldier?

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

Such is his noble purpose, and, believe't,
The duke will lay upon him all the honour
That good convenience claims.

COUNTESS.

Return you thither?

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

Ay, madam, with the swiftest wing of speed.

HELENA.

[_Reads._] _Till I have no wife, I have nothing in France._
?Tis bitter.

COUNTESS.

Find you that there?

HELENA.

Ay, madam.

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

?Tis but the boldness of his hand haply, which his heart was not
consenting to.

COUNTESS.

Nothing in France until he have no wife!
There?s nothing here that is too good for him
But only she, and she deserves a lord
That twenty such rude boys might tend upon,
And call her hourly mistress. Who was with him?

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

A servant only, and a gentleman which I have sometime known.

COUNTESS.

Parolles, was it not?

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

Ay, my good lady, he.

COUNTESS.

A very tainted fellow, and full of wickedness.
My son corrupts a well-derived nature
With his inducement.

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

Indeed, good lady,
The fellow has a deal of that too much,

Which holds him much to have.

COUNTESS.

Ye are welcome, gentlemen.

I will entreat you, when you see my son,
To tell him that his sword can never win
The honour that he loses: more I'll entreat you
Written to bear along.

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

We serve you, madam,
In that and all your worthiest affairs.

COUNTESS.

Not so, but as we change our courtesies.
Will you draw near?

[_Exeunt Countess and Gentlemen._]

HELENA.

'Till I have no wife, I have nothing in France?
Nothing in France until he has no wife!
Thou shalt have none, Rossillon, none in France;
Then hast thou all again. Poor lord, is't I
That chase thee from thy country, and expose
Those tender limbs of thine to the event
Of the none-sparing war? And is it I
That drive thee from the sportive court, where thou
Wast shot at with fair eyes, to be the mark
Of smoky muskets? O you leaden messengers,
That ride upon the violent speed of fire,
Fly with false aim; move the still-peering air,
That sings with piercing; do not touch my lord.
Whoever shoots at him, I set him there;
Whoever charges on his forward breast,
I am the caitiff that do hold him to't;
And though I kill him not, I am the cause
His death was so effected. Better 'twere
I met the ravin lion when he roar'd
With sharp constraint of hunger; better 'twere
That all the miseries which nature owes
Were mine at once. No; come thou home, Rossillon,
Whence honour but of danger wins a scar,
As oft it loses all. I will be gone;
My being here it is that holds thee hence.
Shall I stay here to do't? No, no, although
The air of paradise did fan the house,
And angels offic'd all. I will be gone,
That pitiful rumour may report my flight
To console thine ear. Come, night; end, day;
For with the dark, poor thief, I'll steal away.

[_Exit._]

SCENE III. Florence. Before the Duke's palace.

Flourish. Enter the Duke of Florence, Bertram, drum and trumpets, Soldiers, Parolles.

DUKE.

The general of our horse thou art, and we,
Great in our hope, lay our best love and credence
Upon thy promising fortune.

BERTRAM.

Sir, it is
A charge too heavy for my strength; but yet
We'll strive to bear it for your worthy sake
To th' extreme edge of hazard.

DUKE.

Then go thou forth;
And fortune play upon thy prosperous helm,
As thy auspicious mistress!

BERTRAM.

This very day,
Great Mars, I put myself into thy file;
Make me but like my thoughts, and I shall prove
A lover of thy drum, hater of love.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IV. Rossillon. A room in the Countess's palace.

Enter Countess and Steward.

COUNTESS.

Alas! and would you take the letter of her?
Might you not know she would do as she has done,
By sending me a letter? Read it again.

STEWARD.

[_Reads._] _I am Saint Jaques' pilgrim, thither gone.
Ambitious love hath so in me offended
That barefoot plod I the cold ground upon,
With sainted vow my faults to have amended.
Write, write, that from the bloody course of war
My dearest master, your dear son, may hie.
Bless him at home in peace, whilst I from far
His name with zealous fervour sanctify.
His taken labours bid him me forgive;
I, his spiteful Juno, sent him forth
From courtly friends, with camping foes to live,
Where death and danger dog the heels of worth.
He is too good and fair for death and me;
Whom I myself embrace to set him free._

COUNTESS.

Ah, what sharp stings are in her mildest words!
Rynaldo, you did never lack advice so much
As letting her pass so; had I spoke with her,
I could have well diverted her intents,
Which thus she hath prevented.

STEWARD.

Pardon me, madam;
If I had given you this at over-night,
She might have been o?erta?en; and yet she writes
Pursuit would be but vain.

COUNTESS.

What angel shall
Bless this unworthy husband? He cannot thrive,
Unless her prayers, whom heaven delights to hear
And loves to grant, relieve him from the wrath
Of greatest justice. Write, write, Rynaldo,
To this unworthy husband of his wife;
Let every word weigh heavy of her worth,
That he does weigh too light; my greatest grief,
Though little he do feel it, set down sharply.
Dispatch the most convenient messenger.
When haply he shall hear that she is gone
He will return; and hope I may that she,
Hearing so much, will speed her foot again,
Led hither by pure love. Which of them both
Is dearest to me I have no skill in sense
To make distinction. Provide this messenger.
My heart is heavy, and mine age is weak;
Grief would have tears, and sorrow bids me speak.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE V. Without the walls of Florence.

Enter an old Widow of Florence, Diana, Violenta, Mariana and other
Citizens.

WIDOW.

Nay, come; for if they do approach the city, we shall lose all the
sight.

DIANA.

They say the French count has done most honourable service.

WIDOW.

It is reported that he has taken their great?st commander, and that
with his own hand he slew the duke?s brother.

[_A tucket afar off._]

We have lost our labour; they are gone a contrary way. Hark! you may

know by their trumpets.

MARIANA.

Come, let's return again, and suffice ourselves with the report of it.
Well, Diana, take heed of this French earl; the honour of a maid is her name; and no legacy is so rich as honesty.

WIDOW.

I have told my neighbour how you have been solicited by a gentleman his companion.

MARIANA.

I know that knave; hang him! one Parolles; a filthy officer he is in those suggestions for the young earl. Beware of them, Diana; their promises, enticements, oaths, tokens, and all these engines of lust, are not the things they go under; many a maid hath been seduced by them; and the misery is, example, that so terrible shows in the wreck of maidenhood, cannot for all that dissuade succession, but that they are limed with the twigs that threaten them. I hope I need not to advise you further; but I hope your own grace will keep you where you are, though there were no further danger known but the modesty which is so lost.

DIANA.

You shall not need to fear me.

Enter Helena in the dress of a pilgrim.

WIDOW.

I hope so. Look, here comes a pilgrim. I know she will lie at my house; thither they send one another; I'll question her. God save you, pilgrim! Whither are bound?

HELENA.

To Saint Jaques le Grand.
Where do the palmers lodge, I do beseech you?

WIDOW.

At the Saint Francis here, beside the port.

HELENA.

Is this the way?

[_A march afar._]

WIDOW.

Ay, marry, is't. Hark you, they come this way.
If you will tarry, holy pilgrim,
But till the troops come by,
I will conduct you where you shall be lodg'd;
The rather for I think I know your hostess
As ample as myself.

HELENA.

Is it yourself?

WIDOW.

If you shall please so, pilgrim.

HELENA.

I thank you, and will stay upon your leisure.

WIDOW.

You came, I think, from France?

HELENA.

I did so.

WIDOW.

Here you shall see a countryman of yours
That has done worthy service.

HELENA.

His name, I pray you.

DIANA.

The Count Rossillon. Know you such a one?

HELENA.

But by the ear, that hears most nobly of him;
His face I know not.

DIANA.

Whatsome'er he is,
He's bravely taken here. He stole from France,
As 'tis reported, for the king had married him
Against his liking. Think you it is so?

HELENA.

Ay, surely, mere the truth; I know his lady.

DIANA.

There is a gentleman that serves the count
Reports but coarsely of her.

HELENA.

What's his name?

DIANA.

Monsieur Parolles.

HELENA.

O, I believe with him,
In argument of praise, or to the worth
Of the great count himself, she is too mean
To have her name repeated; all her deserving
Is a reserved honesty, and that
I have not heard examin'd.

DIANA.

Alas, poor lady!

'Tis a hard bondage to become the wife
Of a detesting lord.

WIDOW.

Ay, right; good creature, wheresoe'er she is,
Her heart weighs sadly. This young maid might do her
A shrewd turn, if she pleas'd.

HELENA.

How do you mean?

Maybe the amorous count solicits her
In the unlawful purpose.

WIDOW.

He does indeed,
And brokes with all that can in such a suit
Corrupt the tender honour of a maid;
But she is arm'd for him, and keeps her guard
In honestest defence.

Enter, with a drum and colours, a party of the Florentine army,
Bertram and Parolles.

MARIANA.

The gods forbid else!

WIDOW.

So, now they come.
That is Antonio, the Duke's eldest son;
That Escalus.

HELENA.

Which is the Frenchman?

DIANA.

He;

That with the plume; 'tis a most gallant fellow.
I would he lov'd his wife; if he were honest
He were much goodlier. Is't not a handsome gentleman?

HELENA.

I like him well.

DIANA.

'Tis pity he is not honest. Yond's that same knave
That leads him to these places. Were I his lady
I would poison that vile rascal.

HELENA.

Which is he?

DIANA.

That jack-an-apes with scarfs. Why is he melancholy?

HELENA.

Perchance he's hurt i' the battle.

PAROLLES.

Lose our drum! Well.

MARIANA.

He's shrewdly vex'd at something. Look, he has spied us.

WIDOW.

Marry, hang you!

MARIANA.

And your courtesy, for a ring-carrier!

[_Exeunt Bertram, Parolles, Officers and Soldiers._]

WIDOW.

The troop is past. Come, pilgrim, I will bring you
Where you shall host; of enjoin'd penitents
There's four or five, to great Saint Jaques bound,
Already at my house.

HELENA.

I humbly thank you.
Please it this matron and this gentle maid
To eat with us tonight; the charge and thanking
Shall be for me; and, to requite you further,
I will bestow some precepts of this virgin,
Worthy the note.

BOTH.

We'll take your offer kindly.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VI. Camp before Florence.

Enter Bertram and the two French Lords.

FIRST LORD.

Nay, good my lord, put him to't; let him have his way.

SECOND LORD.

If your lordship find him not a hilding, hold me no more in your
respect.

FIRST LORD.

On my life, my lord, a bubble.

BERTRAM.

Do you think I am so far deceived in him?

FIRST LORD.

Believe it, my lord, in mine own direct knowledge, without any malice, but to speak of him as my kinsman, he's a most notable coward, an infinite and endless liar, an hourly promise-breaker, the owner of no one good quality worthy your lordship's entertainment.

SECOND LORD.

It were fit you knew him; lest, reposing too far in his virtue, which he hath not, he might at some great and trusty business, in a main danger fail you.

BERTRAM.

I would I knew in what particular action to try him.

SECOND LORD.

None better than to let him fetch off his drum, which you hear him so confidently undertake to do.

FIRST LORD.

I with a troop of Florentines will suddenly surprise him; such I will have whom I am sure he knows not from the enemy; we will bind and hoodwink him so that he shall suppose no other but that he is carried into the leaguer of the adversaries when we bring him to our own tents. Be but your lordship present at his examination; if he do not for the promise of his life, and in the highest compulsion of base fear, offer to betray you, and deliver all the intelligence in his power against you, and that with the divine forfeit of his soul upon oath, never trust my judgment in anything.

SECOND LORD.

O, for the love of laughter, let him fetch his drum; he says he has a stratagem for't. When your lordship sees the bottom of his success in't, and to what metal this counterfeit lump of ore will be melted, if you give him not John Drum's entertainment, your inclining cannot be removed. Here he comes.

Enter Parolles.

FIRST LORD.

O, for the love of laughter, hinder not the honour of his design: let him fetch off his drum in any hand.

BERTRAM.

How now, monsieur! This drum sticks sorely in your disposition.

SECOND LORD.

A pox on 't; let it go; 'tis but a drum.

PAROLLES.

But a drum! Is't but a drum? A drum so lost! There was excellent command, to charge in with our horse upon our own wings, and to rend our own soldiers.

SECOND LORD.

That was not to be blamed in the command of the service; it was a disaster of war that Caesar himself could not have prevented, if he had been there to command.

BERTRAM.

Well, we cannot greatly condemn our success: some dishonour we had in the loss of that drum, but it is not to be recovered.

PAROLLES.

It might have been recovered.

BERTRAM.

It might, but it is not now.

PAROLLES.

It is to be recovered. But that the merit of service is seldom attributed to the true and exact performer, I would have that drum or another, or *_hic jacet_*.

BERTRAM.

Why, if you have a stomach, to't, monsieur, if you think your mystery in stratagem can bring this instrument of honour again into his native quarter, be magnanimous in the enterprise, and go on; I will grace the attempt for a worthy exploit; if you speed well in it, the duke shall both speak of it and extend to you what further becomes his greatness, even to the utmost syllable of your worthiness.

PAROLLES.

By the hand of a soldier, I will undertake it.

BERTRAM.

But you must not now slumber in it.

PAROLLES.

I'll about it this evening; and I will presently pen down my dilemmas, encourage myself in my certainty, put myself into my mortal preparation; and by midnight look to hear further from me.

BERTRAM.

May I be bold to acquaint his grace you are gone about it?

PAROLLES.

I know not what the success will be, my lord, but the attempt I vow.

BERTRAM.

I know thou art valiant; and to the possibility of thy soldiership, will subscribe for thee. Farewell.

PAROLLES.

I love not many words.

[_Exit._]

FIRST LORD.

No more than a fish loves water. Is not this a strange fellow, my lord, that so confidently seems to undertake this business, which he knows is not to be done; damns himself to do, and dares better be damn'd than to do't.

SECOND LORD.

You do not know him, my lord, as we do; certain it is that he will steal himself into a man's favour, and for a week escape a great deal of discoveries, but when you find him out, you have him ever after.

BERTRAM.

Why, do you think he will make no deed at all of this, that so seriously he does address himself unto?

FIRST LORD.

None in the world; but return with an invention, and clap upon you two or three probable lies; but we have almost embossed him; you shall see his fall tonight; for indeed he is not for your lordship's respect.

SECOND LORD.

We'll make you some sport with the fox ere we case him. He was first smok'd by the old Lord Lafew; when his disguise and he is parted, tell me what a sprat you shall find him; which you shall see this very night.

FIRST LORD.

I must go look my twigs. He shall be caught.

BERTRAM.

Your brother, he shall go along with me.

FIRST LORD.

As't please your lordship. I'll leave you.

[_Exit._]

BERTRAM.

Now will I lead you to the house, and show you
The lass I spoke of.

SECOND LORD.

But you say she's honest.

BERTRAM.

That's all the fault. I spoke with her but once,
And found her wondrous cold, but I sent to her
By this same coxcomb that we have i' the wind
Tokens and letters which she did re-send,
And this is all I have done. She's a fair creature;
Will you go see her?

SECOND LORD.

With all my heart, my lord.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VII. Florence. A room in the Widow's house.

Enter Helena and Widow.

HELENA.

If you misdoubt me that I am not she,
I know not how I shall assure you further,
But I shall lose the grounds I work upon.

WIDOW.

Though my estate be fall'n, I was well born,
Nothing acquainted with these businesses,
And would not put my reputation now
In any staining act.

HELENA.

Nor would I wish you.
First give me trust, the count he is my husband,
And what to your sworn counsel I have spoken
Is so from word to word; and then you cannot,
By the good aid that I of you shall borrow,
Err in bestowing it.

WIDOW.

I should believe you,
For you have show'd me that which well approves
Your great in fortune.

HELENA.

Take this purse of gold,
And let me buy your friendly help thus far,
Which I will over-pay, and pay again
When I have found it. The count he woos your daughter
Lays down his wanton siege before her beauty,
Resolv'd to carry her; let her in fine consent,
As we'll direct her how 'tis best to bear it.
Now his important blood will naught deny
That she'll demand; a ring the county wears,
That downward hath succeeded in his house
From son to son, some four or five descents
Since the first father wore it. This ring he holds
In most rich choice; yet, in his idle fire,
To buy his will, it would not seem too dear,
How'er repented after.

WIDOW.

Now I see
The bottom of your purpose.

HELENA.

You see it lawful then; it is no more
But that your daughter, ere she seems as won,
Desires this ring; appoints him an encounter;
In fine, delivers me to fill the time,
Herself most chastely absent. After,
To marry her, I'll add three thousand crowns
To what is pass'd already.

WIDOW.

I have yielded.
Instruct my daughter how she shall persevere,
That time and place with this deceit so lawful
May prove coherent. Every night he comes
With musics of all sorts, and songs compos'd
To her unworthiness: it nothing steads us
To chide him from our eaves; for he persists
As if his life lay on 't.

HELENA.

Why then tonight
Let us assay our plot; which, if it speed,
Is wicked meaning in a lawful deed,
And lawful meaning in a lawful act,
Where both not sin, and yet a sinful fact.
But let's about it.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. Without the Florentine camp.

Enter first Lord with five or six Soldiers in ambush.

FIRST LORD.

He can come no other way but by this hedge-corner. When you sally upon
him, speak what terrible language you will; though you understand it
not yourselves, no matter; for we must not seem to understand him,
unless someone among us, whom we must produce for an interpreter.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Good captain, let me be th' interpreter.

FIRST LORD.

Art not acquainted with him? Knows he not thy voice?

FIRST SOLDIER.

No sir, I warrant you.

FIRST LORD.

But what linsey-woolsey has thou to speak to us again?

FIRST SOLDIER.

E'en such as you speak to me.

FIRST LORD.

He must think us some band of strangers i' the adversary's
entertainment. Now he hath a smack of all neighbouring languages,
therefore we must every one be a man of his own fancy; not to know what
we speak one to another, so we seem to know, is to know straight our
purpose: choughs? language, gabble enough, and good enough. As for you,
interpreter, you must seem very politic. But couch, ho! Here he comes;
to beguile two hours in a sleep, and then to return and swear the lies
he forges.

Enter Parolles.

PAROLLES.

Ten o'clock. Within these three hours 'twill be time enough to go home.
What shall I say I have done? It must be a very plausible invention that
carries it. They begin to smoke me, and disgraces have of late knock'd
too often at my door. I find my tongue is too foolhardy, but my heart
hath the fear of Mars before it, and of his creatures, not daring the
reports of my tongue.

FIRST LORD.

[_Aside._] This is the first truth that e'er thine own tongue was
guilty of.

PAROLLES.

What the devil should move me to undertake the recovery of this drum,
being not ignorant of the impossibility, and knowing I had no such
purpose? I must give myself some hurts, and say I got them in exploit;
yet slight ones will not carry it. They will say 'Came you off with so
little?? and great ones I dare not give. Wherefore, what's the
instance? Tongue, I must put you into a butter-woman's mouth, and buy
myself another of Bajazet's mule, if you prattle me into these perils.

FIRST LORD.

[_Aside._] Is it possible he should know what he is, and be that he is?

PAROLLES.

I would the cutting of my garments would serve the turn, or the
breaking of my Spanish sword.

FIRST LORD.

[_Aside._] We cannot afford you so.

PAROLLES.

Or the baring of my beard, and to say it was in stratagem.

FIRST LORD.

[_Aside._] 'Twould not do.

PAROLLES.

Or to drown my clothes, and say I was stripped.

FIRST LORD.

[_Aside._] Hardly serve.

PAROLLES.

Though I swore I leap'd from the window of the citadel,?

FIRST LORD.

[_Aside._] How deep?

PAROLLES.

Thirty fathom.

FIRST LORD.

[_Aside._] Three great oaths would scarce make that be believed.

PAROLLES.

I would I had any drum of the enemy's; I would swear I recover'd it.

FIRST LORD.

[_Aside._] You shall hear one anon.

PAROLLES.

A drum now of the enemy's!

[_Alarum within._]

FIRST LORD.

Throca movousus, cargo, cargo, cargo.

ALL.

Cargo, cargo, cargo, villianda par corbo, cargo.

[_They seize and blindfold him._]

PAROLLES.

O, ransom, ransom! Do not hide mine eyes.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Boskos thromuldo boskos.

PAROLLES.

I know you are the Muskos' regiment,
And I shall lose my life for want of language.
If there be here German, or Dane, Low Dutch,
Italian, or French, let him speak to me,
I'll discover that which shall undo the Florentine.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Boskos vauvado. I understand thee, and can speak thy tongue.
Kerelybonto. Sir, Betake thee to thy faith, for seventeen poniards
are at thy bosom.

PAROLLES.

O!

FIRST SOLDIER.
O, pray, pray, pray!
Manka revania dulce.

FIRST LORD.
Oscorbidulchos volivorco.

FIRST SOLDIER.
The General is content to spare thee yet;
And, hoodwink'd as thou art, will lead thee on
To gather from thee. Haply thou mayst inform
Something to save thy life.

PAROLLES.
O, let me live,
And all the secrets of our camp I'll show,
Their force, their purposes; nay, I'll speak that
Which you will wonder at.

FIRST SOLDIER.
But wilt thou faithfully?

PAROLLES.
If I do not, damn me.

FIRST SOLDIER.
Acordo linta.
Come on; thou art granted space.

[_Exit, with Parolles guarded._]

A short alarum within.

FIRST LORD.
Go tell the Count Rossillon and my brother
We have caught the woodcock, and will keep him muffled
Till we do hear from them.

SECOND SOLDIER.
Captain, I will.

FIRST LORD.
?A will betray us all unto ourselves;
Inform on that.

SECOND SOLDIER.
So I will, sir.

FIRST LORD.
Till then I'll keep him dark, and safely lock'd.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Florence. A room in the Widow's house.

Enter Bertram and Diana.

BERTRAM.

They told me that your name was Fontybell.

DIANA.

No, my good lord, Diana.

BERTRAM.

Titled goddess;
And worth it, with addition! But, fair soul,
In your fine frame hath love no quality?
If the quick fire of youth light not your mind,
You are no maiden but a monument;
When you are dead, you should be such a one
As you are now; for you are cold and stern,
And now you should be as your mother was
When your sweet self was got.

DIANA.

She then was honest.

BERTRAM.

So should you be.

DIANA.

No.
My mother did but duty; such, my lord,
As you owe to your wife.

BERTRAM.

No more a? that!
I pr?ythee do not strive against my vows;
I was compell?d to her; but I love thee
By love?s own sweet constraint, and will for ever
Do thee all rights of service.

DIANA.

Ay, so you serve us
Till we serve you; but when you have our roses,
You barely leave our thorns to prick ourselves,
And mock us with our bareness.

BERTRAM.

How have I sworn?

DIANA.

?Tis not the many oaths that makes the truth,
But the plain single vow that is vow?d true.
What is not holy, that we swear not by,
But take the highest to witness: then, pray you, tell me,
If I should swear by Jove?s great attributes

I lov'd you dearly, would you believe my oaths
When I did love you ill? This has no holding,
To swear by him whom I protest to love
That I will work against him. Therefore your oaths
Are words and poor conditions; but unseal'd,
At least in my opinion.

BERTRAM.

Change it, change it.
Be not so holy-cruel. Love is holy;
And my integrity ne'er knew the crafts
That you do charge men with. Stand no more off,
But give thyself unto my sick desires,
Who then recovers. Say thou art mine, and ever
My love as it begins shall so persever.

DIANA.

I see that men make hopes in such a case,
That we'll forsake ourselves. Give me that ring.

BERTRAM.

I'll lend it thee, my dear, but have no power
To give it from me.

DIANA.

Will you not, my lord?

BERTRAM.

It is an honour 'longing to our house,
Bequeathed down from many ancestors,
Which were the greatest obloquy i' the world
In me to lose.

DIANA.

Mine honour's such a ring;
My chastity's the jewel of our house,
Bequeathed down from many ancestors,
Which were the greatest obloquy i' the world
In me to lose. Thus your own proper wisdom
Brings in the champion honour on my part
Against your vain assault.

BERTRAM.

Here, take my ring;
My house, mine honour, yea, my life be thine,
And I'll be bid by thee.

DIANA.

When midnight comes, knock at my chamber window;
I'll order take my mother shall not hear.
Now will I charge you in the band of truth,
When you have conquer'd my yet maiden-bed,
Remain there but an hour, nor speak to me.
My reasons are most strong; and you shall know them

When back again this ring shall be deliver'd;
And on your finger in the night, I'll put
Another ring, that what in time proceeds
May token to the future our past deeds.
Adieu till then; then fail not. You have won
A wife of me, though there my hope be done.

BERTRAM.

A heaven on earth I have won by wooing thee.

[_Exit._]

DIANA.

For which live long to thank both heaven and me!
You may so in the end.
My mother told me just how he would woo,
As if she sat in's heart. She says all men
Have the like oaths. He had sworn to marry me
When his wife's dead; therefore I'll lie with him
When I am buried. Since Frenchmen are so braid,
Marry that will, I live and die a maid.
Only, in this disguise, I think't no sin
To cozen him that would unjustly win.

[_Exit._]

SCENE III. The Florentine camp.

Enter the two French Lords and two or three Soldiers.

FIRST LORD.

You have not given him his mother's letter?

SECOND LORD.

I have deliver'd it an hour since; there is something in't that stings
his nature; for on the reading it, he chang'd almost into another man.

FIRST LORD.

He has much worthy blame laid upon him for shaking off so good a wife
and so sweet a lady.

SECOND LORD.

Especially he hath incurred the everlasting displeasure of the king,
who had even tun'd his bounty to sing happiness to him. I will tell you
a thing, but you shall let it dwell darkly with you.

FIRST LORD.

When you have spoken it, 'tis dead, and I am the grave of it.

SECOND LORD.

He hath perverted a young gentlewoman here in Florence, of a most
chaste renown, and this night he fleshes his will in the spoil of her
honour; he hath given her his monumental ring, and thinks himself made
in the unchaste composition.

FIRST LORD.

Now, God delay our rebellion! As we are ourselves, what things are we!

SECOND LORD.

Merely our own traitors. And as in the common course of all treasons, we still see them reveal themselves till they attain to their abhorred ends; so he that in this action contrives against his own nobility, in his proper stream, overflows himself.

FIRST LORD.

Is it not meant damnable in us to be trumpeters of our unlawful intents? We shall not then have his company tonight?

SECOND LORD.

Not till after midnight; for he is dieted to his hour.

FIRST LORD.

That approaches apace. I would gladly have him see his company anatomized, that he might take a measure of his own judgments, wherein so curiously he had set this counterfeit.

SECOND LORD.

We will not meddle with him till he come; for his presence must be the whip of the other.

FIRST LORD.

In the meantime, what hear you of these wars?

SECOND LORD.

I hear there is an overture of peace.

FIRST LORD.

Nay, I assure you, a peace concluded.

SECOND LORD.

What will Count Rossillon do then? Will he travel higher, or return again into France?

FIRST LORD.

I perceive by this demand, you are not altogether of his council.

SECOND LORD.

Let it be forbid, sir! So should I be a great deal of his act.

FIRST LORD.

Sir, his wife some two months since fled from his house. Her pretence is a pilgrimage to Saint Jaques le Grand; which holy undertaking with most austere sanctimony she accomplished; and there residing, the tenderness of her nature became as a prey to her grief; in fine, made a groan of her last breath, and now she sings in heaven.

SECOND LORD.

How is this justified?

FIRST LORD.

The stronger part of it by her own letters, which makes her story true, even to the point of her death. Her death itself, which could not be her office to say is come, was faithfully confirm'd by the rector of the place.

SECOND LORD.

Hath the count all this intelligence?

FIRST LORD.

Ay, and the particular confirmations, point from point, to the full arming of the verity.

SECOND LORD.

I am heartily sorry that he'll be glad of this.

FIRST LORD.

How mightily sometimes we make us comforts of our losses!

SECOND LORD.

And how mightily some other times we drown our gain in tears! The great dignity that his valour hath here acquir'd for him shall at home be encountered with a shame as ample.

FIRST LORD.

The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together; our virtues would be proud if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair if they were not cherish'd by our virtues.

Enter a Messenger.

How now? Where's your master?

MESSENGER.

He met the duke in the street, sir; of whom he hath taken a solemn leave: his lordship will next morning for France. The duke hath offered him letters of commendations to the king.

SECOND LORD.

They shall be no more than needful there, if they were more than they can commend.

Enter Bertram.

FIRST LORD.

They cannot be too sweet for the king's tartness. Here's his lordship now. How now, my lord, is't not after midnight?

BERTRAM.

I have tonight despatch'd sixteen businesses, a month's length apiece; by an abstract of success: I have congied with the duke, done my adieu with his nearest; buried a wife, mourn'd for her, writ to my lady mother I am returning, entertained my convoy, and between these main

parcels of despatch effected many nicer needs: the last was the greatest, but that I have not ended yet.

SECOND LORD.

If the business be of any difficulty and this morning your departure hence, it requires haste of your lordship.

BERTRAM.

I mean the business is not ended, as fearing to hear of it hereafter. But shall we have this dialogue between the Fool and the Soldier? Come, bring forth this counterfeit module has deceiv'd me like a double-meaning prophesier.

SECOND LORD.

Bring him forth.

[_Exeunt Soldiers._]

Has sat i? the stocks all night, poor gallant knave.

BERTRAM.

No matter; his heels have deserv'd it, in usurping his spurs so long. How does he carry himself?

FIRST LORD.

I have told your lordship already; the stocks carry him. But to answer you as you would be understood: he weeps like a wench that had shed her milk; he hath confessed himself to Morgan, whom he supposes to be a friar, from the time of his remembrance to this very instant disaster of his setting i? the stocks. And what think you he hath confessed?

BERTRAM.

Nothing of me, has he?

SECOND LORD.

His confession is taken, and it shall be read to his face; if your lordship be in?t, as I believe you are, you must have the patience to hear it.

Enter Soldiers with Parolles.

BERTRAM.

A plague upon him! muffled! he can say nothing of me; hush, hush!

FIRST LORD.

Hoodman comes! _Portotartarossa._

FIRST SOLDIER.

He calls for the tortures. What will you say without ?em?

PAROLLES.

I will confess what I know without constraint. If ye pinch me like a pasty I can say no more.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Bosko chimurcho.

FIRST LORD.

Boblibindo chicurmurco.

FIRST SOLDIER.

You are a merciful general. Our general bids you answer to what I shall ask you out of a note.

PAROLLES.

And truly, as I hope to live.

FIRST SOLDIER.

?First demand of him how many horse the duke is strong.? What say you to that?

PAROLLES.

Five or six thousand; but very weak and unserviceable: the troops are all scattered, and the commanders very poor rogues, upon my reputation and credit, and as I hope to live.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Shall I set down your answer so?

PAROLLES.

Do. I?ll take the sacrament on ?t, how and which way you will.

BERTRAM.

All?s one to him. What a past-saving slave is this!

FIRST LORD.

You are deceived, my lord; this is Monsieur Parolles, the gallant militarist (that was his own phrase), that had the whole theoretic of war in the knot of his scarf, and the practice in the chape of his dagger.

SECOND LORD.

I will never trust a man again for keeping his sword clean, nor believe he can have everything in him by wearing his apparel neatly.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Well, that?s set down.

PAROLLES.

?Five or six thousand horse? I said?I will say true?or thereabouts, set down,?for I?ll speak truth.

FIRST LORD.

He?s very near the truth in this.

BERTRAM.

But I con him no thanks for?t in the nature he delivers it.

PAROLLES.

Poor rogues, I pray you say.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Well, that's set down.

PAROLLES.

I humbly thank you, sir; a truth's a truth, the rogues are marvellous poor.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Demands of him of what strength they are a-foot? What say you to that?

PAROLLES.

By my troth, sir, if I were to live this present hour, I will tell true. Let me see: Spurio, a hundred and fifty, Sebastian, so many; Corambus, so many; Jaques, so many; Guiltian, Cosmo, Lodowick, and Gratii, two hundred fifty each; mine own company, Chitopher, Vaumond, Bentii, two hundred fifty each: so that the muster-file, rotten and sound, upon my life, amounts not to fifteen thousand poll; half of the which dare not shake the snow from off their cassocks lest they shake themselves to pieces.

BERTRAM.

What shall be done to him?

FIRST LORD.

Nothing, but let him have thanks. Demands of him my condition, and what credit I have with the duke.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Well, that's set down. You shall demand of him whether one Captain Dumaine be in the camp, a Frenchman; what his reputation is with the duke, what his valour, honesty and expertness in wars; or whether he thinks it were not possible with well-weighing sums of gold to corrupt him to a revolt? What say you to this? What do you know of it?

PAROLLES.

I beseech you, let me answer to the particular of the interrogatories. Demands them singly.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Do you know this Captain Dumaine?

PAROLLES.

I know him: he was a butcher's apprentice in Paris, from whence he was whipped for getting the shrieve's fool with child, a dumb innocent that could not say him nay.

[_First Lord lifts up his hand in anger._]

BERTRAM.

Nay, by your leave, hold your hands; though I know his brains are forfeit to the next tile that falls.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Well, is this captain in the Duke of Florence's camp?

PAROLLES.

Upon my knowledge, he is, and lousy.

FIRST LORD.

Nay, look not so upon me; we shall hear of your lordship anon.

FIRST SOLDIER.

What is his reputation with the duke?

PAROLLES.

The duke knows him for no other but a poor officer of mine, and writ to me this other day to turn him out of the band. I think I have his letter in my pocket.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Marry, we'll search.

PAROLLES.

In good sadness, I do not know; either it is there or it is upon a file, with the duke's other letters, in my tent.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Here 'tis; here's a paper; shall I read it to you?

PAROLLES.

I do not know if it be it or no.

BERTRAM.

Our interpreter does it well.

FIRST LORD.

Excellently.

FIRST SOLDIER.

[_Reads._] _Dian, the Count's a fool, and full of gold._

PAROLLES.

That is not the duke's letter, sir; that is an advertisement to a proper maid in Florence, one Diana, to take heed of the allurements of one Count Rossillon, a foolish idle boy, but for all that very ruttish. I pray you, sir, put it up again.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Nay, I'll read it first by your favour.

PAROLLES.

My meaning in't, I protest, was very honest in the behalf of the maid; for I knew the young count to be a dangerous and lascivious boy, who is a whale to virginity, and devours up all the fry it finds.

BERTRAM.

Damnably both sides rogue!

FIRST SOLDIER.

[_Reads._]

_When he swears oaths, bid him drop gold, and take it;
After he scores, he never pays the score.
Half won is match well made; match, and well make it;
He ne'er pays after-debts, take it before.
And say a soldier, 'Dian,' told thee this:
Men are to mell with, boys are not to kiss;
For count of this, the count's a fool, I know it,
Who pays before, but not when he does owe it.
Thine, as he vow'd to thee in thine ear, _
PAROLLES.

BERTRAM.

He shall be whipped through the army with this rhyme in's forehead.

SECOND LORD.

This is your devoted friend, sir, the manifold linguist, and the
armipotent soldier.

BERTRAM.

I could endure anything before but a cat, and now he's a cat to me.

FIRST SOLDIER.

I perceive, sir, by our general's looks we shall be fain to hang you.

PAROLLES.

My life, sir, in any case. Not that I am afraid to die, but that, my
offences being many, I would repent out the remainder of nature. Let me
live, sir, in a dungeon, i' the stocks, or anywhere, so I may live.

FIRST SOLDIER.

We'll see what may be done, so you confess freely. Therefore, once more
to this Captain Dumaine: you have answer'd to his reputation with the
duke, and to his valour. What is his honesty?

PAROLLES.

He will steal, sir, an egg out of a cloister: for rapes and ravishments
he parallels Nessus. He professes not keeping of oaths; in breaking
them he is stronger than Hercules. He will lie, sir, with such
volubility that you would think truth were a fool: drunkenness is his
best virtue, for he will be swine-drunk, and in his sleep he does
little harm, save to his bedclothes about him; but they know his
conditions and lay him in straw. I have but little more to say, sir, of
his honesty; he has everything that an honest man should not have; what
an honest man should have, he has nothing.

FIRST LORD.

I begin to love him for this.

BERTRAM.

For this description of thine honesty? A pox upon him for me, he's more

and more a cat.

FIRST SOLDIER.

What say you to his expertness in war?

PAROLLES.

Faith, sir, has led the drum before the English tragedians, to belie him I will not, and more of his soldiership I know not, except in that country he had the honour to be the officer at a place there called Mile-end, to instruct for the doubling of files. I would do the man what honour I can, but of this I am not certain.

FIRST LORD.

He hath out-villain'd villainy so far that the rarity redeems him.

BERTRAM.

A pox on him! He's a cat still.

FIRST SOLDIER.

His qualities being at this poor price, I need not to ask you if gold will corrupt him to revolt.

PAROLLES.

Sir, for a quart d'ecu he will sell the fee-simple of his salvation, the inheritance of it, and cut the entail from all remainders, and a perpetual succession for it perpetually.

FIRST SOLDIER.

What's his brother, the other Captain Dumaine?

SECOND LORD.

Why does he ask him of me?

FIRST SOLDIER.

What's he?

PAROLLES.

Even a crow o' the same nest; not altogether so great as the first in goodness, but greater a great deal in evil. He excels his brother for a coward, yet his brother is reputed one of the best that is. In a retreat he outruns any lackey; marry, in coming on he has the cramp.

FIRST SOLDIER.

If your life be saved, will you undertake to betray the Florentine?

PAROLLES.

Ay, and the captain of his horse, Count Rossillon.

FIRST SOLDIER.

I'll whisper with the general, and know his pleasure.

PAROLLES.

[_Aside_] I'll no more drumming; a plague of all drums! Only to seem to deserve well, and to beguile the supposition of that lascivious

young boy the count, have I run into this danger: yet who would have suspected an ambush where I was taken?

FIRST SOLDIER.

There is no remedy, sir, but you must die. The general says you that have so traitorously discovered the secrets of your army, and made such pestiferous reports of men very nobly held, can serve the world for no honest use; therefore you must die. Come, headsman, off with his head.

PAROLLES.

O Lord! sir, let me live, or let me see my death.

FIRST SOLDIER.

That shall you, and take your leave of all your friends.

[_Unmuffling him._]

So, look about you; know you any here?

BERTRAM.

Good morrow, noble captain.

SECOND LORD.

God bless you, Captain Parolles.

FIRST LORD.

God save you, noble captain.

SECOND LORD.

Captain, what greeting will you to my Lord Lafew? I am for France.

FIRST LORD.

Good Captain, will you give me a copy of the sonnet you writ to Diana in behalf of the Count Rossillon? And I were not a very coward I'd compel it of you; but fare you well.

[_Exeunt Bertram, Lords &c._]

FIRST SOLDIER.

You are undone, captain: all but your scarf; that has a knot on't yet.

PAROLLES.

Who cannot be crushed with a plot?

FIRST SOLDIER.

If you could find out a country where but women were that had received so much shame, you might begin an impudent nation. Fare ye well, sir. I am for France too; we shall speak of you there.

[_Exeunt._]

PAROLLES.

Yet am I thankful. If my heart were great
?Twould burst at this. Captain I'll be no more,

But I will eat, and drink, and sleep as soft
As captain shall. Simply the thing I am
Shall make me live. Who knows himself a braggart,
Let him fear this; for it will come to pass
That every braggart shall be found an ass.
Rust, sword; cool, blushes; and, Parolles live
Safest in shame; being fool'd, by foolery thrive.
There's place and means for every man alive.
I'll after them.

[_Exit._]

SCENE IV. Florence. A room in the Widow's house.

Enter Helena, Widow and Diana.

HELENA.

That you may well perceive I have not wrong'd you
One of the greatest in the Christian world
Shall be my surety; fore whose throne 'tis needful,
Ere I can perfect mine intents, to kneel.
Time was I did him a desired office,
Dear almost as his life; which gratitude
Through flinty Tartar's bosom would peep forth,
And answer thanks. I duly am inform'd
His grace is at Marseilles; to which place
We have convenient convoy. You must know
I am supposed dead. The army breaking,
My husband hies him home, where, heaven aiding,
And by the leave of my good lord the king,
We'll be before our welcome.

WIDOW.

Gentle madam,
You never had a servant to whose trust
Your business was more welcome.

HELENA.

Nor you, mistress,
Ever a friend whose thoughts more truly labour
To recompense your love. Doubt not but heaven
Hath brought me up to be your daughter's dower,
As it hath fated her to be my motive
And helper to a husband. But, O strange men!
That can such sweet use make of what they hate,
When saucy trusting of the cozen'd thoughts
Defiles the pitchy night; so lust doth play
With what it loathes, for that which is away.
But more of this hereafter. You, Diana,
Under my poor instructions yet must suffer
Something in my behalf.

DIANA.

Let death and honesty

Go with your impositions, I am yours
Upon your will to suffer.

HELENA.

Yet, I pray you;
But with the word the time will bring on summer,
When briars shall have leaves as well as thorns,
And be as sweet as sharp. We must away;
Our waggon is prepar'd, and time revives us.
All's well that ends well; still the fine's the crown.
Whatever the course, the end is the renown.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE V. Rossillon. A room in the Countess's palace.

Enter Clown, Countess and Lafew.

LAFEW.

No, no, no, your son was misled with a snipt-taffeta fellow there,
whose villanous saffron would have made all the unbak'd and doughy
youth of a nation in his colour. Your daughter-in-law had been alive at
this hour, and your son here at home, more advanc'd by the king than by
that red-tail'd humble-bee I speak of.

COUNTESS.

I would I had not known him; it was the death of the most virtuous
gentlewoman that ever nature had praise for creating. If she had
partaken of my flesh and cost me the dearest groans of a mother, I
could not have owed her a more rooted love.

LAFEW.

'Twas a good lady, 'twas a good lady. We may pick a thousand salads ere
we light on such another herb.

CLOWN.

Indeed, sir, she was the sweet marjoram of the salad, or, rather, the
herb of grace.

LAFEW.

They are not herbs, you knave; they are nose-herbs.

CLOWN.

I am no great Nebuchadnezzar, sir; I have not much skill in grass.

LAFEW.

Whether dost thou profess thyself, 'a knave or a fool?

CLOWN.

A fool, sir, at a woman's service, and a knave at a man's.

LAFEW.

Your distinction?

CLOWN.

I would cozen the man of his wife, and do his service.

LAFEW.

So you were a knave at his service indeed.

CLOWN.

And I would give his wife my bauble, sir, to do her service.

LAFEW.

I will subscribe for thee; thou art both knave and fool.

CLOWN.

At your service.

LAFEW.

No, no, no.

CLOWN.

Why, sir, if I cannot serve you, I can serve as great a prince as you are.

LAFEW.

Who's that? a Frenchman?

CLOWN.

Faith, sir, he has an English name; but his phisnomy is more hotter in France than there.

LAFEW.

What prince is that?

CLOWN.

The black prince, sir; alias the prince of darkness; alias the devil.

LAFEW.

Hold thee, there's my purse. I give thee not this to suggest thee from thy master thou talk'st of; serve him still.

CLOWN.

I am a woodland fellow, sir, that always loved a great fire, and the master I speak of ever keeps a good fire. But sure he is the prince of the world; let his nobility remain in his court. I am for the house with the narrow gate, which I take to be too little for pomp to enter: some that humble themselves may, but the many will be too chill and tender, and they'll be for the flowery way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire.

LAFEW.

Go thy ways, I begin to be a-weary of thee; and I tell thee so before, because I would not fall out with thee. Go thy ways; let my horses be well looked to, without any tricks.

CLOWN.

If I put any tricks upon 'em, sir, they shall be jades? tricks, which are their own right by the law of nature.

[_Exit._]

LAFEW.

A shrewd knave, and an unhappy.

COUNTESS.

So he is. My lord that?s gone made himself much sport out of him; by his authority he remains here, which he thinks is a patent for his sauciness; and indeed he has no pace, but runs where he will.

LAFEW.

I like him well; 'tis not amiss. And I was about to tell you, since I heard of the good lady?s death, and that my lord your son was upon his return home, I moved the king my master to speak in the behalf of my daughter; which, in the minority of them both, his majesty out of a self-gracious remembrance did first propose. His highness hath promis'd me to do it; and, to stop up the displeasure he hath conceived against your son, there is no fitter matter. How does your ladyship like it?

COUNTESS.

With very much content, my lord, and I wish it happily effected.

LAFEW.

His highness comes post from Marseilles, of as able body as when he number'd thirty; he will be here tomorrow, or I am deceived by him that in such intelligence hath seldom fail'd.

COUNTESS.

It rejoices me that I hope I shall see him ere I die. I have letters that my son will be here tonight. I shall beseech your lordship to remain with me till they meet together.

LAFEW.

Madam, I was thinking with what manners I might safely be admitted.

COUNTESS.

You need but plead your honourable privilege.

LAFEW.

Lady, of that I have made a bold charter; but, I thank my God, it holds yet.

Enter Clown.

CLOWN.

O madam, yonder?s my lord your son with a patch of velvet on?s face; whether there be a scar under't or no, the velvet knows; but 'tis a goodly patch of velvet. His left cheek is a cheek of two pile and a half, but his right cheek is worn bare.

LAFEW.

A scar nobly got, or a noble scar, is a good livery of honour; so belike is that.

CLOWN.

But it is your carbonado'd face.

LAFEW.

Let us go see your son, I pray you. I long to talk with the young noble soldier.

CLOWN.

Faith, there's a dozen of 'em, with delicate fine hats, and most courteous feathers, which bow the head and nod at every man.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT V.

SCENE I. Marseilles. A street.

Enter Helena, Widow and Diana with two Attendants.

HELENA.

But this exceeding posting day and night
Must wear your spirits low. We cannot help it.
But since you have made the days and nights as one,
To wear your gentle limbs in my affairs,
Be bold you do so grow in my requital
As nothing can unroot you. In happy time;?

Enter a Gentleman.

This man may help me to his majesty's ear,
If he would spend his power. God save you, sir.

GENTLEMAN.

And you.

HELENA.

Sir, I have seen you in the court of France.

GENTLEMAN.

I have been sometimes there.

HELENA.

I do presume, sir, that you are not fallen
From the report that goes upon your goodness;
And therefore, goaded with most sharp occasions,
Which lay nice manners by, I put you to
The use of your own virtues, for the which
I shall continue thankful.

GENTLEMAN.

What's your will?

HELENA.

That it will please you
To give this poor petition to the king,
And aid me with that store of power you have
To come into his presence.

GENTLEMAN.

The king's not here.

HELENA.

Not here, sir?

GENTLEMAN.

Not indeed.
He hence remov'd last night, and with more haste
Than is his use.

WIDOW.

Lord, how we lose our pains!

HELENA.

All's well that ends well yet,
Though time seem so adverse and means unfit.
I do beseech you, whither is he gone?

GENTLEMAN.

Marry, as I take it, to Rossillon;
Whither I am going.

HELENA.

I do beseech you, sir,
Since you are like to see the king before me,
Commend the paper to his gracious hand,
Which I presume shall render you no blame,
But rather make you thank your pains for it.
I will come after you with what good speed
Our means will make us means.

GENTLEMAN.

This I'll do for you.

HELENA.

And you shall find yourself to be well thank'd,
Whate'er falls more. We must to horse again.
Go, go, provide.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Rossillon. The inner court of the Countess's palace.

Enter Clown and Parolles.

PAROLLES.

Good Monsieur Lavache, give my Lord Lafew this letter; I have ere now, sir, been better known to you, when I have held familiarity with fresher clothes; but I am now, sir, muddied in Fortune's mood, and smell somewhat strong of her strong displeasure.

CLOWN.

Truly, Fortune's displeasure is but sluttish, if it smell so strongly as thou speak'st of. I will henceforth eat no fish of Fortune's buttering. Pr'ythee, allow the wind.

PAROLLES.

Nay, you need not to stop your nose, sir. I spake but by a metaphor.

CLOWN.

Indeed, sir, if your metaphor stink, I will stop my nose, or against any man's metaphor. Pr'ythee, get thee further.

PAROLLES.

Pray you, sir, deliver me this paper.

CLOWN.

Foh, pr'ythee stand away. A paper from Fortune's close-stool to give to a nobleman! Look here he comes himself.

Enter Lafew.

Here is a pur of Fortune's, sir, or of Fortune's cat, but not a musk-cat, that has fallen into the unclean fishpond of her displeasure, and as he says, is muddied withal. Pray you, sir, use the carp as you may, for he looks like a poor, decayed, ingenious, foolish, rascally knave. I do pity his distress in my similes of comfort, and leave him to your lordship.

[_Exit._]

PAROLLES.

My lord, I am a man whom Fortune hath cruelly scratch'd.

LAFEW.

And what would you have me to do? 'Tis too late to pare her nails now. Wherein have you played the knave with Fortune that she should scratch you, who of herself is a good lady, and would not have knaves thrive long under her? There's a quart d'ecu for you. Let the justices make you and Fortune friends; I am for other business.

PAROLLES.

I beseech your honour to hear me one single word.

LAFEW.

You beg a single penny more. Come, you shall ha't; save your word.

PAROLLES.

My name, my good lord, is Parolles.

LAFEW.

You beg more than word then. Cox my passion! Give me your hand. How does your drum?

PAROLLES.

O my good lord, you were the first that found me.

LAFEW.

Was I, in sooth? And I was the first that lost thee.

PAROLLES.

It lies in you, my lord, to bring me in some grace, for you did bring me out.

LAFEW.

Out upon thee, knave! dost thou put upon me at once both the office of God and the devil? One brings thee in grace, and the other brings thee out.

[_Trumpets sound._]

The king's coming; I know by his trumpets. Sirrah, inquire further after me. I had talk of you last night; though you are a fool and a knave, you shall eat. Go to; follow.

PAROLLES.

I praise God for you.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. The same. A room in the Countess's palace.

Flourish. Enter King, Countess, Lafew, Lords, Gentlemen, Guards &c.

KING.

We lost a jewel of her, and our esteem
Was made much poorer by it; but your son,
As mad in folly, lack'd the sense to know
Her estimation home.

COUNTESS.

'Tis past, my liege,
And I beseech your majesty to make it
Natural rebellion, done i' the blaze of youth,
When oil and fire, too strong for reason's force,
O'erbears it and burns on.

KING.

My honour'd lady,
I have forgiven and forgotten all,
Though my revenges were high bent upon him,
And watch'd the time to shoot.

LAFEW.

This I must say,?

But first, I beg my pardon,?the young lord
Did to his majesty, his mother, and his lady,
Offence of mighty note; but to himself
The greatest wrong of all. He lost a wife
Whose beauty did astonish the survey
Of richest eyes; whose words all ears took captive;
Whose dear perfection hearts that scorn?d to serve
Humbly call?d mistress.

KING.

Praising what is lost
Makes the remembrance dear. Well, call him hither;
We are reconcil?d, and the first view shall kill
All repetition. Let him not ask our pardon;
The nature of his great offence is dead,
And deeper than oblivion do we bury
Th? incensing relics of it. Let him approach
A stranger, no offender; and inform him
So ?tis our will he should.

GENTLEMAN.

I shall, my liege.

[_Exit Gentleman._]

KING.

What says he to your daughter? Have you spoke?

LAFEW.

All that he is hath reference to your highness.

KING.

Then shall we have a match. I have letters sent me
That sets him high in fame.

Enter Bertram.

LAFEW.

He looks well on ?t.

KING.

I am not a day of season,
For thou mayst see a sunshine and a hail
In me at once. But to the brightest beams
Distracted clouds give way; so stand thou forth;
The time is fair again.

BERTRAM.

My high-repenting blames
Dear sovereign, pardon to me.

KING.

All is whole.
Not one word more of the consumed time.
Let's take the instant by the forward top;
For we are old, and on our quick'st decrees
Th'inaudible and noiseless foot of time
Steals ere we can effect them. You remember
The daughter of this lord?

BERTRAM.

Admiringly, my liege. At first
I stuck my choice upon her, ere my heart
Durst make too bold herald of my tongue:
Where the impression of mine eye infixing,
Contempt his scornful perspective did lend me,
Which warp'd the line of every other favour,
Scorn'd a fair colour, or express'd it stolen,
Extended or contracted all proportions
To a most hideous object. Thence it came
That she whom all men prais'd, and whom myself,
Since I have lost, have lov'd, was in mine eye
The dust that did offend it.

KING.

Well excus'd:
That thou didst love her, strikes some scores away
From the great compt: but love that comes too late,
Like a remorseful pardon slowly carried,
To the great sender turns a sour offence,
Crying, That's good that's gone. Our rash faults
Make trivial price of serious things we have,
Not knowing them until we know their grave.
Oft our displeasures, to ourselves unjust,
Destroy our friends, and after weep their dust:
Our own love waking cries to see what's done,
While shameful hate sleeps out the afternoon.
Be this sweet Helen's knell, and now forget her.
Send forth your amorous token for fair Maudlin.
The main consents are had, and here we'll stay
To see our widower's second marriage-day.

COUNTESS.

Which better than the first, O dear heaven, bless!
Or, ere they meet, in me, O nature, cesse!

LAFEW.

Come on, my son, in whom my house's name
Must be digested; give a favour from you,
To sparkle in the spirits of my daughter,
That she may quickly come.

[_Bertram gives a ring to Lafew._]

By my old beard,
And ev'ry hair that's on 't, Helen that's dead

Was a sweet creature: such a ring as this,
The last that e'er I took her leave at court,
I saw upon her finger.

BERTRAM.

Hers it was not.

KING.

Now, pray you, let me see it; for mine eye,
While I was speaking, oft was fasten'd to it.
This ring was mine; and when I gave it Helen
I bade her, if her fortunes ever stood
Necessitated to help, that by this token
I would relieve her. Had you that craft to ?reave her
Of what should stead her most?

BERTRAM.

My gracious sovereign,
Howe'er it pleases you to take it so,
The ring was never hers.

COUNTESS.

Son, on my life,
I have seen her wear it; and she reckon'd it
At her life?s rate.

LAFEW.

I am sure I saw her wear it.

BERTRAM.

You are deceiv'd, my lord; she never saw it.
In Florence was it from a casement thrown me,
Wrapp'd in a paper, which contain'd the name
Of her that threw it. Noble she was, and thought
I stood engag'd; but when I had subscrib'd
To mine own fortune, and inform'd her fully
I could not answer in that course of honour
As she had made the overture, she ceas'd,
In heavy satisfaction, and would never
Receive the ring again.

KING.

Plutus himself,
That knows the tinct and multiplying medicine,
Hath not in nature?s mystery more science
Than I have in this ring. ?Twas mine, ?twas Helen?s,
Whoever gave it you. Then if you know
That you are well acquainted with yourself,
Confess ?twas hers, and by what rough enforcement
You got it from her. She call'd the saints to surety
That she would never put it from her finger
Unless she gave it to yourself in bed,
Where you have never come, or sent it us
Upon her great disaster.

BERTRAM.

She never saw it.

KING.

Thou speak'st it falsely, as I love mine honour,
And mak'st conjectural fears to come into me
Which I would fain shut out. If it should prove
That thou art so inhuman, 'twill not prove so:
And yet I know not, thou didst hate her deadly.
And she is dead; which nothing but to close
Her eyes myself, could win me to believe
More than to see this ring. Take him away.

[_ Guards seize Bertram._]

My fore-past proofs, howe'er the matter fall,
Shall tax my fears of little vanity,
Having vainly fear'd too little. Away with him.
We'll sift this matter further.

BERTRAM.

If you shall prove
This ring was ever hers, you shall as easy
Prove that I husbanded her bed in Florence,
Where she yet never was.

[_Exit, guarded._]

KING.

I am wrapp'd in dismal thinkings.

Enter a Gentleman.

GENTLEMAN.

Gracious sovereign,
Whether I have been to blame or no, I know not:
Here's a petition from a Florentine,
Who hath for four or five removes come short
To tender it herself. I undertook it,
Vanquish'd thereto by the fair grace and speech
Of the poor suppliant, who by this, I know,
Is here attending: her business looks in her
With an importing visage, and she told me
In a sweet verbal brief, it did concern
Your highness with herself.

KING.

[_Reads._] _Upon his many protestations to marry me when his wife was
dead, I blush to say it, he won me. Now is the Count Rossillon a
widower; his vows are forfeited to me, and my honour's paid to him. He
stole from Florence, taking no leave, and I follow him to his country
for justice. Grant it me, O king, in you it best lies; otherwise a
seducer flourishes, and a poor maid is undone._

DIANA CAPILET.

LAFEW.

I will buy me a son-in-law in a fair, and toll for this. I'll none of him.

KING.

The heavens have thought well on thee, Lafew,
To bring forth this discovery. Seek these suitors.
Go speedily, and bring again the count.

[_Exeunt Gentleman and some Attendants._]

I am afeard the life of Helen, lady,
Was foully snatch'd.

COUNTESS.

Now, justice on the doers!

Enter Bertram, guarded.

KING.

I wonder, sir, since wives are monsters to you,
And that you fly them as you swear them lordship,
Yet you desire to marry. What woman's that?

Enter Widow and Diana.

DIANA.

I am, my lord, a wretched Florentine,
Derived from the ancient Capilet;
My suit, as I do understand, you know,
And therefore know how far I may be pitied.

WIDOW.

I am her mother, sir, whose age and honour
Both suffer under this complaint we bring,
And both shall cease, without your remedy.

KING.

Come hither, count; do you know these women?

BERTRAM.

My lord, I neither can nor will deny
But that I know them. Do they charge me further?

DIANA.

Why do you look so strange upon your wife?

BERTRAM.

She's none of mine, my lord.

DIANA.

If you shall marry,

You give away this hand, and that is mine,
You give away heaven's vows, and those are mine,
You give away myself, which is known mine;
For I by vow am so embodied yours
That she which marries you must marry me,
Either both or none.

LAFEW.

[_To Bertram_] Your reputation comes too short for my daughter; you are
no husband for her.

BERTRAM.

My lord, this is a fond and desperate creature
Whom sometime I have laugh'd with. Let your highness
Lay a more noble thought upon mine honour
Than for to think that I would sink it here.

KING.

Sir, for my thoughts, you have them ill to friend
Till your deeds gain them; fairer prove your honour
Than in my thought it lies!

DIANA.

Good my lord,
Ask him upon his oath, if he does think
He had not my virginity.

KING.

What say'st thou to her?

BERTRAM.

She's impudent, my lord,
And was a common gamester to the camp.

DIANA.

He does me wrong, my lord; if I were so
He might have bought me at a common price.
Do not believe him. O, behold this ring,
Whose high respect and rich validity
Did lack a parallel; yet for all that
He gave it to a commoner o' the camp,
If I be one.

COUNTESS.

He blushes, and 'tis it.
Of six preceding ancestors, that gem
Conferr'd by testament to th' sequent issue,
Hath it been owed and worn. This is his wife;
That ring's a thousand proofs.

KING.

Methought you said
You saw one here in court could witness it.

DIANA.

I did, my lord, but loath am to produce
So bad an instrument; his name's Parolles.

LAFEW.

I saw the man today, if man he be.

KING.

Find him, and bring him hither.

[_Exit an Attendant._]

BERTRAM.

What of him?

He's quoted for a most perfidious slave,
With all the spots o' the world tax'd and debauch'd:
Whose nature sickens but to speak a truth.
Am I or that or this for what he'll utter,
That will speak anything?

KING.

She hath that ring of yours.

BERTRAM.

I think she has. Certain it is I lik'd her
And boarded her i' the wanton way of youth.
She knew her distance, and did angle for me,
Madding my eagerness with her restraint,
As all impediments in fancy's course
Are motives of more fancy; and in fine,
Her infinite cunning with her modern grace,
Subdu'd me to her rate; she got the ring,
And I had that which any inferior might
At market-price have bought.

DIANA.

I must be patient.
You that have turn'd off a first so noble wife
May justly diet me. I pray you yet,
Since you lack virtue, I will lose a husband?
Send for your ring, I will return it home,
And give me mine again.

BERTRAM.

I have it not.

KING.

What ring was yours, I pray you?

DIANA.

Sir, much like
The same upon your finger.

KING.

Know you this ring? This ring was his of late.

DIANA.

And this was it I gave him, being abed.

KING.

The story then goes false you threw it him
Out of a casement.

DIANA.

I have spoke the truth.

Enter Attendant with Parolles.

BERTRAM.

My lord, I do confess the ring was hers.

KING.

You boggle shrewdly; every feather starts you.
Is this the man you speak of?

DIANA.

Ay, my lord.

KING.

Tell me, sirrah, but tell me true I charge you,
Not fearing the displeasure of your master,
Which on your just proceeding, I'll keep off,
By him and by this woman here what know you?

PAROLLES.

So please your majesty, my master hath been an honourable gentleman.
Tricks he hath had in him, which gentlemen have.

KING.

Come, come, to the purpose. Did he love this woman?

PAROLLES.

Faith, sir, he did love her; but how?

KING.

How, I pray you?

PAROLLES.

He did love her, sir, as a gentleman loves a woman.

KING.

How is that?

PAROLLES.

He lov'd her, sir, and lov'd her not.

KING.

As thou art a knave and no knave.

What an equivocal companion is this!

PAROLLES.

I am a poor man, and at your majesty's command.

LAFEW.

He's a good drum, my lord, but a naughty orator.

DIANA.

Do you know he promised me marriage?

PAROLLES.

Faith, I know more than I'll speak.

KING.

But wilt thou not speak all thou know'st?

PAROLLES.

Yes, so please your majesty. I did go between them as I said; but more than that, he loved her, for indeed he was mad for her, and talked of Satan, and of Limbo, and of furies, and I know not what: yet I was in that credit with them at that time that I knew of their going to bed; and of other motions, as promising her marriage, and things which would derive me ill will to speak of; therefore I will not speak what I know.

KING.

Thou hast spoken all already, unless thou canst say they are married; but thou art too fine in thy evidence; therefore stand aside. This ring, you say, was yours?

DIANA.

Ay, my good lord.

KING.

Where did you buy it? Or who gave it you?

DIANA.

It was not given me, nor I did not buy it.

KING.

Who lent it you?

DIANA.

It was not lent me neither.

KING.

Where did you find it then?

DIANA.

I found it not.

KING.

If it were yours by none of all these ways,
How could you give it him?

DIANA.

I never gave it him.

LAFEW.

This woman's an easy glove, my lord; she goes off and on at pleasure.

KING.

This ring was mine, I gave it his first wife.

DIANA.

It might be yours or hers for ought I know.

KING.

Take her away, I do not like her now.
To prison with her. And away with him.
Unless thou tell'st me where thou hadst this ring,
Thou diest within this hour.

DIANA.

I'll never tell you.

KING.

Take her away.

DIANA.

I'll put in bail, my liege.

KING.

I think thee now some common customer.

DIANA.

By Jove, if ever I knew man, 'twas you.

KING.

Wherefore hast thou accus'd him all this while?

DIANA.

Because he's guilty, and he is not guilty.
He knows I am no maid, and he'll swear to't:
I'll swear I am a maid, and he knows not.
Great King, I am no strumpet, by my life;
I am either maid, or else this old man's wife.

[_Pointing to Lafew._]

KING.

She does abuse our ears; to prison with her.

DIANA.

Good mother, fetch my bail. Stay, royal sir;

[_Exit Widow._]

The jeweller that owes the ring is sent for,
And he shall surety me. But for this lord
Who hath abus'd me as he knows himself,
Though yet he never harm'd me, here I quit him.
He knows himself my bed he hath defil'd;
And at that time he got his wife with child.
Dead though she be, she feels her young one kick;
So there's my riddle: one that's dead is quick,
And now behold the meaning.

Enter Widow with Helena.

KING.

Is there no exorcist
Beguiles the truer office of mine eyes?
Is't real that I see?

HELENA.

No, my good lord;
'Tis but the shadow of a wife you see,
The name, and not the thing.

BERTRAM.

Both, both. O, pardon!

HELENA.

O, my good lord, when I was like this maid;
I found you wondrous kind. There is your ring,
And, look you, here's your letter. This it says,
'When from my finger you can get this ring,
And is by me with child, &c.' This is done;
Will you be mine now you are doubly won?

BERTRAM.

If she, my liege, can make me know this clearly,
I'll love her dearly, ever, ever dearly.

HELENA.

If it appear not plain, and prove untrue,
Deadly divorce step between me and you!
O my dear mother, do I see you living?

LAFEW.

Mine eyes smell onions; I shall weep anon.
[_to Parolles_] Good Tom Drum, lend me a handkercher.
So, I thank thee. Wait on me home, I'll make sport with thee.
Let thy courtesies alone, they are scurvy ones.

KING.

Let us from point to point this story know,
To make the even truth in pleasure flow.
[_To Diana._] If thou beest yet a fresh uncropped flower,
Choose thou thy husband, and I'll pay thy dower;
For I can guess that by thy honest aid,

Thou kept'st a wife herself, thyself a maid.
Of that and all the progress more and less,
Resolv'dly more leisure shall express.
All yet seems well, and if it end so meet,
The bitter past, more welcome is the sweet.

[_Flourish._]

[EPILOGUE]

_The king's a beggar, now the play is done;
All is well ended if this suit be won,
That you express content; which we will pay
With strife to please you, day exceeding day.
Ours be your patience then, and yours our parts;
Your gentle hands lend us, and take our hearts._

[_Exeunt omnes._]

THE TRAGEDY OF ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

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Dramatis Personæ

MARK ANTONY, Triumvir

OCTAVIUS CAESAR, Triumvir

LEPIDUS, Triumvir

SEXTUS POMPEIUS,

DOMITIUS ENOBARBUS, friend to Antony

VENTIDIUS, friend to Antony

EROS, friend to Antony

SCARUS, friend to Antony

DERCETUS, friend to Antony

DEMETRIUS, friend to Antony

PHILO, friend to Antony

MAECENAS, friend to Caesar

AGRIPPA, friend to Caesar

DOLABELLA, friend to Caesar

PROCULEIUS, friend to Caesar

THIDIAS, friend to Caesar

GALLUS, friend to Caesar

MENAS, friend to Pompey

MENECRATES, friend to Pompey

VARRIUS, friend to Pompey

TAURUS, Lieutenant-General to Caesar

CANIDIUS, Lieutenant-General to Antony

SILIUS, an Officer in Ventidius's army

EUPHRONIUS, an Ambassador from Antony to Caesar

ALEXAS, attendant on Cleopatra

MARDIAN, attendant on Cleopatra

SELEUCUS, attendant on Cleopatra

DIOMEDES, attendant on Cleopatra

A SOOTHSAYER

A CLOWN

CLEOPATRA, Queen of Egypt

OCTAVIA, sister to Caesar and wife to Antony

CHARMIAN, Attendant on Cleopatra

IRAS, Attendant on Cleopatra

Officers, Soldiers, Messengers, and other Attendants

SCENE: Dispersed, in several parts of the Roman Empire.

ACT I

SCENE I. Alexandria. A Room in Cleopatra's palace.

Enter Demetrius and Philo.

PHILO.

Nay, but this dotage of our general's
O'erflows the measure. Those his goodly eyes,
That o'er the files and musters of the war
Have glowed like plated Mars, now bend, now turn
The office and devotion of their view
Upon a tawny front. His captain's heart,
Which in the scuffles of great fights hath burst
The buckles on his breast, reneges all temper
And is become the bellows and the fan
To cool a gipsy's lust.

Flourish. Enter Antony and Cleopatra, her Ladies, the Train, with
Eunuchs fanning her.

Look where they come:

Take but good note, and you shall see in him
The triple pillar of the world transform'd
Into a strumpet's fool. Behold and see.

CLEOPATRA.

If it be love indeed, tell me how much.

ANTONY.

There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned.

CLEOPATRA.

I'll set a bourn how far to be beloved.

ANTONY.

Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER.

News, my good lord, from Rome.

ANTONY.

Grates me, the sum.

CLEOPATRA.

Nay, hear them, Antony.

Fulvia perchance is angry; or who knows
If the scarce-bearded Caesar have not sent
His powerful mandate to you: ?Do this or this;
Take in that kingdom and enfranchise that.
Perform?t, or else we damn thee.?

ANTONY.

How, my love?

CLEOPATRA.

Perchance! Nay, and most like.
You must not stay here longer; your dismissal
Is come from Caesar; therefore hear it, Antony.
Where?s Fulvia?s process??Caesar?s I would say? Both?
Call in the messengers. As I am Egypt?s queen,
Thou blushest, Antony, and that blood of thine
Is Caesar?s homager; else so thy cheek pays shame
When shrill-tongued Fulvia scolds. The messengers!

ANTONY.

Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
Of the ranged empire fall! Here is my space.
Kingdoms are clay. Our dungy earth alike
Feeds beast as man. The nobleness of life
Is to do thus [_Embracing_]; when such a mutual pair
And such a twain can do?t, in which I bind,
On pain of punishment, the world to weet
We stand up peerless.

CLEOPATRA.

Excellent falsehood!
Why did he marry Fulvia, and not love her?
I?ll seem the fool I am not. Antony
Will be himself.

ANTONY.

But stirred by Cleopatra.
Now, for the love of Love and her soft hours,
Let?s not confound the time with conference harsh.
There?s not a minute of our lives should stretch
Without some pleasure now. What sport tonight?

CLEOPATRA.

Hear the ambassadors.

ANTONY.

Fie, wrangling queen!
Whom everything becomes?to chide, to laugh,
To weep; whose every passion fully strives
To make itself, in thee fair and admired!
No messenger but thine, and all alone
Tonight we?ll wander through the streets and note
The qualities of people. Come, my queen,
Last night you did desire it. Speak not to us.

[_Exeunt Antony and Cleopatra with the Train._]

DEMETRIUS.

Is Caesar with Antonius prized so slight?

PHILO.

Sir, sometimes when he is not Antony,
He comes too short of that great property
Which still should go with Antony.

DEMETRIUS.

I am full sorry
That he approves the common liar who
Thus speaks of him at Rome, but I will hope
Of better deeds tomorrow. Rest you happy!

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Alexandria. Another Room in Cleopatra's palace.

Enter Enobarbus, a Soothsayer, Charmian, Iras, Mardian and Alexas.

CHARMIAN.

Lord Alexas, sweet Alexas, most anything Alexas, almost most absolute
Alexas, where's the soothsayer that you praised so to th' queen? O,
that I knew this husband which you say must charge his horns with
garlands!

ALEXAS.

Soothsayer!

SOOTHSAYER.

Your will?

CHARMIAN.

Is this the man? Is't you, sir, that know things?

SOOTHSAYER.

In nature's infinite book of secrecy
A little I can read.

ALEXAS.

Show him your hand.

ENOBARBUS.

Bring in the banquet quickly; wine enough
Cleopatra's health to drink.

CHARMIAN.

Good, sir, give me good fortune.

SOOTHSAYER.

I make not, but foresee.

CHARMIAN.

Pray, then, foresee me one.

SOOTHSAYER.

You shall be yet far fairer than you are.

CHARMIAN.

He means in flesh.

IRAS.

No, you shall paint when you are old.

CHARMIAN.

Wrinkles forbid!

ALEXAS.

Vex not his prescience. Be attentive.

CHARMIAN.

Hush!

SOOTHSAYER.

You shall be more loving than beloved.

CHARMIAN.

I had rather heat my liver with drinking.

ALEXAS.

Nay, hear him.

CHARMIAN.

Good now, some excellent fortune! Let me be married to three kings in a forenoon and widow them all. Let me have a child at fifty, to whom Herod of Jewry may do homage. Find me to marry me with Octavius Caesar, and companion me with my mistress.

SOOTHSAYER.

You shall outlive the lady whom you serve.

CHARMIAN.

O, excellent! I love long life better than figs.

SOOTHSAYER.

You have seen and proved a fairer former fortune
Than that which is to approach.

CHARMIAN.

Then belike my children shall have no names. Prithee, how many boys and wenches must I have?

SOOTHSAYER.

If every of your wishes had a womb,
And fertile every wish, a million.

CHARMIAN.

Out, fool! I forgive thee for a witch.

ALEXAS.

You think none but your sheets are privy to your wishes.

CHARMIAN.

Nay, come, tell Iras hers.

ALEXAS.

We?ll know all our fortunes.

ENOBARBUS.

Mine, and most of our fortunes tonight, shall be drunk to bed.

IRAS.

There?s a palm presages chastity, if nothing else.

CHARMIAN.

E?en as the o?erflowing Nilus presageth famine.

IRAS.

Go, you wild bedfellow, you cannot soothsay.

CHARMIAN.

Nay, if an oily palm be not a fruitful prognostication, I cannot scratch mine ear. Prithee, tell her but workaday fortune.

SOOTHSAYER.

Your fortunes are alike.

IRAS.

But how, but how? give me particulars.

SOOTHSAYER.

I have said.

IRAS.

Am I not an inch of fortune better than she?

CHARMIAN.

Well, if you were but an inch of fortune better than I, where would you choose it?

IRAS.

Not in my husband?s nose.

CHARMIAN.

Our worser thoughts heavens mend! Alexas?come, his fortune! his fortune! O, let him marry a woman that cannot go, sweet Isis, I beseech thee, and let her die too, and give him a worse, and let worse follow worse, till the worst of all follow him laughing to his grave, fiftyfold a cuckold! Good Isis, hear me this prayer, though thou deny

me a matter of more weight; good Isis, I beseech thee!

IRAS.

Amen. Dear goddess, hear that prayer of the people! For, as it is a heartbreaking to see a handsome man loose-wived, so it is a deadly sorrow to behold a foul knave uncuckolded. Therefore, dear Isis, keep decorum and fortune him accordingly!

CHARMIAN.

Amen.

ALEXAS.

Lo now, if it lay in their hands to make me a cuckold, they would make themselves whores but they?d do?t!

Enter Cleopatra.

ENOBARBUS.

Hush, Here comes Antony.

CHARMIAN.

Not he, the queen.

CLEOPATRA.

Saw you my lord?

ENOBARBUS.

No, lady.

CLEOPATRA.

Was he not here?

CHARMIAN.

No, madam.

CLEOPATRA.

He was disposed to mirth; but on the sudden
A Roman thought hath struck him. Enobarbus!

ENOBARBUS.

Madam?

CLEOPATRA.

Seek him and bring him hither. Where?s Alexas?

ALEXAS.

Here, at your service. My lord approaches.

Enter Antony with a Messenger.

CLEOPATRA.

We will not look upon him. Go with us.

[_Exeunt Cleopatra, Enobarbus, Charmian, Iras, Alexas and

Soothsayer._]

MESSENGER.

Fulvia thy wife first came into the field.

ANTONY.

Against my brother Lucius.

MESSENGER.

Ay.

But soon that war had end, and the time's state
Made friends of them, jointing their force 'gainst Caesar,
Whose better issue in the war from Italy
Upon the first encounter drave them.

ANTONY.

Well, what worst?

MESSENGER.

The nature of bad news infects the teller.

ANTONY.

When it concerns the fool or coward. On.
Things that are past are done with me. 'Tis thus:
Who tells me true, though in his tale lie death,
I hear him as he flattered.

MESSENGER.

Labienus?
This is stiff news 'hath with his Parthian force
Extended Asia from Euphrates
His conquering banner shook from Syria
To Lydia and to Ionia,
Whilst?

ANTONY.

'Antony?', thou wouldst say?

MESSENGER.

O, my lord!

ANTONY.

Speak to me home; mince not the general tongue.
Name Cleopatra as she is called in Rome;
Rail thou in Fulvia's phrase, and taunt my faults
With such full licence as both truth and malice
Have power to utter. O, then we bring forth weeds
When our quick minds lie still, and our ills told us
Is as our earring. Fare thee well awhile.

MESSENGER.

At your noble pleasure.

[_Exit Messenger._]

Enter another Messenger.

ANTONY.

From Sicyon, ho, the news? Speak there!

SECOND MESSENGER.

The man from Sicyon?

ANTONY.

Is there such a one?

SECOND MESSENGER.

He stays upon your will.

ANTONY.

Let him appear.

[_Exit second Messenger._]

These strong Egyptian fetters I must break,
Or lose myself in dotage.

Enter another Messenger with a letter.

What are you?

THIRD MESSENGER.

Fulvia thy wife is dead.

ANTONY.

Where died she?

THIRD MESSENGER.

In Sicyon:

Her length of sickness, with what else more serious
Importeth thee to know, this bears.

[_Gives a letter._]

ANTONY.

Forbear me.

[_Exit third Messenger._]

There's a great spirit gone! Thus did I desire it.
What our contempts doth often hurl from us,
We wish it ours again. The present pleasure,
By revolution lowering, does become
The opposite of itself. She's good, being gone.
The hand could pluck her back that shoved her on.
I must from this enchanting queen break off.
Ten thousand harms, more than the ills I know,
My idleness doth hatch. How now, Enobarbus!

Enter Enobarbus.

ENOBARBUS.

What's your pleasure, sir?

ANTONY.

I must with haste from hence.

ENOBARBUS.

Why then we kill all our women. We see how mortal an unkindness is to them. If they suffer our departure, death's the word.

ANTONY.

I must be gone.

ENOBARBUS.

Under a compelling occasion, let women die. It were pity to cast them away for nothing, though, between them and a great cause they should be esteemed nothing. Cleopatra, catching but the least noise of this, dies instantly. I have seen her die twenty times upon far poorer moment. I do think there is mettle in death which commits some loving act upon her, she hath such a celerity in dying.

ANTONY.

She is cunning past man's thought.

ENOBARBUS.

Alack, sir, no; her passions are made of nothing but the finest part of pure love. We cannot call her winds and waters sighs and tears; they are greater storms and tempests than almanacs can report. This cannot be cunning in her; if it be, she makes a shower of rain as well as Jove.

ANTONY.

Would I had never seen her!

ENOBARBUS.

O, sir, you had then left unseen a wonderful piece of work, which not to have been blest withal would have discredited your travel.

ANTONY.

Fulvia is dead.

ENOBARBUS.

Sir?

ANTONY.

Fulvia is dead.

ENOBARBUS.

Fulvia?

ANTONY.

Dead.

ENOBARBUS.

Why, sir, give the gods a thankful sacrifice. When it pleaseth their deities to take the wife of a man from him, it shows to man the tailors of the earth; comforting therein that when old robes are worn out, there are members to make new. If there were no more women but Fulvia, then had you indeed a cut, and the case to be lamented. This grief is crowned with consolation; your old smock brings forth a new petticoat: and indeed the tears live in an onion that should water this sorrow.

ANTONY.

The business she hath broached in the state
Cannot endure my absence.

ENOBARBUS.

And the business you have broached here cannot be without you, especially that of Cleopatra's, which wholly depends on your abode.

ANTONY.

No more light answers. Let our officers
Have notice what we purpose. I shall break
The cause of our expedience to the Queen,
And get her leave to part. For not alone
The death of Fulvia, with more urgent touches,
Do strongly speak to us, but the letters too
Of many our contriving friends in Rome
Petition us at home. Sextus Pompeius
Hath given the dare to Caesar, and commands
The empire of the sea. Our slippery people,
Whose love is never linked to the deserver
Till his deserts are past, begin to throw
Pompey the Great and all his dignities
Upon his son, who, high in name and power,
Higher than both in blood and life, stands up
For the main soldier; whose quality, going on,
The sides o' th' world may danger. Much is breeding
Which, like the courser's hair, hath yet but life
And not a serpent's poison. Say our pleasure
To such whose place is under us, requires
Our quick remove from hence.

ENOBARBUS.

I shall do't.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. Alexandria. A Room in Cleopatra's palace.

Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Alexas and Iras.

CLEOPATRA.

Where is he?

CHARMIAN.

I did not see him since.

CLEOPATRA.

See where he is, who's with him, what he does.

I did not send you. If you find him sad,

Say I am dancing; if in mirth, report

That I am sudden sick. Quick, and return.

[_Exit Alexas._]

CHARMIAN.

Madam, methinks, if you did love him dearly,

You do not hold the method to enforce

The like from him.

CLEOPATRA.

What should I do I do not?

CHARMIAN.

In each thing give him way; cross him in nothing.

CLEOPATRA.

Thou teachest like a fool: the way to lose him.

CHARMIAN.

Tempt him not so too far; I wish, forbear.

In time we hate that which we often fear.

But here comes Antony.

Enter Antony.

CLEOPATRA.

I am sick and sullen.

ANTONY.

I am sorry to give breathing to my purpose?

CLEOPATRA.

Help me away, dear Charmian! I shall fall.

It cannot be thus long; the sides of nature

Will not sustain it.

ANTONY.

Now, my dearest queen?

CLEOPATRA.

Pray you, stand farther from me.

ANTONY.

What's the matter?

CLEOPATRA.

I know by that same eye there's some good news.

What, says the married woman you may go?
Would she had never given you leave to come!
Let her not say 'tis I that keep you here.
I have no power upon you; hers you are.

ANTONY.
The gods best know?

CLEOPATRA.
O, never was there queen
So mightily betrayed! Yet at the first
I saw the treasons planted.

ANTONY.
Cleopatra?

CLEOPATRA.
Why should I think you can be mine and true,
Though you in swearing shake the throned gods,
Who have been false to Fulvia? Riotous madness,
To be entangled with those mouth-made vows
Which break themselves in swearing!

ANTONY.
Most sweet queen?

CLEOPATRA.
Nay, pray you seek no colour for your going,
But bid farewell and go. When you sued staying,
Then was the time for words. No going then,
Eternity was in our lips and eyes,
Bliss in our brows bent; none our parts so poor
But was a race of heaven. They are so still,
Or thou, the greatest soldier of the world,
Art turned the greatest liar.

ANTONY.
How now, lady!

CLEOPATRA.
I would I had thy inches, thou shouldst know
There were a heart in Egypt.

ANTONY.
Hear me, queen:
The strong necessity of time commands
Our services awhile, but my full heart
Remains in use with you. Our Italy
Shines o'er with civil swords; Sextus Pompeius
Makes his approaches to the port of Rome;
Equality of two domestic powers
Breed scrupulous faction; the hated, grown to strength,
Are newly grown to love; the condemned Pompey,
Rich in his father's honour, creeps apace

Into the hearts of such as have not thrived
Upon the present state, whose numbers threaten;
And quietness, grown sick of rest, would purge
By any desperate change. My more particular,
And that which most with you should save my going,
Is Fulvia's death.

CLEOPATRA.

Though age from folly could not give me freedom,
It does from childishness. Can Fulvia die?

ANTONY.

She's dead, my queen.
Look here, and at thy sovereign leisure read
The garboils she awaked; at the last, best,
See when and where she died.

CLEOPATRA.

O most false love!
Where be the sacred vials thou shouldst fill
With sorrowful water? Now I see, I see,
In Fulvia's death how mine received shall be.

ANTONY.

Quarrel no more, but be prepared to know
The purposes I bear; which are, or cease,
As you shall give th' advice. By the fire
That quickens Nilus' slime, I go from hence
Thy soldier, servant, making peace or war
As thou affects.

CLEOPATRA.

Cut my lace, Charmian, come!
But let it be; I am quickly ill and well,
So Antony loves.

ANTONY.

My precious queen, forbear,
And give true evidence to his love, which stands
An honourable trial.

CLEOPATRA.

So Fulvia told me.
I prithee, turn aside and weep for her,
Then bid adieu to me, and say the tears
Belong to Egypt. Good now, play one scene
Of excellent dissembling, and let it look
Like perfect honour.

ANTONY.

You'll heat my blood. No more.

CLEOPATRA.

You can do better yet, but this is meetly.

ANTONY.

Now, by my sword?

CLEOPATRA.

And target. Still he mends.

But this is not the best. Look, prithee, Charmian,
How this Herculean Roman does become
The carriage of his chafe.

ANTONY.

I'll leave you, lady.

CLEOPATRA.

Courteous lord, one word.

Sir, you and I must part, but that's not it;
Sir, you and I have loved, but there's not it;
That you know well. Something it is I would?
O, my oblivion is a very Antony,
And I am all forgotten.

ANTONY.

But that your royalty
Holds idleness your subject, I should take you
For idleness itself.

CLEOPATRA.

'Tis sweating labour
To bear such idleness so near the heart
As Cleopatra this. But, sir, forgive me,
Since my becoming kill me when they do not
Eye well to you. Your honour calls you hence;
Therefore be deaf to my unpitied folly,
And all the gods go with you! Upon your sword
Sit laurel victory, and smooth success
Be strewed before your feet!

ANTONY.

Let us go. Come.
Our separation so abides and flies
That thou, residing here, goes yet with me,
And I, hence fleeting, here remain with thee.
Away!

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IV. Rome. An Apartment in Caesar's House.

Enter Octavius [Caesar], Lepidus and their train.

CAESAR.

You may see, Lepidus, and henceforth know,
It is not Caesar's natural vice to hate
Our great competitor. From Alexandria

This is the news: he fishes, drinks, and wastes
The lamps of night in revel: is not more manlike
Than Cleopatra, nor the queen of Ptolemy
More womanly than he; hardly gave audience, or
Vouchsafed to think he had partners. You shall find there
A man who is the abstract of all faults
That all men follow.

LEPIDUS.

I must not think there are
Evils enough to darken all his goodness.
His faults in him seem as the spots of heaven,
More fiery by night's blackness; hereditary
Rather than purchased; what he cannot change
Than what he chooses.

CAESAR.

You are too indulgent. Let's grant it is not
Amis to tumble on the bed of Ptolemy,
To give a kingdom for a mirth, to sit
And keep the turn of tippling with a slave,
To reel the streets at noon, and stand the buffet
With knaves that smell of sweat. Say this becomes him?
As his composure must be rare indeed
Whom these things cannot blemish? yet must Antony
No way excuse his foils when we do bear
So great weight in his lightness. If he filled
His vacancy with his voluptuousness,
Full surfeits and the dryness of his bones
Call on him for't. But to confound such time
That drums him from his sport, and speaks as loud
As his own state and ours, 'tis to be chid
As we rate boys who, being mature in knowledge,
Pawn their experience to their present pleasure
And so rebel to judgment.

Enter a Messenger.

LEPIDUS.

Here's more news.

MESSENGER.

Thy biddings have been done, and every hour,
Most noble Caesar, shalt thou have report
How 'tis abroad. Pompey is strong at sea,
And it appears he is beloved of those
That only have feared Caesar. To the ports
The discontents repair, and men's reports
Give him much wronged.

CAESAR.

I should have known no less.
It hath been taught us from the primal state
That he which is was wished until he were,

And the ebb'd man, ne'er loved till ne'er worth love,
Comes deard by being lack'd. This common body,
Like to a vagabond flag upon the stream,
Goes to and back, lackeying the varying tide,
To rot itself with motion.

Enter a second Messenger.

SECOND MESSENGER.

Caesar, I bring thee word
Menecrates and Menas, famous pirates,
Make the sea serve them, which they ear and wound
With keels of every kind. Many hot inroads
They make in Italy?the borders maritime
Lack blood to think on?t?and flush youth revolt.
No vessel can peep forth but ?tis as soon
Taken as seen; for Pompey?s name strikes more
Than could his war resisted.

CAESAR.

Antony,
Leave thy lascivious wassails. When thou once
Was beaten from Modena, where thou slew?st
Hirtius and Pansa, consuls, at thy heel
Did famine follow, whom thou fought?st against,
Though daintily brought up, with patience more
Than savages could suffer. Thou didst drink
The stale of horses and the gilded puddle
Which beasts would cough at. Thy palate then did deign
The roughest berry on the rudest hedge.
Yea, like the stag when snow the pasture sheets,
The barks of trees thou browsed. On the Alps
It is reported thou didst eat strange flesh
Which some did die to look on. And all this?
It wounds thine honour that I speak it now?
Was borne so like a soldier that thy cheek
So much as lank'd not.

LEPIDUS.

?Tis pity of him.

CAESAR.

Let his shames quickly
Drive him to Rome. ?Tis time we twain
Did show ourselves i? th? field, and to that end
Assemble we immediate council. Pompey
Thrives in our idleness.

LEPIDUS.

Tomorrow, Caesar,
I shall be furnished to inform you rightly
Both what by sea and land I can be able
To front this present time.

CAESAR.

Till which encounter

It is my business too. Farewell.

LEPIDUS.

Farewell, my lord. What you shall know meantime

Of stirs abroad, I shall beseech you, sir,

To let me be partaker.

CAESAR.

Doubt not, sir.

I knew it for my bond.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE V. Alexandria. A Room in the Palace.

Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras and Mardian.

CLEOPATRA.

Charmian!

CHARMIAN.

Madam?

CLEOPATRA.

Ha, ha!

Give me to drink mandragora.

CHARMIAN.

Why, madam?

CLEOPATRA.

That I might sleep out this great gap of time

My Antony is away.

CHARMIAN.

You think of him too much.

CLEOPATRA.

O, 'tis treason!

CHARMIAN.

Madam, I trust not so.

CLEOPATRA.

Thou, eunuch Mardian!

MARDIAN.

What's your highness' pleasure?

CLEOPATRA.

Not now to hear thee sing. I take no pleasure

In aught an eunuch has. 'Tis well for thee

That, being unseminared, thy freer thoughts
May not fly forth of Egypt. Hast thou affections?

MARDIAN.

Yes, gracious madam.

CLEOPATRA.

Indeed?

MARDIAN.

Not in deed, madam, for I can do nothing
But what indeed is honest to be done.
Yet have I fierce affections, and think
What Venus did with Mars.

CLEOPATRA.

O, Charmian,
Where think'st thou he is now? Stands he, or sits he?
Or does he walk? Or is he on his horse?
O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony!
Do bravely, horse, for wot'st thou whom thou mov'st?
The demi-Atlas of this earth, the arm
And burgonet of men. He's speaking now,
Or murmuring 'Where's my serpent of old Nile??
For so he calls me. Now I feed myself
With most delicious poison. Think on me
That am with Ph'bus' amorous pinches black,
And wrinkled deep in time? Broad-fronted Caesar,
When thou wast here above the ground, I was
A morsel for a monarch. And great Pompey
Would stand and make his eyes grow in my brow;
There would he anchor his aspect, and die
With looking on his life.

Enter Alexas.

ALEXAS.

Sovereign of Egypt, hail!

CLEOPATRA.

How much unlike art thou Mark Antony!
Yet, coming from him, that great medicine hath
With his tinct gilded thee.
How goes it with my brave Mark Antony?

ALEXAS.

Last thing he did, dear queen,
He kissed the last of many doubled kisses?
This orient pearl. His speech sticks in my heart.

CLEOPATRA.

Mine ear must pluck it thence.

ALEXAS.

?Good friend,? quoth he,
?Say, the firm Roman to great Egypt sends
This treasure of an oyster; at whose foot,
To mend the petty present, I will piece
Her opulent throne with kingdoms. All the east,
Say thou, shall call her mistress.? So he nodded
And soberly did mount an arm-gaunt steed,
Who neighed so high that what I would have spoke
Was beastly dumb'd by him.

CLEOPATRA.

What, was he sad or merry?

ALEXAS.

Like to the time o' th' year between the extremes
Of hot and cold, he was nor sad nor merry.

CLEOPATRA.

O well-divided disposition! ?Note him,
Note him, good Charmian, ?tis the man; but note him:
He was not sad, for he would shine on those
That make their looks by his; he was not merry,
Which seemed to tell them his remembrance lay
In Egypt with his joy; but between both.
O heavenly mingle! ?Be?st thou sad or merry,
The violence of either thee becomes,
So does it no man else. ?Met?st thou my posts?

ALEXAS.

Ay, madam, twenty several messengers.
Why do you send so thick?

CLEOPATRA.

Who?s born that day
When I forget to send to Antony
Shall die a beggar. ?Ink and paper, Charmian. ?
Welcome, my good Alexas. ?Did I, Charmian,
Ever love Caesar so?

CHARMIAN.

O that brave Caesar!

CLEOPATRA.

Be choked with such another emphasis!
Say ?the brave Antony.?

CHARMIAN.

The valiant Caesar!

CLEOPATRA.

By Isis, I will give thee bloody teeth
If thou with Caesar paragon again
My man of men.

CHARMIAN.

By your most gracious pardon,
I sing but after you.

CLEOPATRA.

My salad days,
When I was green in judgment, cold in blood,
To say as I said then. But come, away,
Get me ink and paper.
He shall have every day a several greeting,
Or I'll unpeople Egypt.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT II

SCENE I. Messina. A Room in Pompey's house.

Enter Pompey, Menecrates and Menas in warlike manner.

POMPEY.

If the great gods be just, they shall assist
The deeds of justest men.

MENECRATES.

Know, worthy Pompey,
That what they do delay they not deny.

POMPEY.

Whiles we are suitors to their throne, decays
The thing we sue for.

MENECRATES.

We, ignorant of ourselves,
Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers
Deny us for our good; so find we profit
By losing of our prayers.

POMPEY.

I shall do well.
The people love me, and the sea is mine;
My powers are crescent, and my auguring hope
Says it will come to th' full. Mark Antony
In Egypt sits at dinner, and will make
No wars without doors. Caesar gets money where
He loses hearts. Lepidus flatters both,
Of both is flattered; but he neither loves
Nor either cares for him.

MENAS.

Caesar and Lepidus
Are in the field. A mighty strength they carry.

POMPEY.
Where have you this? 'Tis false.

MENAS.
From Silvius, sir.

POMPEY.
He dreams. I know they are in Rome together,
Looking for Antony. But all the charms of love,
Salt Cleopatra, soften thy waned lip!
Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both;
Tie up the libertine in a field of feasts;
Keep his brain fuming. Epicurean cooks
Sharpen with cloyless sauce his appetite,
That sleep and feeding may prorogue his honour
Even till a Lethe'd dullness?

Enter Varrius.

How now, Varrius!

VARRIUS.
This is most certain that I shall deliver:
Mark Antony is every hour in Rome
Expected. Since he went from Egypt 'tis
A space for farther travel.

POMPEY.
I could have given less matter
A better ear. Menas, I did not think
This amorous surfeiter would have donned his helm
For such a petty war. His soldiership
Is twice the other twain. But let us rear
The higher our opinion, that our stirring
Can from the lap of Egypt's widow pluck
The never-lust-wearied Antony.

MENAS.
I cannot hope
Caesar and Antony shall well greet together.
His wife that's dead did trespasses to Caesar;
His brother warred upon him, although I think,
Not moved by Antony.

POMPEY.
I know not, Menas,
How lesser enmities may give way to greater.
Were't not that we stand up against them all,
'Twere pregnant they should square between themselves,
For they have entertained cause enough
To draw their swords. But how the fear of us

May cement their divisions, and bind up
The petty difference, we yet not know.
Be't as our gods will have't! It only stands
Our lives upon to use our strongest hands.
Come, Menas.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Rome. A Room in the House of Lepidus.

Enter Enobarbus and Lepidus.

LEPIDUS.

Good Enobarbus, 'tis a worthy deed,
And shall become you well, to entreat your captain
To soft and gentle speech.

ENOBARBUS.

I shall entreat him
To answer like himself. If Caesar move him,
Let Antony look over Caesar's head
And speak as loud as Mars. By Jupiter,
Were I the wearer of Antonius' beard,
I would not shave't today.

LEPIDUS.

'Tis not a time
For private stomaching.

ENOBARBUS.

Every time
Serves for the matter that is then born in't.

LEPIDUS.

But small to greater matters must give way.

ENOBARBUS.

Not if the small come first.

LEPIDUS.

Your speech is passion;
But pray you stir no embers up. Here comes
The noble Antony.

Enter Antony and Ventidius.

ENOBARBUS.

And yonder Caesar.

Enter Caesar, Maecenas and Agrippa.

ANTONY.

If we compose well here, to Parthia.
Hark, Ventidius.

CAESAR.

I do not know, Maecenas. Ask Agrippa.

LEPIDUS.

Noble friends,

That which combined us was most great, and let not

A leaner action rend us. What's amiss,

May it be gently heard. When we debate

Our trivial difference loud, we do commit

Murder in healing wounds. Then, noble partners,

The rather for I earnestly beseech,

Touch you the sourest points with sweetest terms,

Nor curstness grow to th' matter.

ANTONY.

'Tis spoken well.

Were we before our armies, and to fight,

I should do thus.

CAESAR.

Welcome to Rome.

ANTONY.

Thank you.

CAESAR.

Sit.

ANTONY.

Sit, sir.

CAESAR.

Nay, then.

ANTONY.

I learn you take things ill which are not so,

Or being, concern you not.

CAESAR.

I must be laughed at

If, or for nothing or a little, I

Should say myself offended, and with you

Chiefly in th' world; more laughed at that I should

Once name you derogately when to sound your name

It not concerned me.

ANTONY.

My being in Egypt, Caesar,

What was't to you?

CAESAR.

No more than my residing here at Rome

Might be to you in Egypt. Yet if you there

Did practise on my state, your being in Egypt
Might be my question.

ANTONY.

How intend you, practised?

CAESAR.

You may be pleased to catch at mine intent
By what did here befall me. Your wife and brother
Made wars upon me, and their contestation
Was theme for you; you were the word of war.

ANTONY.

You do mistake your business. My brother never
Did urge me in his act. I did inquire it,
And have my learning from some true reports
That drew their swords with you. Did he not rather
Discredit my authority with yours,
And make the wars alike against my stomach,
Having alike your cause? Of this my letters
Before did satisfy you. If you'll patch a quarrel,
As matter whole you have not to make it with,
It must not be with this.

CAESAR.

You praise yourself
By laying defects of judgment to me; but
You patched up your excuses.

ANTONY.

Not so, not so.
I know you could not lack? I am certain on't?
Very necessity of this thought, that I,
Your partner in the cause 'gainst which he fought,
Could not with graceful eyes attend those wars
Which fronted mine own peace. As for my wife,
I would you had her spirit in such another.
The third o' th' world is yours, which with a snaffle
You may pace easy, but not such a wife.

ENOBARBUS.

Would we had all such wives, that the men
Might go to wars with the women.

ANTONY.

So much uncurbable, her garboils, Caesar,
Made out of her impatience? which not wanted
Shrewdness of policy too? I grieving grant
Did you too much disquiet. For that you must
But say I could not help it.

CAESAR.

I wrote to you
When rioting in Alexandria; you

Did pocket up my letters, and with taunts
Did gibe my missive out of audience.

ANTONY.

Sir,
He fell upon me ere admitted, then.
Three kings I had newly feasted, and did want
Of what I was i? th? morning. But next day
I told him of myself, which was as much
As to have asked him pardon. Let this fellow
Be nothing of our strife; if we contend,
Out of our question wipe him.

CAESAR.

You have broken
The article of your oath, which you shall never
Have tongue to charge me with.

LEPIDUS.

Soft, Caesar!

ANTONY.

No, Lepidus, let him speak.
The honour is sacred which he talks on now,
Supposing that I lacked it. But on, Caesar:
The article of my oath?

CAESAR.

To lend me arms and aid when I required them,
The which you both denied.

ANTONY.

Neglected, rather;
And then when poisoned hours had bound me up
From mine own knowledge. As nearly as I may
I'll play the penitent to you. But mine honesty
Shall not make poor my greatness, nor my power
Work without it. Truth is that Fulvia,
To have me out of Egypt, made wars here,
For which myself, the ignorant motive, do
So far ask pardon as befits mine honour
To stoop in such a case.

LEPIDUS.

?Tis noble spoken.

MAECENAS.

If it might please you to enforce no further
The griefs between ye; to forget them quite
Were to remember that the present need
Speaks to atone you.

LEPIDUS.

Worthily spoken, Maecenas.

ENOBARBUS.

Or, if you borrow one another's love for the instant, you may, when you hear no more words of Pompey, return it again. You shall have time to wrangle in when you have nothing else to do.

ANTONY.

Thou art a soldier only. Speak no more.

ENOBARBUS.

That truth should be silent I had almost forgot.

ANTONY.

You wrong this presence; therefore speak no more.

ENOBARBUS.

Go to, then. Your considerate stone!

CAESAR.

I do not much dislike the matter, but
The manner of his speech; for't cannot be
We shall remain in friendship, our conditions
So differing in their acts. Yet if I knew
What hoop should hold us staunch, from edge to edge
O? th? world I would pursue it.

AGRIPPA.

Give me leave, Caesar.

CAESAR.

Speak, Agrippa.

AGRIPPA.

Thou hast a sister by the mother's side,
Admired Octavia. Great Mark Antony
Is now a widower.

CAESAR.

Say not so, Agrippa.
If Cleopatra heard you, your reproof
Were well deserved of rashness.

ANTONY.

I am not married, Caesar. Let me hear
Agrippa further speak.

AGRIPPA.

To hold you in perpetual amity,
To make you brothers, and to knit your hearts
With an unslipping knot, take Antony
Octavia to his wife; whose beauty claims
No worse a husband than the best of men;
Whose virtue and whose general graces speak
That which none else can utter. By this marriage

All little jealousies, which now seem great,
And all great fears, which now import their dangers,
Would then be nothing. Truths would be tales,
Where now half-tales be truths. Her love to both
Would each to other, and all loves to both,
Draw after her. Pardon what I have spoke,
For 'tis a studied, not a present thought,
By duty ruminated.

ANTONY.
Will Caesar speak?

CAESAR.
Not till he hears how Antony is touched
With what is spoke already.

ANTONY.
What power is in Agrippa,
If I would say 'Agrippa, be it so,'
To make this good?

CAESAR.
The power of Caesar, and
His power unto Octavia.

ANTONY.
May I never
To this good purpose, that so fairly shows,
Dream of impediment! Let me have thy hand.
Further this act of grace; and from this hour
The heart of brothers govern in our loves
And sway our great designs!

CAESAR.
There's my hand.
A sister I bequeath you, whom no brother
Did ever love so dearly. Let her live
To join our kingdoms and our hearts; and never
Fly off our loves again!

LEPIDUS.
Happily, amen!

ANTONY.
I did not think to draw my sword 'gainst Pompey,
For he hath laid strange courtesies and great
Of late upon me. I must thank him only,
Lest my remembrance suffer ill report;
At heel of that, defy him.

LEPIDUS.
Time calls upon 's.
Of us must Pompey presently be sought,
Or else he seeks out us.

ANTONY.
Where lies he?

CAESAR.
About the Mount Misena.

ANTONY.
What is his strength by land?

CAESAR.
Great and increasing; but by sea
He is an absolute master.

ANTONY.
So is the fame.
Would we had spoke together! Haste we for it.
Yet, ere we put ourselves in arms, dispatch we
The business we have talked of.

CAESAR.
With most gladness,
And do invite you to my sister's view,
Whither straight I'll lead you.

ANTONY.
Let us, Lepidus, not lack your company.

LEPIDUS.
Noble Antony, not sickness should detain me.

[_Flourish. Exeunt all except Enobarbus, Agrippa and Maecenas._]

MAECENAS.
Welcome from Egypt, sir.

ENOBARBUS.
Half the heart of Caesar, worthy Maecenas! My honourable friend,
Agrippa!

AGRIPPA.
Good Enobarbus!

MAECENAS.
We have cause to be glad that matters are so well digested. You stayed
well by 't in Egypt.

ENOBARBUS.
Ay, sir, we did sleep day out of countenance and made the night light
with drinking.

MAECENAS.
Eight wild boars roasted whole at a breakfast, and but twelve persons
there. Is this true?

ENOBARBUS.

This was but as a fly by an eagle. We had much more monstrous matter of feast, which worthily deserved noting.

MAECENAS.

She's a most triumphant lady, if report be square to her.

ENOBARBUS.

When she first met Mark Antony, she pursed up his heart upon the river of Cydnus.

AGRIPPA.

There she appeared indeed, or my reporter devised well for her.

ENOBARBUS.

I will tell you.

The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Burned on the water. The poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver,
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggared all description: she did lie
In her pavilion, cloth-of-gold of tissue,
O'erpicturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature. On each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With divers-coloured fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did.

AGRIPPA.

O, rare for Antony!

ENOBARBUS.

Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,
So many mermaids, tended her i' th' eyes,
And made their bends adornings. At the helm
A seeming mermaid steers. The silken tackle
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
Her people out upon her, and Antony,
Enthroned i' th' market-place, did sit alone,
Whistling to th' air, which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,
And made a gap in nature.

AGRIPPA.

Rare Egyptian!

ENOBARBUS.

Upon her landing, Antony sent to her,
Invited her to supper. She replied
It should be better he became her guest,
Which she entreated. Our courteous Antony,
Whom ne'er the word of 'No' woman heard speak,
Being barbered ten times o'er, goes to the feast,
And, for his ordinary, pays his heart
For what his eyes eat only.

AGRIPPA.

Royal wench!
She made great Caesar lay his sword to bed.
He ploughed her, and she cropped.

ENOBARBUS.

I saw her once
Hop forty paces through the public street
And, having lost her breath, she spoke and panted,
That she did make defect perfection,
And, breathless, pour breath forth.

MAECENAS.

Now Antony must leave her utterly.

ENOBARBUS.

Never. He will not.
Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety. Other women cloy
The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry
Where most she satisfies. For vilest things
Become themselves in her, that the holy priests
Bless her when she is riggish.

MAECENAS.

If beauty, wisdom, modesty can settle
The heart of Antony, Octavia is
A blessed lottery to him.

AGRIPPA.

Let us go.
Good Enobarbus, make yourself my guest
Whilst you abide here.

ENOBARBUS.

Humbly, sir, I thank you.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. Rome. A Room in Caesar's House.

Enter Antony, Caesar, Octavia between them.

ANTONY.

The world and my great office will sometimes
Divide me from your bosom.

OCTAVIA.

All which time
Before the gods my knee shall bow my prayers
To them for you.

ANTONY.

Good night, sir. My Octavia,
Read not my blemishes in the world's report.
I have not kept my square, but that to come
Shall all be done by thy rule. Good night, dear lady.

OCTAVIA.

Good night, sir.

CAESAR.

Good night.

[_Exeunt Caesar and Octavia._]

Enter Soothsayer.

ANTONY.

Now, sirrah, you do wish yourself in Egypt?

SOOTHSAYER.

Would I had never come from thence, nor you thither!

ANTONY.

If you can, your reason.

SOOTHSAYER.

I see it in my motion, have it not in my tongue.
But yet hie you to Egypt again.

ANTONY.

Say to me,
Whose fortunes shall rise higher, Caesar's or mine?

SOOTHSAYER.

Caesar's.
Therefore, O Antony, stay not by his side.
Thy dæmon—that thy spirit which keeps thee—is
Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,
Where Caesar's is not. But near him, thy angel
Becomes afraid, as being overpowered. Therefore
Make space enough between you.

ANTONY.

Speak this no more.

SOOTHSAYER.

To none but thee; no more but when to thee.
If thou dost play with him at any game,
Thou art sure to lose; and of that natural luck
He beats thee 'gainst the odds. Thy lustre thickens
When he shines by. I say again, thy spirit
Is all afraid to govern thee near him;
But, he away, 'tis noble.

ANTONY.

Get thee gone.
Say to Ventidius I would speak with him.

[_Exit Soothsayer._]

He shall to Parthia. Be it art or hap,
He hath spoken true. The very dice obey him,
And in our sports my better cunning faints
Under his chance. If we draw lots, he speeds;
His cocks do win the battle still of mine
When it is all to naught, and his quails ever
Beat mine, inhooped, at odds. I will to Egypt:
And though I make this marriage for my peace,
I? th? East my pleasure lies.

Enter Ventidius.

O, come, Ventidius,
You must to Parthia. Your commission's ready.
Follow me and receive 't.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IV. Rome. A street.

Enter Lepidus, Maecenas and Agrippa.

LEPIDUS.

Trouble yourselves no further. Pray you hasten
Your generals after.

AGRIPPA.

Sir, Mark Antony
Will e'en but kiss Octavia, and we'll follow.

LEPIDUS.

Till I shall see you in your soldier's dress,
Which will become you both, farewell.

MAECENAS.

We shall,
As I conceive the journey, be at the Mount
Before you, Lepidus.

LEPIDUS.

Your way is shorter;
My purposes do draw me much about.
You?ll win two days upon me.

BOTH.
Sir, good success!

LEPIDUS.
Farewell.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE V. Alexandria. A Room in the Palace.

Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras, Alexas.

CLEOPATRA.
Give me some music?music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.

ALL.
The music, ho!

Enter Mardian, the eunuch.

CLEOPATRA.
Let it alone. Let?s to billiards. Come, Charmian.

CHARMIAN.
My arm is sore. Best play with Mardian.

CLEOPATRA.
As well a woman with an eunuch played
As with a woman. Come, you?ll play with me, sir?

MARDIAN.
As well as I can, madam.

CLEOPATRA.
And when good will is showed, though?t come too short,
The actor may plead pardon. I?ll none now.
Give me mine angle; we?ll to the river. There,
My music playing far off, I will betray
Tawny-finned fishes. My bended hook shall pierce
Their slimy jaws, and as I draw them up
I?ll think them every one an Antony,
And say ?Ah, ha! You?re caught.?

CHARMIAN.
?Twas merry when
You wagered on your angling; when your diver
Did hang a salt fish on his hook, which he
With fervency drew up.

CLEOPATRA.

That time??O times!?

I laughed him out of patience; and that night
I laughed him into patience, and next morn,
Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed,
Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst
I wore his sword Philippan.

Enter Messenger.

O! from Italy!

Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears,
That long time have been barren.

MESSENGER.

Madam, madam?

CLEOPATRA.

Antony?s dead! If thou say so, villain,
Thou kill?st thy mistress. But well and free,
If thou so yield him, there is gold, and here
My bluest veins to kiss, a hand that kings
Have lipped, and trembled kissing.

MESSENGER.

First, madam, he?s well.

CLEOPATRA.

Why, there?s more gold.
But sirrah, mark, we use
To say the dead are well. Bring it to that,
The gold I give thee will I melt and pour
Down thy ill-uttering throat.

MESSENGER.

Good madam, hear me.

CLEOPATRA.

Well, go to, I will.
But there?s no goodness in thy face if Antony
Be free and healthful. So tart a favour
To trumpet such good tidings! If not well,
Thou shouldst come like a Fury crowned with snakes,
Not like a formal man.

MESSENGER.

Will?t please you hear me?

CLEOPATRA.

I have a mind to strike thee ere thou speak?st.
Yet if thou say Antony lives, is well,
Or friends with Caesar, or not captive to him,
I?ll set thee in a shower of gold and hail
Rich pearls upon thee.

MESSENGER.

Madam, he's well.

CLEOPATRA.

Well said.

MESSENGER.

And friends with Caesar.

CLEOPATRA.

Thou art an honest man.

MESSENGER.

Caesar and he are greater friends than ever.

CLEOPATRA.

Make thee a fortune from me.

MESSENGER.

But yet, madam?

CLEOPATRA.

I do not like 'But yet?', it does allay
The good precedence. Fie upon 'But yet?!'
'But yet?' is as a gaoler to bring forth
Some monstrous malefactor. Prithee, friend,
Pour out the pack of matter to mine ear,
The good and bad together: he's friends with Caesar,
In state of health, thou say'st; and, thou say'st, free.

MESSENGER.

Free, madam? No. I made no such report.
He's bound unto Octavia.

CLEOPATRA.

For what good turn?

MESSENGER.

For the best turn it's thy bed.

CLEOPATRA.

I am pale, Charmian.

MESSENGER.

Madam, he's married to Octavia.

CLEOPATRA.

The most infectious pestilence upon thee!

[_Strikes him down._]

MESSENGER.

Good madam, patience.

CLEOPATRA.
What say you?

[_Strikes him again._]

Hence, horrible villain, or I'll spurn thine eyes
Like balls before me! I'll unhair thy head!

[_She hales him up and down._]

Thou shalt be whipped with wire and stewed in brine,
Smarting in ling?ring pickle.

MESSENGER.
Gracious madam,
I that do bring the news made not the match.

CLEOPATRA.
Say 'tis not so, a province I will give thee,
And make thy fortunes proud. The blow thou hadst
Shall make thy peace for moving me to rage,
And I will boot thee with what gift beside
Thy modesty can beg.

MESSENGER.
He's married, madam.

CLEOPATRA.
Rogue, thou hast lived too long.

[_Draws a knife._]

MESSENGER.
Nay then I'll run.
What mean you, madam? I have made no fault.

[_Exit._]

CHARMIAN.
Good madam, keep yourself within yourself.
The man is innocent.

CLEOPATRA.
Some innocents 'scape not the thunderbolt.
Melt Egypt into Nile, and kindly creatures
Turn all to serpents! Call the slave again.
Though I am mad, I will not bite him. Call!

CHARMIAN.
He is afeard to come.

CLEOPATRA.
I will not hurt him.

[_Exit Charmian._]

These hands do lack nobility that they strike
A meaner than myself, since I myself
Have given myself the cause.

Enter the Messenger again with Charmian.

Come hither, sir.
Though it be honest, it is never good
To bring bad news. Give to a gracious message
An host of tongues, but let ill tidings tell
Themselves when they be felt.

MESSENGER.
I have done my duty.

CLEOPATRA.
Is he married?
I cannot hate thee worser than I do
If thou again say ?Yes.?

MESSENGER.
He?s married, madam.

CLEOPATRA.
The gods confound thee! Dost thou hold there still!

MESSENGER.
Should I lie, madam?

CLEOPATRA.
O, I would thou didst,
So half my Egypt were submerged and made
A cistern for scaled snakes! Go, get thee hence.
Hadst thou Narcissus in thy face, to me
Thou wouldst appear most ugly. He is married?

MESSENGER.
I crave your highness? pardon.

CLEOPATRA.
He is married?

MESSENGER.
Take no offence that I would not offend you.
To punish me for what you make me do
Seems much unequal. He?s married to Octavia.

CLEOPATRA.
O, that his fault should make a knave of thee
That art not what thou?rt sure of! Get thee hence!
The merchandise which thou hast brought from Rome

Are all too dear for me. Lie they upon thy hand,
And be undone by ?em!

[_Exit Messenger._]

CHARMIAN.

Good your highness, patience.

CLEOPATRA.

In praising Antony I have dispraised Caesar.

CHARMIAN.

Many times, madam.

CLEOPATRA.

I am paid for?t now.

Lead me from hence;

I faint. O Iras, Charmian! ?Tis no matter.

Go to the fellow, good Alexas, bid him

Report the feature of Octavia, her years,

Her inclination; let him not leave out

The colour of her hair. Bring me word quickly.

[_Exit Alexas._]

Let him for ever go?let him not, Charmian.

Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon,

The other way ?s a Mars. [_To Mardian_] Bid you Alexas

Bring me word how tall she is. Pity me, Charmian,

But do not speak to me. Lead me to my chamber.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VI. Near Misenum.

Flourish. Enter Pompey and Menas at one door, with drum and trumpet;
at another, Caesar, Lepidus, Antony, Enobarbus, Maecenas, Agrippa,
with Soldiers marching.

POMPEY.

Your hostages I have, so have you mine,

And we shall talk before we fight.

CAESAR.

Most meet

That first we come to words, and therefore have we

Our written purposes before us sent,

Which if thou hast considered, let us know

If ?twill tie up thy discontented sword

And carry back to Sicily much tall youth

That else must perish here.

POMPEY.

To you all three,

The senators alone of this great world,
Chief factors for the gods: I do not know
Wherefore my father should revengers want,
Having a son and friends, since Julius Caesar,
Who at Philippi the good Brutus ghosted,
There saw you labouring for him. What was't
That moved pale Cassius to conspire? And what
Made the all-honoured, honest Roman, Brutus,
With the armed rest, courtiers of beauteous freedom,
To drench the Capitol, but that they would
Have one man but a man? And that is it
Hath made me rig my navy, at whose burden
The angered ocean foams, with which I meant
To scourge th' ingratitude that despiteful Rome
Cast on my noble father.

CAESAR.

Take your time.

ANTONY.

Thou canst not fear us, Pompey, with thy sails.
We'll speak with thee at sea. At land thou know'st
How much we do o'ercount thee.

POMPEY.

At land indeed
Thou dost o'ercount me of my father's house;
But since the cuckoo builds not for himself,
Remain in't as thou mayst.

LEPIDUS.

Be pleased to tell us?
For this is from the present how you take
The offers we have sent you.

CAESAR.

There's the point.

ANTONY.

Which do not be entreated to, but weigh
What it is worth embraced.

CAESAR.

And what may follow
To try a larger fortune.

POMPEY.

You have made me offer
Of Sicily, Sardinia; and I must
Rid all the sea of pirates; then to send
Measures of wheat to Rome. This 'greed upon,
To part with unhacked edges and bear back
Our targes undinted.

CAESAR, ANTONY, and LEPIDUS.
That's our offer.

POMPEY.
Know, then,
I came before you here a man prepared
To take this offer. But Mark Antony
Put me to some impatience. Though I lose
The praise of it by telling, you must know
When Caesar and your brother were at blows,
Your mother came to Sicily and did find
Her welcome friendly.

ANTONY.
I have heard it, Pompey,
And am well studied for a liberal thanks
Which I do owe you.

POMPEY.
Let me have your hand.
I did not think, sir, to have met you here.

ANTONY.
The beds i' th' East are soft; and thanks to you,
That called me timelier than my purpose hither,
For I have gained by 't.

CAESAR.
Since I saw you last,
There is a change upon you.

POMPEY.
Well, I know not
What counts harsh Fortune casts upon my face,
But in my bosom shall she never come
To make my heart her vassal.

LEPIDUS.
Well met here.

POMPEY.
I hope so, Lepidus. Thus we are agreed.
I crave our composition may be written
And sealed between us.

CAESAR.
That's the next to do.

POMPEY.
We'll feast each other ere we part, and let's
Draw lots who shall begin.

ANTONY.
That will I, Pompey.

POMPEY.

No, Antony, take the lot.

But, first or last, your fine Egyptian cookery
Shall have the fame. I have heard that Julius Caesar
Grew fat with feasting there.

ANTONY.

You have heard much.

POMPEY.

I have fair meanings, sir.

ANTONY.

And fair words to them.

POMPEY.

Then so much have I heard.
And I have heard Apollodorus carried?

ENOBARBUS.

No more of that. He did so.

POMPEY.

What, I pray you?

ENOBARBUS.

A certain queen to Caesar in a mattress.

POMPEY.

I know thee now. How far'st thou, soldier?

ENOBARBUS.

Well;
And well am like to do, for I perceive
Four feasts are toward.

POMPEY.

Let me shake thy hand.
I never hated thee. I have seen thee fight
When I have envied thy behaviour.

ENOBARBUS.

Sir,
I never loved you much, but I ha? praised ye
When you have well deserved ten times as much
As I have said you did.

POMPEY.

Enjoy thy plainness;
It nothing ill becomes thee.
Aboard my galley I invite you all.
Will you lead, lords?

CAESAR, ANTONY, and LEPIDUS.

Show's the way, sir.

POMPEY.

Come.

[_Exeunt all but Enobarbus and Menas._]

MENAS.

[_Aside_] Thy father, Pompey, would ne'er have made this treaty.?

You and I have known, sir.

ENOBARBUS.

At sea, I think.

MENAS.

We have, sir.

ENOBARBUS.

You have done well by water.

MENAS.

And you by land.

ENOBARBUS.

I will praise any man that will praise me, though it cannot be denied what I have done by land.

MENAS.

Nor what I have done by water.

ENOBARBUS.

Yes, something you can deny for your own safety: you have been a great thief by sea.

MENAS.

And you by land.

ENOBARBUS.

There I deny my land service. But give me your hand, Menas. If our eyes had authority, here they might take two thieves kissing.

MENAS.

All men's faces are true, whatsoever their hands are.

ENOBARBUS.

But there is never a fair woman has a true face.

MENAS.

No slander. They steal hearts.

ENOBARBUS.

We came hither to fight with you.

MENAS.

For my part, I am sorry it is turned to a drinking. Pompey doth this day laugh away his fortune.

ENOBARBUS.

If he do, sure he cannot weep 't back again.

MENAS.

You have said, sir. We looked not for Mark Antony here. Pray you, is he married to Cleopatra?

ENOBARBUS.

Caesar's sister is called Octavia.

MENAS.

True, sir. She was the wife of Caius Marcellus.

ENOBARBUS.

But she is now the wife of Marcus Antonius.

MENAS.

Pray you, sir?

ENOBARBUS.

'Tis true.

MENAS.

Then is Caesar and he for ever knit together.

ENOBARBUS.

If I were bound to divine of this unity, I would not prophesy so.

MENAS.

I think the policy of that purpose made more in the marriage than the love of the parties.

ENOBARBUS.

I think so too. But you shall find the band that seems to tie their friendship together will be the very strangler of their amity. Octavia is of a holy, cold, and still conversation.

MENAS.

Who would not have his wife so?

ENOBARBUS.

Not he that himself is not so; which is Mark Antony. He will to his Egyptian dish again. Then shall the sighs of Octavia blow the fire up in Caesar, and, as I said before, that which is the strength of their amity shall prove the immediate author of their variance. Antony will use his affection where it is. He married but his occasion here.

MENAS.

And thus it may be. Come, sir, will you aboard? I have a health for you.

ENOBARBUS.

I shall take it, sir. We have used our throats in Egypt.

MENAS.

Come, let's away.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VII. On board Pompey's Galley, lying near Misenum.

Music. Enter two or three Servants with a banquet.

FIRST SERVANT.

Here they'll be, man. Some o' their plants are ill-rooted already; the least wind i' th' world will blow them down.

SECOND SERVANT.

Lepidus is high-coloured.

FIRST SERVANT.

They have made him drink alms-drink.

SECOND SERVANT.

As they pinch one another by the disposition, he cries out 'no more?', reconciles them to his entreaty and himself to th' drink.

FIRST SERVANT.

But it raises the greater war between him and his discretion.

SECOND SERVANT.

Why, this it is to have a name in great men's fellowship. I had as lief have a reed that will do me no service as a partisan I could not heave.

FIRST SERVANT.

To be called into a huge sphere, and not to be seen to move in 't, are the holes where eyes should be, which pitifully disaster the cheeks.

A sennet sounded. Enter Caesar, Antony, Pompey, Lepidus, Agrippa, Maecenas, Enobarbus, Menas with other Captains.

ANTONY.

[_To Caesar_] Thus do they, sir: they take the flow o' th' Nile
By certain scales i' th' pyramid; they know
By th' height, the lowness, or the mean, if dearth
Or foison follow. The higher Nilus swells,
The more it promises. As it ebbs, the seedsman
Upon the slime and ooze scatters his grain,
And shortly comes to harvest.

LEPIDUS.

You've strange serpents there?

ANTONY.

Ay, Lepidus.

LEPIDUS.

Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of your sun; so is your crocodile.

ANTONY.

They are so.

POMPEY.

Sit, and some wine! A health to Lepidus!

LEPIDUS.

I am not so well as I should be, but I'll ne'er out.

ENOBARBUS.

Not till you have slept. I fear me you'll be in till then.

LEPIDUS.

Nay, certainly, I have heard the Ptolemies' pyramids are very goodly things. Without contradiction I have heard that.

MENAS.

[_Aside to Pompey_.] Pompey, a word.

POMPEY.

[_Aside to Menas_.] Say in mine ear what is 't?

MENAS.

[_Whispers in 's ear_.] Forsake thy seat, I do beseech thee, captain, And hear me speak a word.

POMPEY.

[_Aside to Menas_.] Forbear me till anon.?

This wine for Lepidus!

LEPIDUS.

What manner o' thing is your crocodile?

ANTONY.

It is shaped, sir, like itself, and it is as broad as it hath breadth. It is just so high as it is, and moves with it own organs. It lives by that which nourisheth it, and the elements once out of it, it transmigrates.

LEPIDUS.

What colour is it of?

ANTONY.

Of its own colour too.

LEPIDUS.

'Tis a strange serpent.

ANTONY.

'Tis so, and the tears of it are wet.

CAESAR.

Will this description satisfy him?

ANTONY.

With the health that Pompey gives him, else he is a very epicure.

POMPEY.

[_Aside to Menas._] Go hang, sir, hang! Tell me of that? Away!
Do as I bid you. Where's this cup I called for?

MENAS.

[_Aside to Pompey._] If for the sake of merit thou wilt hear me,
Rise from thy stool.

POMPEY.

[_Aside to Menas._] I think thou'rt mad.

[_Rises and walks aside._]

The matter?

MENAS.

I have ever held my cap off to thy fortunes.

POMPEY.

Thou hast served me with much faith. What's else to say??
Be jolly, lords.

ANTONY.

These quicksands, Lepidus,
Keep off them, for you sink.

MENAS.

Wilt thou be lord of all the world?

POMPEY.

What sayst thou?

MENAS.

Wilt thou be lord of the whole world?
That's twice.

POMPEY.

How should that be?

MENAS.

But entertain it,
And though you think me poor, I am the man
Will give thee all the world.

POMPEY.

Hast thou drunk well?

MENAS.

No, Pompey, I have kept me from the cup.
Thou art, if thou dar'st be, the earthly Jove.
Whate'er the ocean pales or sky inclips
Is thine, if thou wilt have't.

POMPEY.

Show me which way.

MENAS.

These three world-sharers, these competitors,
Are in thy vessel. Let me cut the cable,
And when we are put off, fall to their throats.
All then is thine.

POMPEY.

Ah, this thou shouldst have done
And not have spoke on 't! In me 'tis villainy;
In thee 't had been good service. Thou must know
'Tis not my profit that does lead mine honour;
Mine honour it. Repent that e'er thy tongue
Hath so betray'd thine act. Being done unknown,
I should have found it afterwards well done,
But must condemn it now. Desist, and drink.

MENAS.

[_Aside_] For this,
I'll never follow thy palled fortunes more.
Who seeks, and will not take when once 'tis offered,
Shall never find it more.

POMPEY.

This health to Lepidus!

ANTONY.

Bear him ashore. I'll pledge it for him, Pompey.

ENOBARBUS.

Here's to thee, Menas!

MENAS.

Enobarbus, welcome!

POMPEY.

Fill till the cup be hid.

ENOBARBUS.

There's a strong fellow, Menas.

[_Pointing to the servant who carries off Lepidus._]

MENAS.

Why?

ENOBARBUS.

?A bears the third part of the world, man. Seest not?

MENAS.

The third part, then, is drunk. Would it were all,
That it might go on wheels!

ENOBARBUS.

Drink thou. Increase the reels.

MENAS.

Come.

POMPEY.

This is not yet an Alexandrian feast.

ANTONY.

It ripens towards it. Strike the vessels, ho!
Here is to Caesar!

CAESAR.

I could well forbear?t.
It?s monstrous labour when I wash my brain
And it grows fouler.

ANTONY.

Be a child o? the time.

CAESAR.

Possess it, I?ll make answer.
But I had rather fast from all, four days,
Than drink so much in one.

ENOBARBUS.

[_To Antony_] Ha, my brave emperor,
Shall we dance now the Egyptian Bacchanals
And celebrate our drink?

POMPEY.

Let?s ha?t, good soldier.

ANTONY.

Come, let?s all take hands
Till that the conquering wine hath steeped our sense
In soft and delicate Lethe.

ENOBARBUS.

All take hands.
Make battery to our ears with the loud music,
The while I?ll place you; then the boy shall sing.
The holding every man shall beat as loud
As his strong sides can volley.

Music plays. Enobarbus places them hand in hand.

THE SONG.

Come, thou monarch of the vine,
Plumpy Bacchus with pink eyne!
In thy vats our cares be drowned,
With thy grapes our hairs be crowned.
Cup us till the world go round,
Cup us till the world go round!

CAESAR.

What would you more? Pompey, good night. Good brother,
Let me request you off. Our graver business
Frowns at this levity. Gentle lords, let's part.
You see we have burnt our cheeks. Strong Enobarb
Is weaker than the wine, and mine own tongue
Splits what it speaks. The wild disguise hath almost
Anticked us all. What needs more words. Good night.
Good Antony, your hand.

POMPEY.

I'll try you on the shore.

ANTONY.

And shall, sir. Give your hand.

POMPEY.

O Antony,
You have my father's house.
But, what? We are friends. Come, down into the boat.

ENOBARBUS.

Take heed you fall not.

[_Exeunt Pompey, Caesar, Antony and Attendants._]

Menas, I'll not on shore.

MENAS.

No, to my cabin. These drums, these trumpets, flutes! What!
Let Neptune hear we bid a loud farewell
To these great fellows. Sound and be hanged, sound out!

[_Sound a flourish with drums._]

ENOBARBUS.

Hoo, says 'a! There's my cap!

MENAS.

Hoo! Noble captain, come.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT III

SCENE I. A plain in Syria.

Enter Ventidius as it were in triumph, with Silius and other Romans, Officers and Soldiers; the dead body of Pacorus borne before him.

VENTIDIUS.

Now, darting Parthia, art thou struck, and now
Pleased Fortune does of Marcus Crassus' death
Make me revenger. Bear the king's son's body
Before our army. Thy Pacorus, Orodes,
Pays this for Marcus Crassus.

SILIUS.

Noble Ventidius,
Whilst yet with Parthian blood thy sword is warm,
The fugitive Parthians follow. Spur through Media,
Mesopotamia, and the shelters whither
The routed fly. So thy grand captain Antony
Shall set thee on triumphant chariots, and
Put garlands on thy head.

VENTIDIUS.

O Silius, Silius,
I have done enough. A lower place, note well,
May make too great an act. For learn this, Silius:
Better to leave undone than by our deed
Acquire too high a fame when him we serve's away.
Caesar and Antony have ever won
More in their officer, than person. Sossius,
One of my place in Syria, his lieutenant,
For quick accumulation of renown,
Which he achieved by th' minute, lost his favour.
Who does it? th' wars more than his captain can
Becomes his captain's captain; and ambition,
The soldier's virtue, rather makes choice of loss
Than gain which darkens him.
I could do more to do Antonius good,
But 'twould offend him, and in his offence
Should my performance perish.

SILIUS.

Thou hast, Ventidius, that
Without the which a soldier and his sword
Grants scarce distinction. Thou wilt write to Antony?

VENTIDIUS.

I'll humbly signify what in his name,
That magical word of war, we have effected;

How, with his banners, and his well-paid ranks,
The never-yet-beaten horse of Parthia
We have jaded out of the field.

SILIUS.
Where is he now?

VENTIDIUS.
He purposeth to Athens, whither, with what haste
The weight we must convey with 's will permit,
We shall appear before him. 'On there, pass along!

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Rome. An Ante-chamber in Caesar's house.

Enter Agrippa at one door, Enobarbus at another.

AGRIPPA.
What, are the brothers parted?

ENOBARBUS.
They have dispatched with Pompey; he is gone.
The other three are sealing. Octavia weeps
To part from Rome. Caesar is sad, and Lepidus,
Since Pompey's feast, as Menas says, is troubled
With the greensickness.

AGRIPPA.
'Tis a noble Lepidus.

ENOBARBUS.
A very fine one. O, how he loves Caesar!

AGRIPPA.
Nay, but how dearly he adores Mark Antony!

ENOBARBUS.
Caesar? Why he's the Jupiter of men.

AGRIPPA.
What's Antony? The god of Jupiter.

ENOBARBUS.
Spake you of Caesar? How, the nonpareil!

AGRIPPA.
O, Antony! O thou Arabian bird!

ENOBARBUS.
Would you praise Caesar, say 'Caesar?. Go no further.

AGRIPPA.
Indeed, he plied them both with excellent praises.

ENOBARBUS.

But he loves Caesar best, yet he loves Antony.
Hoo! Hearts, tongues, figures, scribes, bards, poets, cannot
Think, speak, cast, write, sing, number? hoo!?
His love to Antony. But as for Caesar,
Kneel down, kneel down, and wonder.

AGRIPPA.

Both he loves.

ENOBARBUS.

They are his shards, and he their beetle.

[_Trumpets within._]

So,

This is to horse. Adieu, noble Agrippa.

AGRIPPA.

Good fortune, worthy soldier, and farewell.

Enter Caesar, Antony, Lepidus and Octavia.

ANTONY.

No further, sir.

CAESAR.

You take from me a great part of myself.
Use me well in't. Sister, prove such a wife
As my thoughts make thee, and as my farthest bond
Shall pass on thy approval. Most noble Antony,
Let not the piece of virtue which is set
Betwixt us, as the cement of our love
To keep it builded, be the ram to batter
The fortress of it. For better might we
Have loved without this mean, if on both parts
This be not cherished.

ANTONY.

Make me not offended
In your distrust.

CAESAR.

I have said.

ANTONY.

You shall not find,
Though you be therein curious, the least cause
For what you seem to fear. So the gods keep you,
And make the hearts of Romans serve your ends.
We will here part.

CAESAR.

Farewell, my dearest sister, fare thee well.
The elements be kind to thee, and make
Thy spirits all of comfort! Fare thee well.

OCTAVIA.
My noble brother!

ANTONY.
The April's in her eyes. It is love's spring,
And these the showers to bring it on. Be cheerful.

OCTAVIA.
Sir, look well to my husband's house, and?

CAESAR.
What, Octavia?

OCTAVIA.
I'll tell you in your ear.

ANTONY.
Her tongue will not obey her heart, nor can
Her heart inform her tongue?the swan's-down feather,
That stands upon the swell at the full of tide,
And neither way inclines.

ENOBARBUS.
[_Aside to Agrippa_] Will Caesar weep?

AGRIPPA.
[_Aside to Enobarbus_] He has a cloud in 's face.

ENOBARBUS.
[_Aside to Agrippa_] He were the worse for that were he a horse;
So is he, being a man.

AGRIPPA.
[_Aside to Enobarbus_] Why, Enobarbus,
When Antony found Julius Caesar dead,
He cried almost to roaring, and he wept
When at Philippi he found Brutus slain.

ENOBARBUS.
[_Aside to Agrippa_] That year, indeed, he was troubled with a rheum;
What willingly he did confound he wailed,
Believe 't, till I weep too.

CAESAR.
No, sweet Octavia,
You shall hear from me still. The time shall not
Outgo my thinking on you.

ANTONY.
Come, sir, come,

I'll wrestle with you in my strength of love.
Look, here I have you, thus I let you go,
And give you to the gods.

CAESAR.
Adieu, be happy!

LEPIDUS.
Let all the number of the stars give light
To thy fair way!

CAESAR.
Farewell, farewell!

[_Kisses Octavia._]

ANTONY.
Farewell!

[_Trumpets sound. Exeunt._]

SCENE III. Alexandria. A Room in the Palace.

Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras and Alexas.

CLEOPATRA.
Where is the fellow?

ALEXAS.
Half afeared to come.

CLEOPATRA.
Go to, go to.

Enter a Messenger as before.

Come hither, sir.

ALEXAS.
Good majesty,
Herod of Jewry dare not look upon you
But when you are well pleased.

CLEOPATRA.
That Herod's head
I'll have! But how, when Antony is gone,
Through whom I might command it??Come thou near.

MESSENGER.
Most gracious majesty!

CLEOPATRA.
Didst thou behold Octavia?

MESSENGER.

Ay, dread queen.

CLEOPATRA.

Where?

MESSENGER.

Madam, in Rome

I looked her in the face, and saw her led

Between her brother and Mark Antony.

CLEOPATRA.

Is she as tall as me?

MESSENGER.

She is not, madam.

CLEOPATRA.

Didst hear her speak? Is she shrill-tongued or low?

MESSENGER.

Madam, I heard her speak. She is low-voiced.

CLEOPATRA.

That's not so good. He cannot like her long.

CHARMIAN.

Like her? O Isis! 'Tis impossible.

CLEOPATRA.

I think so, Charmian: dull of tongue and dwarfish!

What majesty is in her gait? Remember,

If e'er thou look'st on majesty.

MESSENGER.

She creeps.

Her motion and her station are as one.

She shows a body rather than a life,

A statue than a breather.

CLEOPATRA.

Is this certain?

MESSENGER.

Or I have no observance.

CHARMIAN.

Three in Egypt

Cannot make better note.

CLEOPATRA.

He's very knowing;

I do perceive't. There's nothing in her yet.

The fellow has good judgment.

CHARMIAN.

Excellent.

CLEOPATRA.

Guess at her years, I prithee.

MESSENGER.

Madam,

She was a widow.

CLEOPATRA.

Widow! Charmian, hark!

MESSENGER.

And I do think she's thirty.

CLEOPATRA.

Bear'st thou her face in mind? Is't long or round?

MESSENGER.

Round even to faultiness.

CLEOPATRA.

For the most part, too, they are foolish that are so.

Her hair, what colour?

MESSENGER.

Brown, madam, and her forehead

As low as she would wish it.

CLEOPATRA.

There's gold for thee.

Thou must not take my former sharpness ill.

I will employ thee back again; I find thee

Most fit for business. Go make thee ready;

Our letters are prepared.

[_Exit Messenger._]

CHARMIAN.

A proper man.

CLEOPATRA.

Indeed, he is so. I repent me much

That so I harried him. Why, methinks, by him,

This creature's no such thing.

CHARMIAN.

Nothing, madam.

CLEOPATRA.

The man hath seen some majesty, and should know.

CHARMIAN.

Hath he seen majesty? Isis else defend,
And serving you so long!

CLEOPATRA.

I have one thing more to ask him yet, good Charmian.
But 'tis no matter; thou shalt bring him to me
Where I will write. All may be well enough.

CHARMIAN.

I warrant you, madam.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IV. Athens. A Room in Antony's House.

Enter Antony and Octavia.

ANTONY.

Nay, nay, Octavia, not only that?
That were excusable, that and thousands more
Of semblable import?but he hath waged
New wars 'gainst Pompey; made his will, and read it
To public ear;
Spoke scantily of me; when perforce he could not
But pay me terms of honour, cold and sickly
He vented them; most narrow measure lent me;
When the best hint was given him, he not took 't,
Or did it from his teeth.

OCTAVIA.

O, my good lord,
Believe not all, or if you must believe,
Stomach not all. A more unhappy lady,
If this division chance, ne'er stood between,
Praying for both parts.
The good gods will mock me presently
When I shall pray 'O, bless my lord and husband!
Undo that prayer by crying out as loud
'O, bless my brother!?' Husband win, win brother,
Prays and destroys the prayer; no midway
'Twixt these extremes at all.

ANTONY.

Gentle Octavia,
Let your best love draw to that point which seeks
Best to preserve it. If I lose mine honour,
I lose myself; better I were not yours
Than yours so branchless. But, as you requested,
Yourself shall go between's. The meantime, lady,
I'll raise the preparation of a war
Shall stain your brother. Make your soonest haste,
So your desires are yours.

OCTAVIA.

Thanks to my lord.

The Jove of power make me, most weak, most weak,
Your reconciler! Wars ?twixt you twain would be
As if the world should cleave, and that slain men
Should solder up the rift.

ANTONY.

When it appears to you where this begins,
Turn your displeasure that way, for our faults
Can never be so equal that your love
Can equally move with them. Provide your going;
Choose your own company, and command what cost
Your heart has mind to.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE V. Athens. Another Room in Antony?s House.

Enter Enobarbus and Eros meeting.

ENOBARBUS.

How now, friend Eros?

EROS.

There?s strange news come, sir.

ENOBARBUS.

What, man?

EROS.

Caesar and Lepidus have made wars upon Pompey.

ENOBARBUS.

This is old. What is the success?

EROS.

Caesar, having made use of him in the wars ?gainst Pompey, presently denied him rivalry; would not let him partake in the glory of the action, and, not resting here, accuses him of letters he had formerly wrote to Pompey; upon his own appeal, seizes him. So the poor third is up, till death enlarge his confine.

ENOBARBUS.

Then, world, thou hast a pair of chaps, no more,
And throw between them all the food thou hast,
They?ll grind the one the other. Where?s Antony?

EROS.

He?s walking in the garden, thus, and spurns
The rush that lies before him; cries ?Fool Lepidus!
And threats the throat of that his officer
That murdered Pompey.

ENOBARBUS.

Our great navy's rigged.

EROS.

For Italy and Caesar. More, Domitius:
My lord desires you presently. My news
I might have told hereafter.

ENOBARBUS.

'Twill be naught,
But let it be. Bring me to Antony.

EROS.

Come, sir.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VI. Rome. A Room in Caesar's House.

Enter Agrippa, Maecenas and Caesar.

CAESAR.

Contemning Rome, he has done all this, and more
In Alexandria. Here's the manner of 't:
I? th? market-place, on a tribunal silvered,
Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold
Were publicly enthroned. At the feet sat
Caesarion, whom they call my father's son,
And all the unlawful issue that their lust
Since then hath made between them. Unto her
He gave the stablishment of Egypt; made her
Of lower Syria, Cyprus, Lydia,
Absolute queen.

MAECENAS.

This in the public eye?

CAESAR.

I? th? common showplace where they exercise.
His sons he there proclaimed the kings of kings:
Great Media, Parthia, and Armenia
He gave to Alexander; to Ptolemy he assigned
Syria, Cilicia, and Phoenicia. She
In th? habiliments of the goddess Isis
That day appeared, and oft before gave audience,
As 'tis reported, so.

MAECENAS.

Let Rome be thus informed.

AGRIPPA.

Who, queasy with his insolence already,
Will their good thoughts call from him.

CAESAR.

The people knows it and have now received
His accusations.

AGRIPPA.

Who does he accuse?

CAESAR.

Caesar, and that, having in Sicily
Sextus Pompeius spoiled, we had not rated him
His part o' th' isle. Then does he say he lent me
Some shipping, unreturned. Lastly, he frets
That Lepidus of the triumvirate
Should be deposed and, being, that we detain
All his revenue.

AGRIPPA.

Sir, this should be answered.

CAESAR.

'Tis done already, and messenger gone.
I have told him Lepidus was grown too cruel,
That he his high authority abused,
And did deserve his change. For what I have conquered
I grant him part; but then in his Armenia
And other of his conquered kingdoms, I
Demand the like.

MAECENAS.

He'll never yield to that.

CAESAR.

Nor must not then be yielded to in this.

Enter Octavia with her train.

OCTAVIA.

Hail, Caesar, and my lord! Hail, most dear Caesar!

CAESAR.

That ever I should call thee castaway!

OCTAVIA.

You have not called me so, nor have you cause.

CAESAR.

Why have you stolen upon us thus? You come not
Like Caesar's sister. The wife of Antony
Should have an army for an usher, and
The neighs of horse to tell of her approach
Long ere she did appear. The trees by th' way
Should have borne men, and expectation fainted,
Longing for what it had not. Nay, the dust
Should have ascended to the roof of heaven,

Raised by your populous troops. But you are come
A market-maid to Rome, and have prevented
The ostentation of our love, which, left unshown,
Is often left unloved. We should have met you
By sea and land, supplying every stage
With an augmented greeting.

OCTAVIA.

Good my lord,
To come thus was I not constrained, but did it
On my free will. My lord, Mark Antony,
Hearing that you prepared for war, acquainted
My grieved ear withal, whereon I begged
His pardon for return.

CAESAR.

Which soon he granted,
Being an abstract 'tween his lust and him.

OCTAVIA.

Do not say so, my lord.

CAESAR.

I have eyes upon him,
And his affairs come to me on the wind.
Where is he now?

OCTAVIA.

My lord, in Athens.

CAESAR.

No, my most wronged sister. Cleopatra
Hath nodded him to her. He hath given his empire
Up to a whore, who now are levying
The kings o' th' earth for war. He hath assembled
Bocchus, the king of Libya; Archelaus
Of Cappadocia; Philadelphos, king
Of Paphlagonia; the Thracian king, Adallas;
King Manchus of Arabia; King of Pont;
Herod of Jewry; Mithridates, king
Of Comagene; Polemon and Amyntas,
The kings of Mede and Lycaonia,
With a more larger list of sceptres.

OCTAVIA.

Ay me, most wretched,
That have my heart parted betwixt two friends
That does afflict each other!

CAESAR.

Welcome hither.
Your letters did withhold our breaking forth
Till we perceived both how you were wrong led
And we in negligent danger. Cheer your heart.

Be you not troubled with the time, which drives
O'er your content these strong necessities,
But let determined things to destiny
Hold unbewailed their way. Welcome to Rome,
Nothing more dear to me. You are abused
Beyond the mark of thought, and the high gods,
To do you justice, make their ministers
Of us and those that love you. Best of comfort,
And ever welcome to us.

AGRIPPA.

Welcome, lady.

MAECENAS.

Welcome, dear madam.

Each heart in Rome does love and pity you.

Only th' adulterous Antony, most large

In his abominations, turns you off

And gives his potent regiment to a trull

That noises it against us.

OCTAVIA.

Is it so, sir?

CAESAR.

Most certain. Sister, welcome. Pray you

Be ever known to patience. My dear'st sister!

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VII. Antony's Camp near the Promontory of Actium.

Enter Cleopatra and Enobarbus.

CLEOPATRA.

I will be even with thee, doubt it not.

ENOBARBUS.

But why, why, why?

CLEOPATRA.

Thou hast forspoke my being in these wars

And say'st it is not fit.

ENOBARBUS.

Well, is it, is it?

CLEOPATRA.

Is 't not denounced against us? Why should not we

Be there in person?

ENOBARBUS.

Well, I could reply:

If we should serve with horse and mares together,

The horse were merely lost. The mares would bear
A soldier and his horse.

CLEOPATRA.

What is't you say?

ENOBARBUS.

Your presence needs must puzzle Antony,
Take from his heart, take from his brain, from 's time,
What should not then be spared. He is already
Traded for levity, and 'tis said in Rome
That Photinus, an eunuch, and your maids
Manage this war.

CLEOPATRA.

Sink Rome, and their tongues rot
That speak against us! A charge we bear i' th' war,
And, as the president of my kingdom, will
Appear there for a man. Speak not against it.
I will not stay behind.

Enter Antony and Canidius.

ENOBARBUS.

Nay, I have done.
Here comes the Emperor.

ANTONY.

Is it not strange, Canidius,
That from Tarentum and Brundisium
He could so quickly cut the Ionian sea
And take in Toryne??You have heard on 't, sweet?

CLEOPATRA.

Celerity is never more admired
Than by the negligent.

ANTONY.

A good rebuke,
Which might have well becomeed the best of men
To taunt at slackness.?Canidius, we
Will fight with him by sea.

CLEOPATRA.

By sea, what else?

CANIDIUS.

Why will my lord do so?

ANTONY.

For that he dares us to 't.

ENOBARBUS.

So hath my lord dared him to single fight.

CANIDIUS.

Ay, and to wage this battle at Pharsalia,
Where Caesar fought with Pompey. But these offers,
Which serve not for his vantage, he shakes off,
And so should you.

ENOBARBUS.

Your ships are not well manned,
Your mariners are muleteers, reapers, people
Engrossed by swift impress. In Caesar's fleet
Are those that often have 'gainst Pompey fought.
Their ships are yare, yours heavy. No disgrace
Shall fall you for refusing him at sea,
Being prepared for land.

ANTONY.

By sea, by sea.

ENOBARBUS.

Most worthy sir, you therein throw away
The absolute soldiership you have by land;
Distract your army, which doth most consist
Of war-marked footmen; leave unexecuted
Your own renowned knowledge; quite forgo
The way which promises assurance; and
Give up yourself merely to chance and hazard
From firm security.

ANTONY.

I'll fight at sea.

CLEOPATRA.

I have sixty sails, Caesar none better.

ANTONY.

Our overplus of shipping will we burn,
And with the rest full-manned, from th' head of Actium
Beat th' approaching Caesar. But if we fail,
We then can do 't at land.

Enter a Messenger.

Thy business?

MESSENGER.

The news is true, my lord; he is descried.
Caesar has taken Tornyne.

ANTONY.

Can he be there in person? 'Tis impossible;
Strange that his power should be. Canidius,
Our nineteen legions thou shalt hold by land,
And our twelve thousand horse. We'll to our ship.

Away, my Thetis!

Enter a Soldier.

How now, worthy soldier?

SOLDIER.

O noble emperor, do not fight by sea.
Trust not to rotten planks. Do you misdoubt
This sword and these my wounds? Let th' Egyptians
And the Phoenicians go a-ducking. We
Have used to conquer standing on the earth
And fighting foot to foot.

ANTONY.

Well, well, away.

[_Exeunt Antony, Cleopatra and Enobarbus._]

SOLDIER.

By Hercules, I think I am i' th' right.

CANIDIUS.

Soldier, thou art. But his whole action grows
Not in the power on 't. So our leader's led,
And we are women's men.

SOLDIER.

You keep by land
The legions and the horse whole, do you not?

CANIDIUS.

Marcus Octavius, Marcus Justeius,
Publicola, and Caelius are for sea,
But we keep whole by land. This speed of Caesar's
Carries beyond belief.

SOLDIER.

While he was yet in Rome,
His power went out in such distractions as
Beguiled all spies.

CANIDIUS.

Who's his lieutenant, hear you?

SOLDIER.

They say one Taurus.

CANIDIUS.

Well I know the man.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER.

The Emperor calls Canidius.

CANIDIUS.

With news the time's with labour, and throes forth
Each minute some.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VIII. A plain near Actium.

Enter Caesar with his army and Taurus marching.

CAESAR.

Taurus!

TAURUS.

My lord?

CAESAR.

Strike not by land; keep whole; provoke not battle
Till we have done at sea. Do not exceed
The prescript of this scroll. Our fortune lies
Upon this jump.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IX. Another part of the Plain.

Enter Antony and Enobarbus.

ANTONY.

Set we our squadrons on yon side o' th' hill
In eye of Caesar's battle, from which place
We may the number of the ships behold
And so proceed accordingly.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE X. Another part of the Plain.

Canidius marching with his land army one way over the stage, and
Taurus, the Lieutenant of Caesar, with his Army, the other way. After
their going in, is heard the noise of a sea fight.

Alarum. Enter Enobarbus.

ENOBARBUS.

Naught, naught, all naught! I can behold no longer.
Th' Antoniads, the Egyptian admiral,
With all their sixty, fly and turn the rudder.
To see 't mine eyes are blasted.

Enter Scarus.

SCARUS.

Gods and goddesses,
All the whole synod of them!

ENOBARBUS.

What's thy passion?

SCARUS.

The greater cantle of the world is lost
With very ignorance. We have kissed away
Kingdoms and provinces.

ENOBARBUS.

How appears the fight?

SCARUS.

On our side, like the tokened pestilence,
Where death is sure. Yon ribaudred nag of Egypt,
Whom leprosy o'ertake, i' th' midst o' th' fight,
When vantage like a pair of twins appeared,
Both as the same?or, rather, ours the elder?
The breeze upon her, like a cow in June,
Hoists sails and flies.

ENOBARBUS.

That I beheld.
Mine eyes did sicken at the sight and could not
Endure a further view.

SCARUS.

She once being loofed,
The noble ruin of her magic, Antony,
Claps on his sea-wing and, like a doting mallard,
Leaving the fight in height, flies after her.
I never saw an action of such shame.
Experience, manhood, honour, ne'er before
Did violate so itself.

ENOBARBUS.

Alack, alack!

Enter Canidius.

CANIDIUS.

Our fortune on the sea is out of breath
And sinks most lamentably. Had our general
Been what he knew himself, it had gone well.
O, he has given example for our flight
Most grossly by his own!

ENOBARBUS.

Ay, are you thereabouts?
Why, then, good night indeed.

CANIDIUS.

Toward Peloponnesus are they fled.

SCARUS.

'Tis easy to't, and there I will attend
What further comes.

CANIDIUS.

To Caesar will I render
My legions and my horse. Six kings already
Show me the way of yielding.

ENOBARBUS.

I'll yet follow
The wounded chance of Antony, though my reason
Sits in the wind against me.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE XI. Alexandria. A Room in the Palace.

Enter Antony with attendants.

ANTONY.

Hark, the land bids me tread no more upon't.
It is ashamed to bear me. Friends, come hither.
I am so lated in the world that I
Have lost my way for ever. I have a ship
Laden with gold. Take that, divide it. Fly,
And make your peace with Caesar.

ALL.

Fly? Not we.

ANTONY.

I have fled myself, and have instructed cowards
To run and show their shoulders. Friends, be gone.
I have myself resolved upon a course
Which has no need of you. Be gone.
My treasure's in the harbour. Take it. O,
I followed that I blush to look upon.
My very hairs do mutiny, for the white
Reprove the brown for rashness, and they them
For fear and doting. Friends, be gone. You shall
Have letters from me to some friends that will
Sweep your way for you. Pray you, look not sad,
Nor make replies of loathness. Take the hint
Which my despair proclaims. Let that be left
Which leaves itself. To the sea-side straightway.
I will possess you of that ship and treasure.
Leave me, I pray, a little? pray you, now,
Nay, do so; for indeed I have lost command.
Therefore I pray you. I'll see you by and by.

[_Sits down._]

Enter Cleopatra led by Charmian, Iras and Eros.

EROS.

Nay, gentle madam, to him! Comfort him.

IRAS.

Do, most dear queen.

CHARMIAN.

Do! Why, what else?

CLEOPATRA.

Let me sit down. O Juno!

ANTONY.

No, no, no, no, no.

EROS.

See you here, sir?

ANTONY.

O, fie, fie, fie!

CHARMIAN.

Madam.

IRAS.

Madam, O good empress!

EROS.

Sir, sir!

ANTONY.

Yes, my lord, yes. He at Philippi kept
His sword e?en like a dancer, while I struck
The lean and wrinkled Cassius, and ?twas I
That the mad Brutus ended. He alone
Dealt on lieutenantry, and no practice had
In the brave squares of war. Yet now?no matter.

CLEOPATRA.

Ah, stand by.

EROS.

The Queen, my lord, the Queen!

IRAS.

Go to him, madam; speak to him.
He is unqualified with very shame.

CLEOPATRA.

Well then, sustain me. O!

EROS.

Most noble sir, arise. The Queen approaches.
Her head's declined, and death will seize her but
Your comfort makes the rescue.

ANTONY.

I have offended reputation,
A most unnoble swerving.

EROS.

Sir, the Queen.

ANTONY.

O, whither hast thou led me, Egypt? See
How I convey my shame out of thine eyes
By looking back what I have left behind
?Stroyed in dishonour.

CLEOPATRA.

O my lord, my lord,
Forgive my fearful sails! I little thought
You would have followed.

ANTONY.

Egypt, thou knew'st too well
My heart was to thy rudder tied by th' strings,
And thou shouldst tow me after. O'er my spirit
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
Command me.

CLEOPATRA.

O, my pardon!

ANTONY.

Now I must
To the young man send humble treaties, dodge
And palter in the shifts of lowness, who
With half the bulk o' th' world played as I pleased,
Making and marring fortunes. You did know
How much you were my conqueror, and that
My sword, made weak by my affection, would
Obey it on all cause.

CLEOPATRA.

Pardon, pardon!

ANTONY.

Fall not a tear, I say; one of them rates
All that is won and lost. Give me a kiss.
Even this repays me.
We sent our schoolmaster. Is he come back?
Love, I am full of lead. Some wine

Within there, and our viands! Fortune knows
We scorn her most when most she offers blows.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE XII. Caesar's camp in Egypt.

Enter Caesar, Agrippa, Dolabella with others.

CAESAR.

Let him appear that's come from Antony.
Know you him?

DOLABELLA.

Caesar, 'tis his schoolmaster?
An argument that he is plucked, when hither
He sends so poor a pinion of his wing,
Which had superfluous kings for messengers
Not many moons gone by.

Enter Ambassador from Anthony.

CAESAR.

Approach, and speak.

AMBASSADOR.

Such as I am, I come from Antony.
I was of late as petty to his ends
As is the morn-dew on the myrtle leaf
To his grand sea.

CAESAR.

Be't so. Declare thine office.

AMBASSADOR.

Lord of his fortunes he salutes thee, and
Requires to live in Egypt, which not granted,
He lessens his requests, and to thee sues
To let him breathe between the heavens and earth,
A private man in Athens. This for him.
Next, Cleopatra does confess thy greatness,
Submits her to thy might, and of thee craves
The circle of the Ptolemies for her heirs,
Now hazarded to thy grace.

CAESAR.

For Antony,
I have no ears to his request. The queen
Of audience nor desire shall fail, so she
From Egypt drive her all-disgraced friend,
Or take his life there. This if she perform,
She shall not sue unheard. So to them both.

AMBASSADOR.

Fortune pursue thee!

CAESAR.

Bring him through the bands.

[_Exit Ambassador, attended._]

[_To Thidias_] To try thy eloquence now 'tis time. Dispatch.

From Antony win Cleopatra. Promise,
And in our name, what she requires; add more,
From thine invention, offers. Women are not
In their best fortunes strong, but want will perjure
The ne'er-touch'd vestal. Try thy cunning, Thidias;
Make thine own edict for thy pains, which we
Will answer as a law.

THIDIAS.

Caesar, I go.

CAESAR.

Observe how Antony becomes his flaw,
And what thou think'st his very action speaks
In every power that moves.

THIDIAS.

Caesar, I shall.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE XIII. Alexandria. A Room in the Palace.

Enter Cleopatra, Enobarbus, Charmian and Iras.

CLEOPATRA.

What shall we do, Enobarbus?

ENOBARBUS.

Think, and die.

CLEOPATRA.

Is Antony or we in fault for this?

ENOBARBUS.

Antony only, that would make his will
Lord of his reason. What though you fled
From that great face of war, whose several ranges
Frighted each other? Why should he follow?
The itch of his affection should not then
Have nicked his captainship, at such a point,
When half to half the world opposed, he being
The mered question. 'Twas a shame no less
Than was his loss, to course your flying flags
And leave his navy gazing.

CLEOPATRA.
Prithee, peace.

Enter the Ambassador with Antony.

ANTONY.
Is that his answer?

AMBASSADOR.
Ay, my lord.

ANTONY.
The Queen shall then have courtesy, so she
Will yield us up.

AMBASSADOR.
He says so.

ANTONY.
Let her know? t.?
To the boy Caesar send this grizzled head,
And he will fill thy wishes to the brim
With principalities.

CLEOPATRA.
That head, my lord?

ANTONY.
To him again. Tell him he wears the rose
Of youth upon him, from which the world should note
Something particular: his coin, ships, legions,
May be a coward's; whose ministers would prevail
Under the service of a child as soon
As i' th' command of Caesar. I dare him therefore
To lay his gay comparisons apart,
And answer me declined, sword against sword,
Ourselves alone. I'll write it. Follow me.

[_Exeunt Antony and Ambassador._]

ENOBARBUS.
Yes, like enough high-battled Caesar will
Unstate his happiness, and be staged to th' show
Against a sworder! I see men's judgments are
A parcel of their fortunes, and things outward
Do draw the inward quality after them
To suffer all alike. That he should dream,
Knowing all measures, the full Caesar will
Answer his emptiness! Caesar, thou hast subdued
His judgment too.

Enter a Servant.

SERVANT.

A messenger from Caesar.

CLEOPATRA.

What, no more ceremony? See, my women,
Against the blown rose may they stop their nose
That kneeled unto the buds. Admit him, sir.

[_Exit Servant._]

ENOBARBUS.

[_Aside_.] Mine honesty and I begin to square.
The loyalty well held to fools does make
Our faith mere folly. Yet he that can endure
To follow with allegiance a fallen lord
Does conquer him that did his master conquer,
And earns a place i' th' story.

Enter Thidias.

CLEOPATRA.

Caesar's will?

THIDIAS.

Hear it apart.

CLEOPATRA.

None but friends. Say boldly.

THIDIAS.

So haply are they friends to Antony.

ENOBARBUS.

He needs as many, sir, as Caesar has,
Or needs not us. If Caesar please, our master
Will leap to be his friend. For us, you know
Whose he is we are, and that is Caesar's.

THIDIAS.

So.?

Thus then, thou most renowned: Caesar entreats
Not to consider in what case thou stand'st
Further than he is Caesar.

CLEOPATRA.

Go on; right royal.

THIDIAS.

He knows that you embrace not Antony
As you did love, but as you feared him.

CLEOPATRA.

O!

THIDIAS.

The scars upon your honour, therefore, he
Does pity as constrained blemishes,
Not as deserved.

CLEOPATRA.

He is a god and knows
What is most right. Mine honour was not yielded,
But conquered merely.

ENOBARBUS.

[_Aside_] To be sure of that,
I will ask Antony. Sir, sir, thou art so leaky
That we must leave thee to thy sinking, for
Thy dearest quit thee.

[_Exit Enobarbus._]

THIDIAS.

Shall I say to Caesar
What you require of him? For he partly begs
To be desired to give. It much would please him
That of his fortunes you should make a staff
To lean upon. But it would warm his spirits
To hear from me you had left Antony,
And put yourself under his shroud,
The universal landlord.

CLEOPATRA.

What's your name?

THIDIAS.

My name is Thidias.

CLEOPATRA.

Most kind messenger,
Say to great Caesar this in deputation:
I kiss his conquering hand. Tell him I am prompt
To lay my crown at his feet, and there to kneel.
Tell him, from his all-obeying breath I hear
The doom of Egypt.

THIDIAS.

'Tis your noblest course.
Wisdom and fortune combating together,
If that the former dare but what it can,
No chance may shake it. Give me grace to lay
My duty on your hand.

CLEOPATRA.

Your Caesar's father oft,
When he hath mused of taking kingdoms in,
Bestowed his lips on that unworthy place
As it rained kisses.

Enter Antony and Enobarbus.

ANTONY.

Favours, by Jove that thunders!
What art thou, fellow?

THIDIAS.

One that but performs
The bidding of the fullest man and worthiest
To have command obeyed.

ENOBARBUS.

[_Aside_] You will be whipped.

ANTONY.

Approach there. Ah, you kite! Now, gods and devils,
Authority melts from me. Of late when I cried Ho!
Like boys unto a muss, kings would start forth
And cry Your will? Have you no ears? I am
Antony yet.

Enter Servants.

Take hence this jack and whip him.

ENOBARBUS.

'Tis better playing with a lion's whelp
Than with an old one dying.

ANTONY.

Moon and stars!
Whip him. Were't twenty of the greatest tributaries
That do acknowledge Caesar, should I find them
So saucy with the hand of she here? what's her name
Since she was Cleopatra? Whip him, fellows,
Till like a boy you see him cringe his face
And whine aloud for mercy. Take him hence.

THIDIAS.

Mark Antony?

ANTONY.

Tug him away. Being whipp'd,
Bring him again. This jack of Caesar's shall
Bear us an errand to him.

[_Exeunt Servants with Thidias._]

You were half blasted ere I knew you. Ha!
Have I my pillow left unpressed in Rome,
Forborne the getting of a lawful race,
And by a gem of women, to be abused
By one that looks on feeders?

CLEOPATRA.
Good my lord?

ANTONY.
You have been a boggler ever.
But when we in our viciousness grow hard?
O misery on?tl?the wise gods seal our eyes,
In our own filth drop our clear judgments, make us
Adore our errors, laugh at?s while we strut
To our confusion.

CLEOPATRA.
O, is?t come to this?

ANTONY.
I found you as a morsel cold upon
Dead Caesar?s trencher; nay, you were a fragment
Of Gneius Pompey?s, besides what hotter hours,
Unregistered in vulgar fame, you have
Luxuriously pick?d out. For I am sure,
Though you can guess what temperance should be,
You know not what it is.

CLEOPATRA.
Wherefore is this?

ANTONY.
To let a fellow that will take rewards
And say ?God quit you!? be familiar with
My playfellow, your hand, this kingly seal
And plighter of high hearts! O that I were
Upon the hill of Basan, to outroar
The horned herd! For I have savage cause,
And to proclaim it civilly were like
A haltered neck which does the hangman thank
For being yare about him.

Enter a Servant with Thidias.

Is he whipped?

SERVANT.
Soundly, my lord.

ANTONY.
Cried he? And begged he pardon?

SERVANT.
He did ask favour.

ANTONY.
If that thy father live, let him repent
Thou wast not made his daughter; and be thou sorry
To follow Caesar in his triumph, since

Thou hast been whipped for following him. Henceforth
The white hand of a lady fever thee;
Shake thou to look on't. Get thee back to Caesar;
Tell him thy entertainment. Look thou say
He makes me angry with him; for he seems
Proud and disdainful, harping on what I am,
Not what he knew I was. He makes me angry,
And at this time most easy 'tis to do't,
When my good stars that were my former guides
Have empty left their orbs and shot their fires
Into th' abyss of hell. If he mislike
My speech and what is done, tell him he has
Hipparchus, my enfranchised bondman, whom
He may at pleasure whip, or hang, or torture,
As he shall like, to quit me. Urge it thou.
Hence with thy stripes, be gone.

[_Exit Thidias._]

CLEOPATRA.
Have you done yet?

ANTONY.
Alack, our terrene moon is now eclipsed,
And it portends alone the fall of Antony.

CLEOPATRA.
I must stay his time.

ANTONY.
To flatter Caesar, would you mingle eyes
With one that ties his points?

CLEOPATRA.
Not know me yet?

ANTONY.
Cold-hearted toward me?

CLEOPATRA.
Ah, dear, if I be so,
From my cold heart let heaven engender hail
And poison it in the source, and the first stone
Drop in my neck; as it determines, so
Dissolve my life! The next Caesarion smite,
Till, by degrees the memory of my womb,
Together with my brave Egyptians all,
By the discarding of this pelleted storm,
Lie graveless, till the flies and gnats of Nile
Have buried them for prey!

ANTONY.
I am satisfied.
Caesar sits down in Alexandria, where

I will oppose his fate. Our force by land
Hath nobly held; our severed navy too
Have knit again, and fleet, threat'ning most sea-like.
Where hast thou been, my heart? Dost thou hear, lady?
If from the field I shall return once more
To kiss these lips, I will appear in blood.
I and my sword will earn our chronicle.
There's hope in't yet.

CLEOPATRA.

That's my brave lord!

ANTONY.

I will be treble-sinewed, hearted, breathed,
And fight maliciously. For when mine hours
Were nice and lucky, men did ransom lives
Of me for jests. But now I'll set my teeth
And send to darkness all that stop me. Come,
Let's have one other gaudy night. Call to me
All my sad captains. Fill our bowls once more
Let's mock the midnight bell.

CLEOPATRA.

It is my birthday.

I had thought t'have held it poor, but since my lord
Is Antony again, I will be Cleopatra.

ANTONY.

We will yet do well.

CLEOPATRA.

Call all his noble captains to my lord.

ANTONY.

Do so; we'll speak to them; and tonight I'll force
The wine peep through their scars. Come on, my queen,
There's sap in't yet. The next time I do fight
I'll make Death love me, for I will contend
Even with his pestilent scythe.

[_Exeunt all but Enobarbus._]

ENOBARBUS.

Now he'll outstare the lightning. To be furious
Is to be frightened out of fear, and in that mood
The dove will peck the estridge; and I see still
A diminution in our captain's brain
Restores his heart. When valour preys on reason,
It eats the sword it fights with. I will seek
Some way to leave him.

[_Exit._]

ACT IV

SCENE I. Caesar's Camp at Alexandria.

Enter Caesar, Agrippa, and Maecenas, with his army.
Caesar reading a letter.

CAESAR.

He calls me boy, and chides as he had power
To beat me out of Egypt. My messenger
He hath whipped with rods; dares me to personal combat,
Caesar to Antony. Let the old ruffian know
I have many other ways to die; meantime
Laugh at his challenge.

MAECENAS.

Caesar must think,
When one so great begins to rage, he's hunted
Even to falling. Give him no breath, but now
Make boot of his distraction. Never anger
Made good guard for itself.

CAESAR.

Let our best heads
Know that tomorrow the last of many battles
We mean to fight. Within our files there are,
Of those that served Mark Antony but late,
Enough to fetch him in. See it done,
And feast the army; we have store to do't,
And they have earned the waste. Poor Antony!

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Alexandria. A Room in the Palace.

Enter Antony, Cleopatra, Enobarbus, Charmian, Iras, Alexas with
others.

ANTONY.

He will not fight with me, Domitius?

ENOBARBUS.

No.

ANTONY.

Why should he not?

ENOBARBUS.

He thinks, being twenty times of better fortune,
He is twenty men to one.

ANTONY.

Tomorrow, soldier,
By sea and land I'll fight. Or I will live,
Or bathe my dying honour in the blood
Shall make it live again. Woo'st thou fight well?

ENOBARBUS.

I'll strike, and cry 'Take all.'

ANTONY.

Well said. Come on.
Call forth my household servants. Let's tonight
Be bounteous at our meal.

Enter Servants.

Give me thy hand.

Thou has been rightly honest; so hast thou,
Thou, and thou, and thou. You have served me well,
And kings have been your fellows.

CLEOPATRA.

[_Aside to Enobarbus_] What means this?

ENOBARBUS.

[_Aside to Cleopatra_] 'Tis one of those odd tricks which sorrow
shoots
Out of the mind.

ANTONY.

And thou art honest too.
I wish I could be made so many men,
And all of you clapped up together in
An Antony, that I might do you service
So good as you have done.

ALL THE SERVANTS.

The gods forbid!

ANTONY.

Well, my good fellows, wait on me tonight.
Scant not my cups, and make as much of me
As when mine empire was your fellow too
And suffered my command.

CLEOPATRA.

[_Aside to Enobarbus_] What does he mean?

ENOBARBUS.

[_Aside to Cleopatra_] To make his followers weep.

ANTONY.

Tend me tonight;
May be it is the period of your duty.

Haply you shall not see me more, or if,
A mangled shadow. Perchance tomorrow
You'll serve another master. I look on you
As one that takes his leave. Mine honest friends,
I turn you not away, but, like a master
Married to your good service, stay till death.
Tend me tonight two hours, I ask no more,
And the gods yield you for?!

ENOBARBUS.

What mean you, sir,
To give them this discomfort? Look, they weep,
And I, an ass, am onion-eyed. For shame,
Transform us not to women.

ANTONY.

Ho, ho, ho!
Now the witch take me if I meant it thus!
Grace grow where those drops fall! My hearty friends,
You take me in too dolorous a sense,
For I spake to you for your comfort, did desire you
To burn this night with torches. Know, my hearts,
I hope well of tomorrow, and will lead you
Where rather I'll expect victorious life
Than death and honour. Let's to supper, come,
And drown consideration.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. Alexandria. Before the Palace.

Enter a Company of Soldiers.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Brother, good night. Tomorrow is the day.

SECOND SOLDIER.

It will determine one way. Fare you well.
Heard you of nothing strange about the streets?

FIRST SOLDIER.

Nothing. What news?

SECOND SOLDIER.

Belike 'tis but a rumour. Good night to you.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Well, sir, good night.

Enter two other Soldiers.

SECOND SOLDIER.

Soldiers, have careful watch.

THIRD SOLDIER.

And you. Good night, good night.

[_They place themselves in every corner of the stage._]

SECOND SOLDIER.

Here we. And if tomorrow
Our navy thrive, I have an absolute hope
Our landmen will stand up.

FIRST SOLDIER.

?Tis a brave army, and full of purpose.

[_Music of the hautboys under the stage._]

SECOND SOLDIER.

Peace, what noise?

FIRST SOLDIER.

List, list!

SECOND SOLDIER.

Hark!

FIRST SOLDIER.

Music i? th? air.

THIRD SOLDIER.

Under the earth.

FOURTH SOLDIER.

It signs well, does it not?

THIRD SOLDIER.

No.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Peace, I say! What should this mean?

SECOND SOLDIER.

?Tis the god Hercules, whom Antony loved,
Now leaves him.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Walk. Let?s see if other watchmen
Do hear what we do.

[_They advance to another post._]

SECOND SOLDIER.

How now, masters!

ALL.

How now! How now! Do you hear this?

FIRST SOLDIER.
Ay. Is't not strange?

THIRD SOLDIER.
Do you hear, masters? Do you hear?

FIRST SOLDIER.
Follow the noise so far as we have quarter.
Let's see how it will give off.

ALL.
Content. 'Tis strange.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IV. Alexandria. A Room in the Palace.

Enter Antony and Cleopatra with others.

ANTONY.
Eros! Mine armour, Eros!

CLEOPATRA.
Sleep a little.

ANTONY.
No, my chuck. Eros! Come, mine armour, Eros!

Enter Eros with armour.

Come, good fellow, put thine iron on.
If fortune be not ours today, it is
Because we brave her. Come.

CLEOPATRA.
Nay, I'll help too.
What's this for?

ANTONY.
Ah, let be, let be! Thou art
The armourer of my heart. False, false. This, this!

CLEOPATRA.
Sooth, I, I'll help. Thus it must be.

ANTONY.
Well, well,
We shall thrive now. Seest thou, my good fellow?
Go put on thy defences.

EROS.
Briefly, sir.

CLEOPATRA.

Is not this buckled well?

ANTONY.

Rarely, rarely.

He that unbuckles this, till we do please
To daff?t for our repose, shall hear a storm.
Thou fumblest, Eros, and my queen?s a squire
More tight at this than thou. Dispatch. O love,
That thou couldst see my wars today, and knew?st
The royal occupation, thou shouldst see
A workman in?t.

Enter an Officer, armed.

Good morrow to thee. Welcome.
Thou look?st like him that knows a warlike charge.
To business that we love we rise betime
And go to?t with delight.

OFFICER.

A thousand, sir,
Early though?t be, have on their riveted trim
And at the port expect you.

[_Shout. Trumpets flourish._]

Enter other Captains and Soldiers.

CAPTAIN.

The morn is fair. Good morrow, general.

ALL.

Good morrow, general.

ANTONY.

?Tis well blown, lads.
This morning, like the spirit of a youth
That means to be of note, begins betimes.
So, so. Come, give me that. This way. Well said.
Fare thee well, dame.
Whate?er becomes of me,
This is a soldier?s kiss. [_Kisses her._] Rebukeable
And worthy shameful check it were, to stand
On more mechanic compliment. I?ll leave thee
Now like a man of steel.?You that will fight,
Follow me close, I?ll bring you to?t. Adieu.

[_Exeunt Antony, Eros, Captains and Soldiers._]

CHARMIAN.

Please you, retire to your chamber.

CLEOPATRA.

Lead me.

He goes forth gallantly. That he and Caesar might
Determine this great war in single fight!
Then Antony?but now?. Well, on.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE V. Antony?s camp near Alexandria.

Trumpets sound. Enter Antony and Eros, a Soldier meeting them.

SOLDIER.

The gods make this a happy day to Antony!

ANTONY.

Would thou and those thy scars had once prevailed
To make me fight at land!

SOLDIER.

Hadst thou done so,
The kings that have revolted and the soldier
That has this morning left thee would have still
Followed thy heels.

ANTONY.

Who?s gone this morning?

SOLDIER.

Who?
One ever near thee. Call for Enobarbus,
He shall not hear thee, or from Caesar?s camp
Say ?I am none of thine.?

ANTONY.

What sayest thou?

SOLDIER.

Sir,
He is with Caesar.

EROS.

Sir, his chests and treasure
He has not with him.

ANTONY.

Is he gone?

SOLDIER.

Most certain.

ANTONY.

Go, Eros, send his treasure after. Do it.
Detain no jot, I charge thee. Write to him?
I will subscribe?gentle adieus and greetings.

Say that I wish he never find more cause
To change a master. O, my fortunes have
Corrupted honest men! Dispatch. ?Enobarbus!

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VI. Alexandria. Caesar?s camp.

Flourish. Enter Agrippa, Caesar with Enobarbus and Dolabella.

CAESAR.

Go forth, Agrippa, and begin the fight.
Our will is Antony be took alive;
Make it so known.

AGRIPPA.

Caesar, I shall.

[_Exit._]

CAESAR.

The time of universal peace is near.
Prove this a prosp?rous day, the three-nooked world
Shall bear the olive freely.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER.

Antony
Is come into the field.

CAESAR.

Go charge Agrippa
Plant those that have revolted in the van
That Antony may seem to spend his fury
Upon himself.

[_Exeunt Caesar and his Train._]

ENOBARBUS.

Alexas did revolt and went to Jewry on
Affairs of Antony; there did dissuade
Great Herod to incline himself to Caesar
And leave his master Antony. For this pains
Caesar hath hanged him. Canidius and the rest
That fell away have entertainment but
No honourable trust. I have done ill,
Of which I do accuse myself so sorely
That I will joy no more.

Enter a Soldier of Caesar?s.

SOLDIER.

Enobarbus, Antony

Hath after thee sent all thy treasure, with
His bounty overplus. The messenger
Came on my guard, and at thy tent is now
Unloading of his mules.

ENOBARBUS.

I give it you.

SOLDIER.

Mock not, Enobarbus.

I tell you true. Best you safed the bringer
Out of the host. I must attend mine office,
Or would have done't myself. Your emperor
Continues still a Jove.

[_Exit._]

ENOBARBUS.

I am alone the villain of the earth,
And feel I am so most. O Antony,
Thou mine of bounty, how wouldst thou have paid
My better service, when my turpitude
Thou dost so crown with gold! This blows my heart.
If swift thought break it not, a swifter mean
Shall outstrike thought, but thought will do't, I feel.
I fight against thee! No, I will go seek
Some ditch wherein to die; the foul'st best fits
My latter part of life.

[_Exit._]

SCENE VII. Field of battle between the Camps.

Alarum. Drums and Trumpets. Enter Agrippa and others.

AGRIPPA.

Retire! We have engaged ourselves too far.
Caesar himself has work, and our oppression
Exceeds what we expected.

[_Exeunt._]

Alarums. Enter Antony and Scarus wounded.

SCARUS.

O my brave emperor, this is fought indeed!
Had we done so at first, we had droven them home
With clouts about their heads.

ANTONY.

Thou bleed'st apace.

SCARUS.

I had a wound here that was like a T,

But now 'tis made an H.

Sounds retreat far off.

ANTONY.

They do retire.

SCARUS.

We'll beat 'em into bench-holes. I have yet
Room for six scotches more.

Enter Eros.

EROS.

They are beaten, sir, and our advantage serves
For a fair victory.

SCARUS.

Let us score their backs
And snatch 'em up as we take hares, behind.
'Tis sport to maul a runner.

ANTONY.

I will reward thee
Once for thy sprightly comfort, and tenfold
For thy good valour. Come thee on.

SCARUS.

I'll halt after.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VIII. Under the Walls of Alexandria.

Alarum. Enter Antony again in a march; Scarus with others.

ANTONY.

We have beat him to his camp. Run one before
And let the Queen know of our gestic.
Tomorrow,
Before the sun shall see's, we'll spill the blood
That has today escaped. I thank you all,
For doughty-handed are you, and have fought
Not as you served the cause, but as't had been
Each man's like mine. You have shown all Hectors.
Enter the city, clip your wives, your friends,
Tell them your feats; whilst they with joyful tears
Wash the congealment from your wounds and kiss
The honoured gashes whole.

Enter Cleopatra.

[_To Scarus_] Give me thy hand.

To this great fairy I'll commend thy acts,
Make her thanks bless thee. O thou day o' th' world,

Chain mine armed neck. Leap thou, attire and all,
Through proof of harness to my heart, and there
Ride on the pants triumphing.

CLEOPATRA.

Lord of lords!

O infinite virtue, com'st thou smiling from
The world's great snare uncaught?

ANTONY.

Mine nightingale,

We have beat them to their beds. What, girl! Though grey
Do something mingle with our younger brown, yet ha? we
A brain that nourishes our nerves and can
Get goal for goal of youth. Behold this man.
Commend unto his lips thy favouring hand?
Kiss it, my warrior. He hath fought today
As if a god, in hate of mankind, had
Destroyed in such a shape.

CLEOPATRA.

I'll give thee, friend,

An armour all of gold. It was a king's.

ANTONY.

He has deserved it, were it carbuncled
Like holy Phobus' car. Give me thy hand.
Through Alexandria make a jolly march;
Bear our hacked targets like the men that owe them.
Had our great palace the capacity
To camp this host, we all would sup together
And drink carouses to the next day's fate,
Which promises royal peril. Trumpeters,
With brazen din blast you the city's ear;
Make mingle with our rattling tabourines,
That heaven and earth may strike their sounds together,
Applauding our approach.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IX. Caesar's camp.

Enter a Sentry and his company. Enobarbus follows.

SENTRY.

If we be not relieved within this hour,
We must return to th' court of guard. The night
Is shiny, and they say we shall embattle
By th' second hour i' th' morn.

FIRST WATCH.

This last day was a shrewd one to's.

ENOBARBUS.

O, bear me witness, night.?

SECOND WATCH.

What man is this?

FIRST WATCH.

Stand close and list him.

ENOBARBUS.

Be witness to me, O thou blessed moon,
When men revolted shall upon record
Bear hateful memory, poor Enobarbus did
Before thy face repent.

SENTRY.

Enobarbus?

SECOND WATCH.

Peace! Hark further.

ENOBARBUS.

O sovereign mistress of true melancholy,
The poisonous damp of night disponge upon me,
That life, a very rebel to my will,
May hang no longer on me. Throw my heart
Against the flint and hardness of my fault,
Which, being dried with grief, will break to powder
And finish all foul thoughts. O Antony,
Nobler than my revolt is infamous,
Forgive me in thine own particular,
But let the world rank me in register
A master-leaver and a fugitive.
O Antony! O Antony!

[_Dies._]

FIRST WATCH.

Let's speak to him.

SENTRY.

Let's hear him, for the things he speaks may concern Caesar.

SECOND WATCH.

Let's do so. But he sleeps.

SENTRY.

Swoons rather, for so bad a prayer as his
Was never yet for sleep.

FIRST WATCH.

Go we to him.

SECOND WATCH.

Awake, sir, awake! Speak to us.

FIRST WATCH.

Hear you, sir?

SENTRY.

The hand of death hath caught him.

[_Drums afar off._]

Hark! The drums

Demurely wake the sleepers. Let us bear him

To th' court of guard; he is of note. Our hour

Is fully out.

SECOND WATCH.

Come on, then. He may recover yet.

[_Exeunt with the body._]

SCENE X. Ground between the two Camps.

Enter Antony and Scarus with their army.

ANTONY.

Their preparation is today by sea;

We please them not by land.

SCARUS.

For both, my lord.

ANTONY.

I would they'd fight it th' fire or it th' air;

We'd fight there too. But this it is: our foot

Upon the hills adjoining to the city

Shall stay with us; order for sea is given;

They have put forth the haven?

Where their appointment we may best discover

And look on their endeavour.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE XI. Another part of the Ground.

Enter Caesar and his army.

CAESAR.

But being charged, we will be still by land,

Which, as I take't, we shall, for his best force

Is forth to man his galleys. To the vales,

And hold our best advantage.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE XII. Another part of the Ground.

Alarum afar off, as at a sea fight. Enter Antony and Scarus.

ANTONY.

Yet they are not joined. Where yond pine does stand
I shall discover all. I'll bring thee word
Straight how 'tis like to go.

[_Exit._]

SCARUS.

Swallows have built
In Cleopatra's sails their nests. The augurs
Say they know not, they cannot tell; look grimly,
And dare not speak their knowledge. Antony
Is valiant and dejected, and by starts
His fretted fortunes give him hope and fear
Of what he has and has not.

Enter Antony.

ANTONY.

All is lost!
This foul Egyptian hath betrayed me.
My fleet hath yielded to the foe, and yonder
They cast their caps up and carouse together
Like friends long lost. Triple-turned whore! 'Tis thou
Hast sold me to this novice, and my heart
Makes only wars on thee. Bid them all fly;
For when I am revenged upon my charm,
I have done all. Bid them all fly! Be gone!

[_Exit Scarus._]

O sun, thy uprise shall I see no more.
Fortune and Antony part here; even here
Do we shake hands. All come to this! The hearts
That spanieled me at heels, to whom I gave
Their wishes, do discandy, melt their sweets
On blossoming Caesar, and this pine is barked
That overtopped them all. Betray'd I am:
O this false soul of Egypt! This grave charm,
Whose eye becked forth my wars and called them home,
Whose bosom was my crownet, my chief end,
Like a right gypsy hath at fast and loose
Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.
What, Eros, Eros!

Enter Cleopatra.

Ah, thou spell! Avaunt!

CLEOPATRA.

Why is my lord enraged against his love?

ANTONY.

Vanish, or I shall give thee thy deserving
And blemish Caesar's triumph. Let him take thee
And hoist thee up to the shouting plebeians!
Follow his chariot, like the greatest spot
Of all thy sex; most monster-like be shown
For poor'st diminutives, for dolts, and let
Patient Octavia plough thy visage up
With her prepared nails.

[_Exit Cleopatra._]

'Tis well thou'rt gone,
If it be well to live; but better 'twere
Thou fell'st into my fury, for one death
Might have prevented many. 'Eros, ho!
The shirt of Nessus is upon me. Teach me,
Alcides, thou mine ancestor, thy rage.
Let me lodge Lichas on the horns o' th' moon,
And with those hands that grasped the heaviest club
Subdue my worthiest self. The witch shall die.
To the young Roman boy she hath sold me, and I fall
Under this plot. She dies for't. 'Eros, ho!

[_Exit._]

SCENE XIII. Alexandria. A Room in the Palace.

Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras and Mardian.

CLEOPATRA.

Help me, my women! O, he is more mad
Than Telamon for his shield; the boar of Thessaly
Was never so embossed.

CHARMIAN.

To th' monument!
There lock yourself and send him word you are dead.
The soul and body rive not more in parting
Than greatness going off.

CLEOPATRA.

To th' monument!
Mardian, go tell him I have slain myself.
Say that the last I spoke was 'Antony',
And word it, prithee, piteously. Hence, Mardian,
And bring me how he takes my death. 'To th' monument!

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE XIV. Alexandria. Another Room.

Enter Antony and Eros.

ANTONY.

Eros, thou yet behold'st me?

EROS.

Ay, noble lord.

ANTONY.

Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish,
A vapour sometime like a bear or lion,
A towered citadel, a pendant rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon't, that nod unto the world
And mock our eyes with air. Thou hast seen these signs.
They are black vesper's pageants.

EROS.

Ay, my lord.

ANTONY.

That which is now a horse, even with a thought
The rack dislimns and makes it indistinct
As water is in water.

EROS.

It does, my lord.

ANTONY.

My good knave Eros, now thy captain is
Even such a body. Here I am Antony,
Yet cannot hold this visible shape, my knave.
I made these wars for Egypt, and the Queen,
Whose heart I thought I had, for she had mine,
Which, whilst it was mine, had annexed unto't
A million more, now lost'she, Eros, has
Packed cards with Caesar, and false-played my glory
Unto an enemy's triumph.
Nay, weep not, gentle Eros. There is left us
Ourselves to end ourselves.

Enter Mardian.

O, thy vile lady!

She has robbed me of my sword.

MARDIAN.

No, Antony,
My mistress loved thee and her fortunes mingled
With thine entirely.

ANTONY.

Hence, saucy eunuch! Peace!
She hath betrayed me and shall die the death.

MARDIAN.

Death of one person can be paid but once,
And that she has discharged. What thou wouldst do
Is done unto thy hand. The last she spake
Was ?Antony! Most noble Antony!?
Then in the midst a tearing groan did break
The name of Antony; it was divided
Between her heart and lips. She rendered life,
Thy name so buried in her.

ANTONY.

Dead, then?

MARDIAN.

Dead.

ANTONY.

Unarm, Eros. The long day?s task is done,
And we must sleep.?That thou depart?st hence safe
Does pay thy labour richly. Go.

[_Exit Mardian._]

Off, pluck off!

The sevenfold shield of Ajax cannot keep
The battery from my heart. O, cleave, my sides!
Heart, once be stronger than thy continent;
Crack thy frail case! Apace, Eros, apace!
No more a soldier. Bruised pieces, go;
You have been nobly borne. From me awhile.

[_Exit Eros._]

I will o?ertake thee, Cleopatra, and
Weep for my pardon. So it must be, for now
All length is torture. Since the torch is out,
Lie down, and stray no farther. Now all labour
Mars what it does; yea, very force entangles
Itself with strength. Seal then, and all is done.
Eros! ?I come, my queen.?Eros! ?Stay for me.
Where souls do couch on flowers, we?ll hand in hand,
And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze.
Dido and her Aeneas shall want troops,
And all the haunt be ours.?Come, Eros, Eros!

Enter Eros.

EROS.

What would my lord?

ANTONY.

Since Cleopatra died,
I have lived in such dishonour that the gods
Detest my baseness. I, that with my sword

Quartered the world, and o'er green Neptune's back
With ships made cities, condemn myself to lack
The courage of a woman; less noble mind
Than she which, by her death, our Caesar tells
?I am conqueror of myself.? Thou art sworn, Eros,
That when the exigent should come, which now
Is come indeed, when I should see behind me
Th? inevitable prosecution of
Disgrace and horror, that on my command
Thou then wouldst kill me. Do?t. The time is come.
Thou strik?st not me; ?tis Caesar thou defeat?st.
Put colour in thy cheek.

EROS.

The gods withhold me!
Shall I do that which all the Parthian darts,
Though enemy, lost aim and could not?

ANTONY.

Eros,
Wouldst thou be windowed in great Rome and see
Thy master thus with pleached arms, bending down
His corrigible neck, his face subdued
To penetrative shame, whilst the wheeled seat
Of fortunate Caesar, drawn before him, branded
His baseness that ensued?

EROS.

I would not see?t.

ANTONY.

Come, then, for with a wound I must be cured.
Draw that thy honest sword, which thou hast worn
Most useful for thy country.

EROS.

O, sir, pardon me!

ANTONY.

When I did make thee free, swor?st thou not then
To do this when I bade thee? Do it at once,
Or thy precedent services are all
But accidents unpurposed. Draw, and come.

EROS.

Turn from me then that noble countenance
Wherein the worship of the whole world lies.

ANTONY.

Lo thee!

[_Turning from him._]

EROS.

My sword is drawn.

ANTONY.

Then let it do at once
The thing why thou hast drawn it.

EROS.

My dear master,
My captain and my emperor, let me say,
Before I strike this bloody stroke, farewell.

ANTONY.

'Tis said, man, and farewell.

EROS.

Farewell, great chief. Shall I strike now?

ANTONY.

Now, Eros.

EROS.

Why, there then! [_kills himself_]
Thus do I escape the sorrow
Of Antony's death.

[_Dies._]

ANTONY.

Thrice nobler than myself!
Thou teachest me, O valiant Eros, what
I should and thou couldst not. My queen and Eros
Have by their brave instruction got upon me
A nobleness in record. But I will be
A bridegroom in my death and run into't
As to a lover's bed. Come then, and, Eros,
Thy master dies thy scholar. To do thus

[_Falling on his sword._]

I learned of thee. How? Not dead? Not dead?
The guard, ho! O, dispatch me!

Enter a company of the Guard, one of them Dercetus.

FIRST GUARD.

What's the noise?

ANTONY.

I have done my work ill, friends. O, make an end
Of what I have begun.

SECOND GUARD.

The star is fallen.

FIRST GUARD.
And time is at his period.

ALL.
Alas, and woe!

ANTONY.
Let him that loves me strike me dead.

FIRST GUARD.
Not I.

SECOND GUARD.
Nor I.

THIRD GUARD.
Nor anyone.

[_Exeunt guard._]

DERCETUS.
Thy death and fortunes bid thy followers fly.
This sword but shown to Caesar with this tidings,
Shall enter me with him.

Enter Diomedes.

DIOMEDES.
Where's Antony?

DERCETUS.
There, Diomed, there.

DIOMEDES.
Lives he? Wilt thou not answer, man?

[_Exit Dercetus._]

ANTONY.
Art thou there, Diomed? Draw thy sword and give me
Sufficing strokes for death.

DIOMEDES.
Most absolute lord,
My mistress Cleopatra sent me to thee.

ANTONY.
When did she send thee?

DIOMEDES.
Now, my lord.

ANTONY.
Where is she?

DIOMEDES.

Locked in her monument. She had a prophesying fear
Of what hath come to pass. For when she saw?
Which never shall be found? you did suspect
She had disposed with Caesar, and that your rage
Would not be purged, she sent you word she was dead;
But fearing since how it might work, hath sent
Me to proclaim the truth, and I am come,
I dread, too late.

ANTONY.

Too late, good Diomed. Call my guard, I prithee.

DIOMEDES.

What, ho! The emperor's guard! The guard, what ho!
Come, your lord calls!

Enter four or five of the Guard of Antony.

ANTONY.

Bear me, good friends, where Cleopatra bides.
'Tis the last service that I shall command you.

FIRST GUARD.

Woe, woe are we, sir, you may not live to wear
All your true followers out.

ALL.

Most heavy day!

ANTONY.

Nay, good my fellows, do not please sharp fate
To grace it with your sorrows. Bid that welcome
Which comes to punish us, and we punish it,
Seeming to bear it lightly. Take me up.
I have led you oft; carry me now, good friends,
And have my thanks for all.

[_Exeunt, bearing Antony._]

SCENE XV. Alexandria. A monument.

Enter Cleopatra and her maids aloft, with Charmian and Iras.

CLEOPATRA.

O Charmian, I will never go from hence.

CHARMIAN.

Be comforted, dear madam.

CLEOPATRA.

No, I will not.
All strange and terrible events are welcome,

But comforts we despise. Our size of sorrow,
Proportioned to our cause, must be as great
As that which makes it.

Enter, below Diomedes.

How now! Is he dead?

DIOMEDES.

His death's upon him, but not dead.
Look out o' th' other side your monument;
His guard have brought him thither.

Enter, below Antony borne by the Guard.

CLEOPATRA.

O sun,
Burn the great sphere thou mov'st in! Darkling stand
The varying shore o' th' world. O Antony,
Antony, Antony! Help, Charmian! Help, Iras, help!
Help, friends below! Let's draw him hither.

ANTONY.

Peace!
Not Caesar's valour hath o'erthrown Antony,
But Antony's hath triumphed on itself.

CLEOPATRA.

So it should be, that none but Antony
Should conquer Antony, but woe 'tis so!

ANTONY.

I am dying, Egypt, dying. Only
I here importune death awhile until
Of many thousand kisses the poor last
I lay upon thy lips.

CLEOPATRA.

I dare not, dear
Dear my lord, pardon. I dare not,
Lest I be taken. Not th' imperious show
Of the full-fortuned Caesar ever shall
Be brooch'd with me; if knife, drugs, serpents, have
Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe.
Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes
And still conclusion, shall acquire no honour
Demuring upon me. But come, come, Antony?
Help me, my women?we must draw thee up.
Assist, good friends.

ANTONY.

O, quick, or I am gone.

CLEOPATRA.

Here's sport indeed! How heavy weighs my lord!
Our strength is all gone into heaviness;
That makes the weight. Had I great Juno's power,
The strong-winged Mercury should fetch thee up
And set thee by Jove's side. Yet come a little;
Wishers were ever fools. O come, come come,

[_ They heave Antony aloft to Cleopatra. _]

And welcome, welcome! Die where thou hast lived;
Quicken with kissing. Had my lips that power,
Thus would I wear them out.

ALL.
A heavy sight!

ANTONY.
I am dying, Egypt, dying.
Give me some wine, and let me speak a little.

CLEOPATRA.
No, let me speak, and let me rail so high
That the false huswife Fortune break her wheel,
Provoked by my offence.

ANTONY.
One word, sweet queen:
Of Caesar seek your honour, with your safety. O!

CLEOPATRA.
They do not go together.

ANTONY.
Gentle, hear me.
None about Caesar trust but Proculeius.

CLEOPATRA.
My resolution and my hands I'll trust;
None about Caesar.

ANTONY.
The miserable change now at my end
Lament nor sorrow at, but please your thoughts
In feeding them with those my former fortunes
Wherein I lived the greatest prince o' th' world,
The noblest; and do now not basely die,
Not cowardly put off my helmet to
My countryman; a Roman by a Roman
Valiantly vanquished. Now my spirit is going;
I can no more.

CLEOPATRA.
Noblest of men, woo't die?
Hast thou no care of me? Shall I abide

In this dull world, which in thy absence is
No better than a sty? O, see, my women,

[_ Antony dies._]

The crown o' th' earth doth melt. My lord!
O, withered is the garland of the war,
The soldier's pole is fallen; young boys and girls
Are level now with men. The odds is gone,
And there is nothing left remarkable
Beneath the visiting moon.

[_ Faints._]

CHARMIAN.
O, quietness, lady!

IRAS.
She is dead too, our sovereign.

CHARMIAN.
Lady!

IRAS.
Madam!

CHARMIAN.
O madam, madam, madam!

IRAS.
Royal Egypt, Empress!

CHARMIAN.
Peace, peace, Iras!

CLEOPATRA.
No more but e'en a woman, and commanded
By such poor passion as the maid that milks
And does the meanest chares. It were for me
To throw my sceptre at the injurious gods,
To tell them that this world did equal theirs
Till they had stolen our jewel. All's but naught;
Patience is sottish, and impatience does
Become a dog that's mad. Then is it sin
To rush into the secret house of death
Ere death dare come to us? How do you, women?
What, what! good cheer! Why, how now, Charmian?
My noble girls! Ah, women, women! Look,
Our lamp is spent, it's out! Good sirs, take heart.
We'll bury him; and then, what's brave, what's noble,
Let's do it after the high Roman fashion
And make death proud to take us. Come, away.
This case of that huge spirit now is cold.
Ah, women, women! Come, we have no friend

But resolution and the briefest end.

[_Exeunt, bearing off Antony's body._]

ACT V

SCENE I. Caesar's Camp before Alexandria.

Enter Caesar, Agrippa, Dolabella, Maecenas, Gallus, Proculeius with his council of war.

CAESAR.

Go to him, Dolabella, bid him yield.
Being so frustrate, tell him, he mocks
The pauses that he makes.

DOLABELLA.

Caesar, I shall.

[_Exit._]

Enter Dercetus with the sword of Antony.

CAESAR.

Wherefore is that? And what art thou that dar'st
Appear thus to us?

DERCETUS.

I am called Dercetus.
Mark Antony I served, who best was worthy
Best to be served. Whilst he stood up and spoke,
He was my master, and I wore my life
To spend upon his haters. If thou please
To take me to thee, as I was to him
I'll be to Caesar; if thou pleasest not,
I yield thee up my life.

CAESAR.

What is't thou say'st?

DERCETUS.

I say, O Caesar, Antony is dead.

CAESAR.

The breaking of so great a thing should make
A greater crack. The round world
Should have shook lions into civil streets,
And citizens to their dens. The death of Antony
Is not a single doom; in the name lay
A moiety of the world.

DERCETUS.

He is dead, Caesar,
Not by a public minister of justice,
Nor by a hired knife, but that self hand
Which writ his honour in the acts it did
Hath, with the courage which the heart did lend it,
Splitted the heart. This is his sword.
I robbed his wound of it. Behold it stained
With his most noble blood.

CAESAR.

Look you sad, friends?
The gods rebuke me, but it is tidings
To wash the eyes of kings.

AGRIPPA.

And strange it is
That nature must compel us to lament
Our most persisted deeds.

MAECENAS.

His taints and honours
Waged equal with him.

AGRIPPA.

A rarer spirit never
Did steer humanity, but you gods will give us
Some faults to make us men. Caesar is touched.

MAECENAS.

When such a spacious mirror's set before him,
He needs must see himself.

CAESAR.

O Antony,
I have followed thee to this, but we do lance
Diseases in our bodies. I must perforce
Have shown to thee such a declining day
Or look on thine. We could not stall together
In the whole world. But yet let me lament
With tears as sovereign as the blood of hearts,
That thou, my brother, my competitor
In top of all design, my mate in empire,
Friend and companion in the front of war,
The arm of mine own body, and the heart
Where mine his thoughts did kindle, that our stars,
Unreconcilable, should divide
Our equalness to this. Hear me, good friends?

Enter an Egyptian.

But I will tell you at some meeter season.
The business of this man looks out of him;

We?ll hear him what he says. Whence are you?

EGYPTIAN.

A poor Egyptian yet. The queen, my mistress,
Confined in all she has, her monument,
Of thy intents desires instruction,
That she preparedly may frame herself
To the way she?s forced to.

CAESAR.

Bid her have good heart.
She soon shall know of us, by some of ours,
How honourable and how kindly we
Determine for her. For Caesar cannot lean
To be ungentle.

EGYPTIAN.

So the gods preserve thee!

[_Exit._]

CAESAR.

Come hither, Proculeius. Go and say
We purpose her no shame. Give her what comforts
The quality of her passion shall require,
Lest, in her greatness, by some mortal stroke
She do defeat us, for her life in Rome
Would be eternal in our triumph. Go,
And with your speediest bring us what she says
And how you find of her.

PROCULEIUS.

Caesar, I shall.

[_Exit Proculeius._]

CAESAR.

Gallus, go you along.

[_Exit Gallus._]

Where?s Dolabella, to second Proculeius?

ALL.

Dolabella!

CAESAR.

Let him alone, for I remember now
How he?s employed. He shall in time be ready.
Go with me to my tent, where you shall see
How hardly I was drawn into this war,
How calm and gentle I proceeded still
In all my writings. Go with me and see
What I can show in this.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Alexandria. A Room in the Monument.

Enter Cleopatra, Charmian and Iras.

CLEOPATRA.

My desolation does begin to make
A better life. 'Tis paltry to be Caesar;
Not being Fortune, he's but Fortune's knave,
A minister of her will. And it is great
To do that thing that ends all other deeds,
Which shackles accidents and bolts up change,
Which sleeps and never palates more the dung,
The beggar's nurse and Caesar's.

Enter Proculeius.

PROCULEIUS.

Caesar sends greetings to the queen of Egypt,
And bids thee study on what fair demands
Thou mean'st to have him grant thee.

CLEOPATRA.

What's thy name?

PROCULEIUS.

My name is Proculeius.

CLEOPATRA.

Antony
Did tell me of you, bade me trust you, but
I do not greatly care to be deceived
That have no use for trusting. If your master
Would have a queen his beggar, you must tell him
That majesty, to keep decorum, must
No less beg than a kingdom. If he please
To give me conquered Egypt for my son,
He gives me so much of mine own as I
Will kneel to him with thanks.

PROCULEIUS.

Be of good cheer.
You are fallen into a princely hand; fear nothing.
Make your full reference freely to my lord,
Who is so full of grace that it flows over
On all that need. Let me report to him
Your sweet dependency, and you shall find
A conqueror that will pray in aid for kindness
Where he for grace is kneeled to.

CLEOPATRA.

Pray you tell him

I am his fortune's vassal and I send him
The greatness he has got. I hourly learn
A doctrine of obedience, and would gladly
Look him in the face.

PROCULEIUS.

This I'll report, dear lady.
Have comfort, for I know your plight is pitied
Of him that caused it.

Enter Gallus and Roman Soldiers.

You see how easily she may be surprised.
Guard her till Caesar come.

IRAS.

Royal queen!

CHARMIAN.

O Cleopatra, thou art taken, queen!

CLEOPATRA.

Quick, quick, good hands.

[_Drawing a dagger._]

PROCULEIUS.

Hold, worthy lady, hold!

[_Seizes and disarms her._]

Do not yourself such wrong, who are in this
Relieved, but not betrayed.

CLEOPATRA.

What, of death too,
That rids our dogs of languish?

PROCULEIUS.

Cleopatra,
Do not abuse my master's bounty by
Thy undoing of yourself. Let the world see
His nobleness well acted, which your death
Will never let come forth.

CLEOPATRA.

Where art thou, Death?
Come hither, come! Come, come, and take a queen
Worth many babes and beggars!

PROCULEIUS.

O, temperance, lady!

CLEOPATRA.

Sir, I will eat no meat; I'll not drink, sir;
If idle talk will once be necessary,
I'll not sleep neither. This mortal house I'll ruin,
Do Caesar what he can. Know, sir, that I
Will not wait pinioned at your master's court,
Nor once be chastised with the sober eye
Of dull Octavia. Shall they hoist me up
And show me to the shouting varletry
Of censuring Rome? Rather a ditch in Egypt
Be gentle grave unto me! Rather on Nilus' mud
Lay me stark-naked, and let the water-flies
Blow me into abhorring! Rather make
My country's high pyramids my gibbet
And hang me up in chains!

PROCULEIUS.

You do extend
These thoughts of horror further than you shall
Find cause in Caesar.

Enter Dolabella.

DOLABELLA.

Proculeius,
What thou hast done thy master Caesar knows,
And he hath sent for thee. For the queen,
I'll take her to my guard.

PROCULEIUS.

So, Dolabella,
It shall content me best. Be gentle to her.
[_To Cleopatra._] To Caesar I will speak what you shall please,
If you'll employ me to him.

CLEOPATRA.

Say I would die.

[_Exeunt Proculeius and Soldiers._]

DOLABELLA.

Most noble empress, you have heard of me?

CLEOPATRA.

I cannot tell.

DOLABELLA.

Assuredly you know me.

CLEOPATRA.

No matter, sir, what I have heard or known.
You laugh when boys or women tell their dreams;
Is't not your trick?

DOLABELLA.

I understand not, madam.

CLEOPATRA.

I dreamt there was an Emperor Antony.
O, such another sleep, that I might see
But such another man!

DOLABELLA.

If it might please you?

CLEOPATRA.

His face was as the heavens, and therein stuck
A sun and moon, which kept their course, and lighted
The little O, the earth.

DOLABELLA.

Most sovereign creature?

CLEOPATRA.

His legs bestrid the ocean; his reared arm
Crested the world; his voice was propertyed
As all the tuned spheres, and that to friends;
But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,
He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,
There was no winter in't; an autumn 'twas
That grew the more by reaping. His delights
Were dolphin-like; they showed his back above
The element they lived in. In his livery
Walked crowns and crownets; realms and islands were
As plates dropped from his pocket.

DOLABELLA.

Cleopatra?

CLEOPATRA.

Think you there was or might be such a man
As this I dreamt of?

DOLABELLA.

Gentle madam, no.

CLEOPATRA.

You lie up to the hearing of the gods!
But if there be nor ever were one such,
It's past the size of dreaming. Nature wants stuff
To vie strange forms with fancy; yet t' imagine
An Antony were nature's piece 'gainst fancy,
Condemning shadows quite.

DOLABELLA.

Hear me, good madam.
Your loss is, as yourself, great; and you bear it
As answering to the weight. Would I might never
O'ertake pursued success, but I do feel,

By the rebound of yours, a grief that smites
My very heart at root.

CLEOPATRA.
I thank you, sir.
Know you what Caesar means to do with me?

DOLABELLA.
I am loath to tell you what I would you knew.

CLEOPATRA.
Nay, pray you, sir.

DOLABELLA.
Though he be honourable?

CLEOPATRA.
He'll lead me, then, in triumph.

DOLABELLA.
Madam, he will. I know it.

Flourish. Enter Caesar, Proculeius, Gallus, Maecenas and others of his
train.

ALL.
Make way there! Caesar!

CAESAR.
Which is the Queen of Egypt?

DOLABELLA.
It is the Emperor, madam.

[_Cleopatra kneels._]

CAESAR.
Arise, you shall not kneel.
I pray you, rise. Rise, Egypt.

CLEOPATRA.
Sir, the gods
Will have it thus. My master and my lord
I must obey.

CAESAR.
Take to you no hard thoughts.
The record of what injuries you did us,
Though written in our flesh, we shall remember
As things but done by chance.

CLEOPATRA.
Sole sir o' th' world,
I cannot project mine own cause so well

To make it clear, but do confess I have
Been laden with like frailties which before
Have often shamed our sex.

CAESAR.

Cleopatra, know
We will extenuate rather than enforce.
If you apply yourself to our intents,
Which towards you are most gentle, you shall find
A benefit in this change; but if you seek
To lay on me a cruelty by taking
Antony's course, you shall bereave yourself
Of my good purposes, and put your children
To that destruction which I'll guard them from
If thereon you rely. I'll take my leave.

CLEOPATRA.

And may, through all the world. 'Tis yours, and we,
Your scutcheons and your signs of conquest, shall
Hang in what place you please. Here, my good lord.

CAESAR.

You shall advise me in all for Cleopatra.

CLEOPATRA.

This is the brief of money, plate, and jewels
I am possessed of. 'Tis exactly valued,
Not petty things admitted. Where's Seleucus?

Enter Seleucus.

SELEUCUS.

Here, madam.

CLEOPATRA.

This is my treasurer. Let him speak, my lord,
Upon his peril, that I have reserved
To myself nothing. Speak the truth, Seleucus.

SELEUCUS.

Madam, I had rather seal my lips
Than to my peril speak that which is not.

CLEOPATRA.

What have I kept back?

SELEUCUS.

Enough to purchase what you have made known.

CAESAR.

Nay, blush not, Cleopatra. I approve
Your wisdom in the deed.

CLEOPATRA.

See, Caesar! O, behold,
How pomp is followed! Mine will now be yours
And should we shift estates, yours would be mine.
The ingratitude of this Seleucus does
Even make me wild. O slave, of no more trust
Than love that's hired! What, goest thou back? Thou shalt
Go back, I warrant thee! But I'll catch thine eyes
Though they had wings. Slave, soulless villain, dog!
O rarely base!

CAESAR.

Good queen, let us entreat you.

CLEOPATRA.

O Caesar, what a wounding shame is this,
That thou vouchsafing here to visit me,
Doing the honour of thy lordliness
To one so meek, that mine own servant should
Parcel the sum of my disgraces by
Addition of his envy! Say, good Caesar,
That I some lady trifles have reserved,
Immement toys, things of such dignity
As we greet modern friends withal; and say
Some nobler token I have kept apart
For Livia and Octavia, to induce
Their mediation, must I be unfolded
With one that I have bred? The gods! It smites me
Beneath the fall I have.
[_To Seleucus_] Prithee go hence,
Or I shall show the cinders of my spirits
Through th' ashes of my chance. Wert thou a man,
Thou wouldst have mercy on me.

CAESAR.

Forbear, Seleucus.

[_Exit Seleucus._]

CLEOPATRA.

Be it known that we, the greatest, are misthought
For things that others do; and when we fall,
We answer others' merits in our name,
Are therefore to be pitied.

CAESAR.

Cleopatra,
Not what you have reserved nor what acknowledged
Put we in th' roll of conquest. Still be't yours;
Bestow it at your pleasure, and believe
Caesar's no merchant to make prize with you
Of things that merchants sold. Therefore be cheered;
Make not your thoughts your prisons. No, dear queen;
For we intend so to dispose you as
Yourself shall give us counsel. Feed and sleep.

Our care and pity is so much upon you
That we remain your friend; and so, adieu.

CLEOPATRA.
My master and my lord!

CAESAR.
Not so. Adieu.

[_Flourish. Exeunt Caesar and his train._]

CLEOPATRA.
He words me, girls, he words me, that I should not
Be noble to myself. But hark thee, Charmian!

[_Whispers to Charmian._]

IRAS.
Finish, good lady. The bright day is done,
And we are for the dark.

CLEOPATRA.
Hie thee again.
I have spoke already, and it is provided.
Go put it to the haste.

CHARMIAN.
Madam, I will.

Enter Dolabella.

DOLABELLA.
Where's the Queen?

CHARMIAN.
Behold, sir.

[_Exit._]

CLEOPATRA.
Dolabella!

DOLABELLA.
Madam, as thereto sworn by your command,
Which my love makes religion to obey,
I tell you this: Caesar through Syria
Intends his journey, and within three days
You with your children will he send before.
Make your best use of this. I have performed
Your pleasure and my promise.

CLEOPATRA.
Dolabella,
I shall remain your debtor.

DOLABELLA.

I your servant.

Adieu, good queen. I must attend on Caesar.

CLEOPATRA.

Farewell, and thanks.

[_Exit Dolabella._]

Now, Iras, what think'st thou?

Thou an Egyptian puppet shall be shown
In Rome as well as I. Mechanic slaves
With greasy aprons, rules, and hammers shall
Uplift us to the view. In their thick breaths,
Rank of gross diet, shall we be enclouded,
And forced to drink their vapour.

IRAS.

The gods forbid!

CLEOPATRA.

Nay, 'tis most certain, Iras. Saucy lictors
Will catch at us like strumpets, and scald rhymers
Ballad us out o' tune. The quick comedians
Extemporally will stage us and present
Our Alexandrian revels; Antony
Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
I' th' posture of a whore.

IRAS.

O the good gods!

CLEOPATRA.

Nay, that's certain.

IRAS.

I'll never see't, for I am sure mine nails
Are stronger than mine eyes.

CLEOPATRA.

Why, that's the way
To fool their preparation and to conquer
Their most absurd intents.

Enter Charmian.

Now, Charmian!

Show me, my women, like a queen. Go fetch
My best attires. I am again for Cydnus
To meet Mark Antony. Sirrah, Iras, go.
Now, noble Charmian, we'll dispatch indeed,
And when thou hast done this chare, I'll give thee leave

To play till doomsday. Bring our crown and all.

[_Exit Iras. A noise within._]

Wherefore? 's this noise?

Enter a Guardsman.

GUARDSMAN.

Here is a rural fellow
That will not be denied your highness? presence.
He brings you figs.

CLEOPATRA.

Let him come in.

[_Exit Guardsman._]

What poor an instrument
May do a noble deed! He brings me liberty.
My resolution? 's placed, and I have nothing
Of woman in me. Now from head to foot
I am marble-constant. Now the fleeting moon
No planet is of mine.

Enter Guardsman and Clown with a basket.

GUARDSMAN.

This is the man.

CLEOPATRA.

Avoid, and leave him.

[_Exit Guardsman._]

Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there
That kills and pains not?

CLOWN.

Truly, I have him, but I would not be the party that should desire you
to touch him, for his biting is immortal. Those that do die of it do
seldom or never recover.

CLEOPATRA.

Remember? 'st thou any that have died on? 't?

CLOWN.

Very many, men and women too. I heard of one of them no longer than
yesterday? a very honest woman, but something given to lie; as a woman
should not do but in the way of honesty? how she died of the biting of
it, what pain she felt. Truly she makes a very good report o? th? worm;
but he that will believe all that they say shall never be saved by half
that they do. But this is most falliable, the worm? 's an odd worm.

CLEOPATRA.
Get thee hence. Farewell.

CLOWN.
I wish you all joy of the worm.

[_Sets down the basket._]

CLEOPATRA.
Farewell.

CLOWN.
You must think this, look you, that the worm will do his kind.

CLEOPATRA.
Ay, ay, farewell.

CLOWN.
Look you, the worm is not to be trusted but in the keeping of wise people; for indeed there is no goodness in the worm.

CLEOPATRA.
Take thou no care; it shall be heeded.

CLOWN.
Very good. Give it nothing, I pray you, for it is not worth the feeding.

CLEOPATRA.
Will it eat me?

CLOWN.
You must not think I am so simple but I know the devil himself will not eat a woman. I know that a woman is a dish for the gods if the devil dress her not. But truly, these same whoreson devils do the gods great harm in their women, for in every ten that they make, the devils mar five.

CLEOPATRA.
Well, get thee gone. Farewell.

CLOWN.
Yes, forsooth. I wish you joy o' th' worm.

[_Exit._]

Enter Iras with a robe, crown, &c.

CLEOPATRA.
Give me my robe. Put on my crown. I have
Immortal longings in me. Now no more
The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip.
Yare, yare, good Iras; quick. Methinks I hear
Antony call. I see him rouse himself

To praise my noble act. I hear him mock
The luck of Caesar, which the gods give men
To excuse their after wrath. Husband, I come!
Now to that name my courage prove my title!
I am fire and air; my other elements
I give to baser life. So, have you done?
Come then, and take the last warmth of my lips.
Farewell, kind Charmian. Iras, long farewell.

[Kisses them. Iras falls and dies.]

Have I the asp in my lips? Dost fall?
If thou and nature can so gently part,
The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch,
Which hurts and is desired. Dost thou lie still?
If thus thou vanishest, thou tell'st the world
It is not worth leave-taking.

CHARMIAN.

Dissolve, thick cloud, and rain, that I may say
The gods themselves do weep!

CLEOPATRA.

This proves me base.
If she first meet the curled Antony,
He'll make demand of her, and spend that kiss
Which is my heaven to have. Come, thou mortal wretch,

[To an asp, which she applies to her breast.]

With thy sharp teeth this knot intricate
Of life at once untie. Poor venomous fool,
Be angry and dispatch. O couldst thou speak,
That I might hear thee call great Caesar ass
Unpolicied!

CHARMIAN.

O eastern star!

CLEOPATRA.

Peace, peace!
Dost thou not see my baby at my breast
That sucks the nurse asleep?

CHARMIAN.

O, break! O, break!

CLEOPATRA.

As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle?
O Antony! Nay, I will take thee too.

[Applying another asp to her arm.]

What should I stay?

[_Dies._]

CHARMIAN.

In this vile world? So, fare thee well.
Now boast thee, Death, in thy possession lies
A lass unparalleled. Downy windows, close,
And golden Ph?bus never be beheld
Of eyes again so royal! Your crown?s awry;
I?ll mend it and then play.

Enter the Guard rustling in.

FIRST GUARD.

Where?s the queen?

CHARMIAN.

Speak softly. Wake her not.

FIRST GUARD.

Caesar hath sent?

CHARMIAN.

Too slow a messenger.

[_Applies an asp._]

O, come apace, dispatch! I partly feel thee.

FIRST GUARD.

Approach, ho! All?s not well. Caesar?s beguiled.

SECOND GUARD.

There?s Dolabella sent from Caesar. Call him.

FIRST GUARD.

What work is here, Charmian? Is this well done?

CHARMIAN.

It is well done, and fitting for a princess
Descended of so many royal kings.
Ah, soldier!

[_Charmian dies._]

Enter Dolabella.

DOLABELLA.

How goes it here?

SECOND GUARD.

All dead.

DOLABELLA.

Caesar, thy thoughts
Touch their effects in this. Thyself art coming
To see performed the dreaded act which thou
So sought'st to hinder.

Enter Caesar and all his train, marching.

ALL.

A way there, a way for Caesar!

DOLABELLA.

O sir, you are too sure an augurer:
That you did fear is done.

CAESAR.

Bravest at the last,
She levelled at our purposes and, being royal,
Took her own way. The manner of their deaths?
I do not see them bleed.

DOLABELLA.

Who was last with them?

FIRST GUARD.

A simple countryman that brought her figs.
This was his basket.

CAESAR.

Poisoned then.

FIRST GUARD.

O Caesar,
This Charmian lived but now; she stood and spake.
I found her trimming up the diadem
On her dead mistress; tremblingly she stood,
And on the sudden dropped.

CAESAR.

O noble weakness!
If they had swallowed poison 'twould appear
By external swelling; but she looks like sleep,
As she would catch another Antony
In her strong toil of grace.

DOLABELLA.

Here on her breast
There is a vent of blood, and something blown.
The like is on her arm.

FIRST GUARD.

This is an asp's trail, and these fig leaves
Have slime upon them, such as the asp's leaves
Upon the caves of Nile.

CAESAR.

Most probable

That so she died, for her physician tells me
She hath pursued conclusions infinite
Of easy ways to die. Take up her bed,
And bear her women from the monument.
She shall be buried by her Antony.
No grave upon the earth shall clip in it
A pair so famous. High events as these
Strike those that make them; and their story is
No less in pity than his glory which
Brought them to be lamented. Our army shall
In solemn show attend this funeral,
And then to Rome. Come, Dolabella, see
High order in this great solemnity.

[_Exeunt omnes._]

AS YOU LIKE IT

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Dramatis Personæ

ORLANDO, youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys

OLIVER, eldest son of Sir Rowland de Boys

JAQUES DE BOYS, second son of Sir Rowland de Boys

ADAM, Servant to Oliver

DENNIS, Servant to Oliver

ROSALIND, Daughter of Duke Senior

CELIA, Daughter of Duke Frederick

TOUCHSTONE, a Clown

DUKE SENIOR (Ferdinand), living in exile

JAQUES, Lord attending on the Duke Senior

AMIENS, Lord attending on the Duke Senior

DUKE FREDERICK, Brother to the Duke, and Usurper of his Dominions

CHARLES, his Wrestler

LE BEAU, a Courtier attending upon Frederick

CORIN, Shepherd

SILVIUS, Shepherd

PHOEBE, a Shepherdess

AUDREY, a Country Wench

WILLIAM, a Country Fellow, in love with Audrey

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT, a Vicar

A person representing HYMEN

Lords belonging to the two Dukes; Pages, Foresters, and other Attendants.

The scene lies first near Oliver's house; afterwards partly in the Usurper's court and partly in the Forest of Arden.

ACT I

SCENE I. An Orchard near Oliver's house

Enter Orlando and Adam.

ORLANDO.

As I remember, Adam, it was upon this fashion bequeathed me by will but poor a thousand crowns, and, as thou sayst, charged my brother, on his blessing, to breed me well; and there begins my sadness. My brother Jaques he keeps at school, and report speaks goldenly of his profit. For my part, he keeps me rustically at home, or, to speak more properly, stays me here at home unkept; for call you that keeping, for a gentleman of my birth, that differs not from the stalling of an ox? His horses are bred better, for, besides that they are fair with their feeding, they are taught their manage and to that end riders dearly hired; but I, his brother, gain nothing under him but growth, for the which his animals on his dunghills are as much bound to him as I. Besides this nothing that he so plentifully gives me, the something that nature gave me his countenance seems to take from me. He lets me feed with his hinds, bars me the place of a brother, and as much as in him lies, mines my gentility with my education. This is it, Adam, that grieves me, and the spirit of my father, which I think is within me, begins to mutiny against this servitude. I will no longer endure it, though yet I know no wise remedy how to avoid it.

Enter Oliver.

ADAM.

Yonder comes my master, your brother.

ORLANDO.

Go apart, Adam, and thou shalt hear how he will shake me up.

[_Adam retires._]

OLIVER.

Now, sir, what make you here?

ORLANDO.

Nothing. I am not taught to make anything.

OLIVER.

What mar you then, sir?

ORLANDO.

Marry, sir, I am helping you to mar that which God made, a poor unworthy brother of yours, with idleness.

OLIVER.

Marry, sir, be better employed, and be naught awhile.

ORLANDO.

Shall I keep your hogs, and eat husks with them? What prodigal portion have I spent that I should come to such penury?

OLIVER.

Know you where you are, sir?

ORLANDO.

O, sir, very well: here in your orchard.

OLIVER.

Know you before whom, sir?

ORLANDO.

Ay, better than him I am before knows me. I know you are my eldest brother, and in the gentle condition of blood you should so know me. The courtesy of nations allows you my better in that you are the first-born, but the same tradition takes not away my blood, were there twenty brothers betwixt us. I have as much of my father in me as you, albeit I confess your coming before me is nearer to his reverence.

OLIVER.

What, boy!

ORLANDO.

Come, come, elder brother, you are too young in this.

OLIVER.

Wilt thou lay hands on me, villain?

ORLANDO.

I am no villain. I am the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys; he was my father, and he is thrice a villain that says such a father begot villains. Wert thou not my brother, I would not take this hand from thy throat till this other had pulled out thy tongue for saying so. Thou has railed on thyself.

ADAM.

[_Coming forward_] Sweet masters, be patient. For your father's remembrance, be at accord.

OLIVER.

Let me go, I say.

ORLANDO.

I will not till I please. You shall hear me. My father charged you in his will to give me good education. You have trained me like a peasant, obscuring and hiding from me all gentleman-like qualities. The spirit of my father grows strong in me, and I will no longer endure it. Therefore allow me such exercises as may become a gentleman, or give me the poor allottery my father left me by testament; with that I will go buy my fortunes.

OLIVER.

And what wilt thou do? Beg when that is spent? Well, sir, get you in. I will not long be troubled with you. You shall have some part of your will. I pray you leave me.

ORLANDO.

I no further offend you than becomes me for my good.

OLIVER.

Get you with him, you old dog.

ADAM.

Is 'old dog' my reward? Most true, I have lost my teeth in your service. God be with my old master. He would not have spoke such a word.

[_Exeunt Orlando and Adam._]

OLIVER.

Is it even so? Begin you to grow upon me? I will physic your rankness, and yet give no thousand crowns neither. Holla, Dennis!

Enter Dennis.

DENNIS

Calls your worship?

OLIVER.

Was not Charles, the Duke's wrestler, here to speak with me?

DENNIS

So please you, he is here at the door and importunes access to you.

OLIVER.

Call him in.

[_Exit Dennis._]

'Twill be a good way, and tomorrow the wrestling is.

Enter Charles.

CHARLES.

Good morrow to your worship.

OLIVER.

Good Monsieur Charles. What's the new news at the new court?

CHARLES.

There's no news at the court, sir, but the old news. That is, the old Duke is banished by his younger brother the new Duke, and three or four loving lords have put themselves into voluntary exile with him, whose lands and revenues enrich the new Duke; therefore he gives them good leave to wander.

OLIVER.

Can you tell if Rosalind, the Duke's daughter, be banished with her father?

CHARLES.

O, no; for the Duke's daughter, her cousin, so loves her, being ever from their cradles bred together, that she would have followed her exile or have died to stay behind her. She is at the court and no less

beloved of her uncle than his own daughter, and never two ladies loved as they do.

OLIVER.

Where will the old Duke live?

CHARLES.

They say he is already in the Forest of Arden, and a many merry men with him; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England. They say many young gentlemen flock to him every day and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world.

OLIVER.

What, you wrestle tomorrow before the new Duke?

CHARLES.

Marry, do I, sir, and I came to acquaint you with a matter. I am given, sir, secretly to understand that your younger brother Orlando hath a disposition to come in disguised against me to try a fall. Tomorrow, sir, I wrestle for my credit, and he that escapes me without some broken limb shall acquit him well. Your brother is but young and tender, and for your love I would be loath to foil him, as I must for my own honour if he come in. Therefore, out of my love to you, I came hither to acquaint you withal, that either you might stay him from his intendment, or brook such disgrace well as he shall run into, in that it is a thing of his own search and altogether against my will.

OLIVER.

Charles, I thank thee for thy love to me, which thou shalt find I will most kindly requite. I had myself notice of my brother's purpose herein, and have by underhand means laboured to dissuade him from it; but he is resolute. I'll tell thee, Charles, it is the stubbornest young fellow of France, full of ambition, an envious emulator of every man's good parts, a secret and villainous contriver against me his natural brother. Therefore use thy discretion. I had as lief thou didst break his neck as his finger. And thou wert best look to't; for if thou dost him any slight disgrace, or if he do not mightily grace himself on thee, he will practise against thee by poison, entrap thee by some treacherous device, and never leave thee till he hath taken thy life by some indirect means or other. For I assure thee (and almost with tears I speak it) there is not one so young and so villainous this day living. I speak but brotherly of him, but should I anatomize him to thee as he is, I must blush and weep, and thou must look pale and wonder.

CHARLES.

I am heartily glad I came hither to you. If he come tomorrow I'll give him his payment. If ever he go alone again I'll never wrestle for prize more. And so, God keep your worship.

[_Exit._]

OLIVER.

Farewell, good Charles. Now will I stir this gamester. I hope I shall

see an end of him; for my soul?yet I know not why?hates nothing more than he. Yet he?s gentle, never schooled and yet learned, full of noble device, of all sorts enchantingly beloved, and indeed so much in the heart of the world, and especially of my own people, who best know him, that I am altogether misprized. But it shall not be so long; this wrestler shall clear all. Nothing remains but that I kindle the boy thither, which now I?ll go about.

[_Exit._]

SCENE II. A Lawn before the Duke?s Palace

Enter Rosalind and Celia.

CELIA.

I pray thee, Rosalind, sweet my coz, be merry.

ROSALIND.

Dear Celia, I show more mirth than I am mistress of, and would you yet I were merrier? Unless you could teach me to forget a banished father, you must not learn me how to remember any extraordinary pleasure.

CELIA.

Herein I see thou lov?st me not with the full weight that I love thee. If my uncle, thy banished father, had banished thy uncle, the Duke my father, so thou hadst been still with me, I could have taught my love to take thy father for mine. So wouldst thou, if the truth of thy love to me were so righteously tempered as mine is to thee.

ROSALIND.

Well, I will forget the condition of my estate to rejoice in yours.

CELIA.

You know my father hath no child but I, nor none is like to have; and truly, when he dies thou shalt be his heir, for what he hath taken away from thy father perforce, I will render thee again in affection. By mine honour I will! And when I break that oath, let me turn monster. Therefore, my sweet Rose, my dear Rose, be merry.

ROSALIND.

From henceforth I will, coz, and devise sports. Let me see?what think you of falling in love?

CELIA.

Marry, I prithee do, to make sport withal; but love no man in good earnest, nor no further in sport neither than with safety of a pure blush thou mayst in honour come off again.

ROSALIND.

What shall be our sport, then?

CELIA.

Let us sit and mock the good housewife Fortune from her wheel, that her gifts may henceforth be bestowed equally.

ROSALIND.

I would we could do so, for her benefits are mightily misplaced, and the bountiful blind woman doth most mistake in her gifts to women.

CELIA.

'Tis true, for those that she makes fair she scarce makes honest, and those that she makes honest she makes very ill-favouredly.

ROSALIND.

Nay, now thou goest from Fortune's office to Nature's. Fortune reigns in gifts of the world, not in the lineaments of Nature.

Enter Touchstone.

CELIA.

No? When Nature hath made a fair creature, may she not by Fortune fall into the fire? Though Nature hath given us wit to flout at Fortune, hath not Fortune sent in this fool to cut off the argument?

ROSALIND.

Indeed, there is Fortune too hard for Nature, when Fortune makes Nature's natural the cutter-off of Nature's wit.

CELIA.

Peradventure this is not Fortune's work neither, but Nature's, who perceiveth our natural wits too dull to reason of such goddesses, and hath sent this natural for our whetstone; for always the dullness of the fool is the whetstone of the wits. How now, wit, whither wander you?

TOUCHSTONE.

Mistress, you must come away to your father.

CELIA.

Were you made the messenger?

TOUCHSTONE.

No, by mine honour, but I was bid to come for you.

ROSALIND.

Where learned you that oath, fool?

TOUCHSTONE.

Of a certain knight that swore by his honour they were good pancakes, and swore by his honour the mustard was naught. Now, I'll stand to it, the pancakes were naught and the mustard was good, and yet was not the knight forsworn.

CELIA.

How prove you that in the great heap of your knowledge?

ROSALIND.

Ay, marry, now unmuzzle your wisdom.

TOUCHSTONE.

Stand you both forth now: stroke your chins, and swear by your beards that I am a knave.

CELIA.

By our beards, if we had them, thou art.

TOUCHSTONE.

By my knavery, if I had it, then I were. But if you swear by that that is not, you are not forsworn. No more was this knight swearing by his honour, for he never had any; or if he had, he had sworn it away before ever he saw those pancakes or that mustard.

CELIA.

Prithee, who is't that thou mean'st?

TOUCHSTONE.

One that old Frederick, your father, loves.

CELIA.

My father's love is enough to honour him. Enough! Speak no more of him. You'll be whipped for taxation one of these days.

TOUCHSTONE.

The more pity that fools may not speak wisely what wise men do foolishly.

CELIA.

By my troth, thou sayest true. For since the little wit that fools have was silenced, the little foolery that wise men have makes a great show. Here comes Monsieur Le Beau.

Enter Le Beau.

ROSALIND.

With his mouth full of news.

CELIA.

Which he will put on us as pigeons feed their young.

ROSALIND.

Then shall we be news-crammed.

CELIA.

All the better; we shall be the more marketable.
Bonjour, Monsieur Le Beau. What's the news?

LE BEAU.

Fair princess, you have lost much good sport.

CELIA.

Sport! Of what colour?

LE BEAU.

What colour, madam? How shall I answer you?

ROSALIND.

As wit and fortune will.

TOUCHSTONE.

Or as the destinies decrees.

CELIA.

Well said. That was laid on with a trowel.

TOUCHSTONE.

Nay, if I keep not my rank?

ROSALIND.

Thou lovest thy old smell.

LE BEAU.

You amaze me, ladies. I would have told you of good wrestling, which you have lost the sight of.

ROSALIND.

Yet tell us the manner of the wrestling.

LE BEAU.

I will tell you the beginning and, if it please your ladyships, you may see the end, for the best is yet to do; and here, where you are, they are coming to perform it.

CELIA.

Well, the beginning that is dead and buried.

LE BEAU.

There comes an old man and his three sons?

CELIA.

I could match this beginning with an old tale.

LE BEAU.

Three proper young men of excellent growth and presence.

ROSALIND.

With bills on their necks: ?Be it known unto all men by these presents.?

LE BEAU.

The eldest of the three wrestled with Charles, the Duke?s wrestler, which Charles in a moment threw him and broke three of his ribs, that there is little hope of life in him. So he served the second, and so the third. Yonder they lie, the poor old man their father making such pitiful dole over them that all the beholders take his part with weeping.

ROSALIND.

Alas!

TOUCHSTONE.

But what is the sport, monsieur, that the ladies have lost?

LE BEAU.

Why, this that I speak of.

TOUCHSTONE.

Thus men may grow wiser every day. It is the first time that ever I heard breaking of ribs was sport for ladies.

CELIA.

Or I, I promise thee.

ROSALIND.

But is there any else longs to see this broken music in his sides? Is there yet another dotes upon rib-breaking? Shall we see this wrestling, cousin?

LE BEAU.

You must if you stay here, for here is the place appointed for the wrestling, and they are ready to perform it.

CELIA.

Yonder, sure, they are coming. Let us now stay and see it.

Flourish. Enter Duke Frederick, Lords, Orlando, Charles and Attendants.

DUKE FREDERICK.

Come on. Since the youth will not be entreated, his own peril on his forwardness.

ROSALIND.

Is yonder the man?

LE BEAU.

Even he, madam.

CELIA.

Alas, he is too young. Yet he looks successfully.

DUKE FREDERICK.

How now, daughter and cousin? Are you crept hither to see the wrestling?

ROSALIND.

Ay, my liege, so please you give us leave.

DUKE FREDERICK.

You will take little delight in it, I can tell you, there is such odds in the man. In pity of the challenger's youth I would fain dissuade him, but he will not be entreated. Speak to him, ladies; see if you can

move him.

CELIA.

Call him hither, good Monsieur Le Beau.

DUKE FREDERICK.

Do so; I'll not be by.

[_Duke Frederick steps aside._]

LE BEAU.

Monsieur the challenger, the Princess calls for you.

ORLANDO.

I attend them with all respect and duty.

ROSALIND.

Young man, have you challenged Charles the wrestler?

ORLANDO.

No, fair princess. He is the general challenger. I come but in as others do, to try with him the strength of my youth.

CELIA.

Young gentleman, your spirits are too bold for your years. You have seen cruel proof of this man's strength. If you saw yourself with your eyes or knew yourself with your judgement, the fear of your adventure would counsel you to a more equal enterprise. We pray you for your own sake to embrace your own safety and give over this attempt.

ROSALIND.

Do, young sir. Your reputation shall not therefore be misprized. We will make it our suit to the Duke that the wrestling might not go forward.

ORLANDO.

I beseech you, punish me not with your hard thoughts, wherein I confess me much guilty to deny so fair and excellent ladies anything. But let your fair eyes and gentle wishes go with me to my trial, wherein if I be foiled there is but one shamed that was never gracious; if killed, but one dead that is willing to be so. I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me; the world no injury, for in it I have nothing. Only in the world I fill up a place, which may be better supplied when I have made it empty.

ROSALIND.

The little strength that I have, I would it were with you.

CELIA.

And mine to eke out hers.

ROSALIND.

Fare you well. Pray heaven I be deceived in you.

CELIA.

Your heart's desires be with you.

CHARLES.

Come, where is this young gallant that is so desirous to lie with his mother earth?

ORLANDO.

Ready, sir; but his will hath in it a more modest working.

DUKE FREDERICK.

You shall try but one fall.

CHARLES.

No, I warrant your grace you shall not entreat him to a second, that have so mightily persuaded him from a first.

ORLANDO.

You mean to mock me after; you should not have mocked me before. But come your ways.

ROSALIND.

Now, Hercules be thy speed, young man!

CELIA.

I would I were invisible, to catch the strong fellow by the leg.

[_Orlando and Charles wrestle._]

ROSALIND.

O excellent young man!

CELIA.

If I had a thunderbolt in mine eye, I can tell who should down.

[_Charles is thrown. Shout._]

DUKE FREDERICK.

No more, no more.

ORLANDO.

Yes, I beseech your grace. I am not yet well breathed.

DUKE FREDERICK.

How dost thou, Charles?

LE BEAU.

He cannot speak, my lord.

DUKE FREDERICK.

Bear him away.

[_Charles is carried off by Attendants._]

What is thy name, young man?

ORLANDO.

Orlando, my liege, the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys.

DUKE FREDERICK.

I would thou hadst been son to some man else.
The world esteemed thy father honourable,
But I did find him still mine enemy.
Thou shouldst have better pleased me with this deed
Hadst thou descended from another house.
But fare thee well, thou art a gallant youth.
I would thou hadst told me of another father.

[_Exeunt Duke Frederick, Le Beau and Lords._]

CELIA.

Were I my father, coz, would I do this?

ORLANDO.

I am more proud to be Sir Rowland's son,
His youngest son, and would not change that calling
To be adopted heir to Frederick.

ROSALIND.

My father loved Sir Rowland as his soul,
And all the world was of my father's mind.
Had I before known this young man his son,
I should have given him tears unto entreaties
Ere he should thus have ventured.

CELIA.

Gentle cousin,
Let us go thank him and encourage him.
My father's rough and envious disposition
Sticks me at heart. Sir, you have well deserved.
If you do keep your promises in love
But justly, as you have exceeded promise,
Your mistress shall be happy.

ROSALIND.

Gentleman,

[_Giving him a chain from her neck_.]

Wear this for me?one out of suits with Fortune,
That could give more but that her hand lacks means?
Shall we go, coz?

CELIA.

Ay.?Fare you well, fair gentleman.

ORLANDO.

Can I not say, I thank you? My better parts

Are all thrown down, and that which here stands up
Is but a quintain, a mere lifeless block.

ROSALIND.

He calls us back. My pride fell with my fortunes.
I'll ask him what he would. Did you call, sir??
Sir, you have wrestled well and overthrown
More than your enemies.

CELIA.

Will you go, coz?

ROSALIND.

Have with you. Fare you well.

[_Exeunt Rosalind and Celia._]

ORLANDO.

What passion hangs these weights upon my tongue?
I cannot speak to her, yet she urged conference.
O poor Orlando, thou art overthrown.
Or Charles or something weaker masters thee.

Enter Le Beau.

LE BEAU.

Good sir, I do in friendship counsel you
To leave this place. Albeit you have deserved
High commendation, true applause, and love,
Yet such is now the Duke's condition
That he misconsters all that you have done.
The Duke is humorous; what he is indeed
More suits you to conceive than I to speak of.

ORLANDO.

I thank you, sir; and pray you tell me this:
Which of the two was daughter of the Duke
That here was at the wrestling?

LE BEAU.

Neither his daughter, if we judge by manners,
But yet indeed the smaller is his daughter.
The other is daughter to the banished Duke,
And here detained by her usurping uncle
To keep his daughter company, whose loves
Are dearer than the natural bond of sisters.
But I can tell you that of late this Duke
Hath taken displeasure 'gainst his gentle niece,
Grounded upon no other argument
But that the people praise her for her virtues
And pity her for her good father's sake;
And, on my life, his malice 'gainst the lady
Will suddenly break forth. Sir, fare you well.
Hereafter, in a better world than this,

I shall desire more love and knowledge of you.

ORLANDO.

I rest much bounden to you; fare you well!

[_Exit Le Beau._]

Thus must I from the smoke into the smother,
From tyrant Duke unto a tyrant brother.
But heavenly Rosalind!

[_Exit._]

SCENE III. A Room in the Palace

Enter Celia and Rosalind.

CELIA.

Why, cousin, why, Rosalind! Cupid have mercy! Not a word?

ROSALIND.

Not one to throw at a dog.

CELIA.

No, thy words are too precious to be cast away upon curs. Throw some of them at me. Come, lame me with reasons.

ROSALIND.

Then there were two cousins laid up, when the one should be lamed with reasons and the other mad without any.

CELIA.

But is all this for your father?

ROSALIND.

No, some of it is for my child's father. O, how full of briers is this working-day world!

CELIA.

They are but burs, cousin, thrown upon thee in holiday foolery. If we walk not in the trodden paths, our very petticoats will catch them.

ROSALIND.

I could shake them off my coat; these burs are in my heart.

CELIA.

Hem them away.

ROSALIND.

I would try, if I could cry ?hem? and have him.

CELIA.

Come, come, wrestle with thy affections.

ROSALIND.

O, they take the part of a better wrestler than myself.

CELIA.

O, a good wish upon you! You will try in time, in despite of a fall.
But turning these jests out of service, let us talk in good earnest. Is
it possible on such a sudden you should fall into so strong a liking
with old Sir Rowland's youngest son?

ROSALIND.

The Duke my father loved his father dearly.

CELIA.

Doth it therefore ensue that you should love his son dearly? By this
kind of chase I should hate him, for my father hated his father dearly;
yet I hate not Orlando.

ROSALIND.

No, faith, hate him not, for my sake.

CELIA.

Why should I not? Doth he not deserve well?

Enter Duke Frederick with Lords.

ROSALIND.

Let me love him for that, and do you love him because I do? Look, here
comes the Duke.

CELIA.

With his eyes full of anger.

DUKE FREDERICK.

Mistress, dispatch you with your safest haste,
And get you from our court.

ROSALIND.

Me, uncle?

DUKE FREDERICK.

You, cousin.
Within these ten days if that thou be'st found
So near our public court as twenty miles,
Thou diest for it.

ROSALIND.

I do beseech your Grace,
Let me the knowledge of my fault bear with me.
If with myself I hold intelligence,
Or have acquaintance with mine own desires,
If that I do not dream, or be not frantic?
As I do trust I am not? then, dear uncle,
Never so much as in a thought unborn
Did I offend your Highness.

DUKE FREDERICK.

Thus do all traitors.

If their purgation did consist in words,

They are as innocent as grace itself.

Let it suffice thee that I trust thee not.

ROSALIND.

Yet your mistrust cannot make me a traitor.

Tell me whereon the likelihood depends.

DUKE FREDERICK.

Thou art thy father's daughter, there's enough.

ROSALIND.

So was I when your highness took his dukedom;

So was I when your highness banished him.

Treason is not inherited, my lord,

Or, if we did derive it from our friends,

What's that to me? My father was no traitor.

Then, good my liege, mistake me not so much

To think my poverty is treacherous.

CELIA.

Dear sovereign, hear me speak.

DUKE FREDERICK.

Ay, Celia, we stayed her for your sake,

Else had she with her father ranged along.

CELIA.

I did not then entreat to have her stay;

It was your pleasure and your own remorse.

I was too young that time to value her,

But now I know her. If she be a traitor,

Why, so am I. We still have slept together,

Rose at an instant, learned, played, ate together,

And wheresoe'er we went, like Juno's swans,

Still we went coupled and inseparable.

DUKE FREDERICK.

She is too subtle for thee, and her smoothness,

Her very silence, and her patience

Speak to the people, and they pity her.

Thou art a fool. She robs thee of thy name,

And thou wilt show more bright and seem more virtuous

When she is gone. Then open not thy lips.

Firm and irrevocable is my doom

Which I have passed upon her. She is banished.

CELIA.

Pronounce that sentence then on me, my liege.

I cannot live out of her company.

DUKE FREDERICK.

You are a fool. You, niece, provide yourself.
If you outstay the time, upon mine honour
And in the greatness of my word, you die.

[_Exeunt Duke Frederick and Lords._]

CELIA.

O my poor Rosalind, whither wilt thou go?
Wilt thou change fathers? I will give thee mine.
I charge thee, be not thou more grieved than I am.

ROSALIND.

I have more cause.

CELIA.

Thou hast not, cousin.
Prithee be cheerful. Know'st thou not the Duke
Hath banished me, his daughter?

ROSALIND.

That he hath not.

CELIA.

No, hath not? Rosalind lacks then the love
Which teacheth thee that thou and I am one.
Shall we be sundered? Shall we part, sweet girl?
No, let my father seek another heir.
Therefore devise with me how we may fly,
Whither to go, and what to bear with us,
And do not seek to take your change upon you,
To bear your griefs yourself and leave me out.
For, by this heaven, now at our sorrows pale,
Say what thou canst, I'll go along with thee.

ROSALIND.

Why, whither shall we go?

CELIA.

To seek my uncle in the Forest of Arden.

ROSALIND.

Alas, what danger will it be to us,
Maids as we are, to travel forth so far?
Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold.

CELIA.

I'll put myself in poor and mean attire,
And with a kind of umber smirch my face.
The like do you; so shall we pass along
And never stir assailants.

ROSALIND.

Were it not better,

Because that I am more than common tall,
That I did suit me all points like a man?
A gallant curtal-axe upon my thigh,
A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart
Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will,
We'll have a swashing and a martial outside,
As many other mannish cowards have
That do outface it with their semblances.

CELIA.

What shall I call thee when thou art a man?

ROSALIND.

I'll have no worse a name than Jove's own page,
And therefore look you call me Ganymede.
But what will you be called?

CELIA.

Something that hath a reference to my state:
No longer Celia, but Aliena.

ROSALIND.

But, cousin, what if we assayed to steal
The clownish fool out of your father's court?
Would he not be a comfort to our travel?

CELIA.

He'll go along o'er the wide world with me.
Leave me alone to woo him. Let's away,
And get our jewels and our wealth together,
Devise the fittest time and safest way
To hide us from pursuit that will be made
After my flight. Now go we in content
To liberty, and not to banishment.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT II

SCENE I. The Forest of Arden

Enter Duke Senior, Amiens and two or three Lords, dressed as foresters.

DUKE SENIOR.

Now, my co-mates and brothers in exile,
Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court?
Here feel we not the penalty of Adam,
The seasons' difference, as the icy fang

And churlish chiding of the winter's wind,
Which when it bites and blows upon my body
Even till I shrink with cold, I smile and say:
?This is no flattery. These are counsellors
That feelingly persuade me what I am.
Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

AMIENS.

I would not change it. Happy is your grace,
That can translate the stubbornness of fortune
Into so quiet and so sweet a style.

DUKE SENIOR.

Come, shall we go and kill us venison?
And yet it irks me the poor dappled fools,
Being native burghers of this desert city,
Should in their own confines with forked heads
Have their round haunches gored.

FIRST LORD.

Indeed, my lord,
The melancholy Jaques grieves at that,
And in that kind swears you do more usurp
Than doth your brother that hath banished you.
Today my lord of Amiens and myself
Did steal behind him as he lay along
Under an oak, whose antique root peeps out
Upon the brook that brawls along this wood;
To the which place a poor sequestered stag,
That from the hunter's aim had ta'en a hurt,
Did come to languish; and indeed, my lord,
The wretched animal heaved forth such groans
That their discharge did stretch his leathern coat
Almost to bursting, and the big round tears
Coursed one another down his innocent nose
In piteous chase. And thus the hairy fool,
Much marked of the melancholy Jaques,
Stood on th' extremest verge of the swift brook,
Augmenting it with tears.

DUKE SENIOR.

But what said Jaques?
Did he not moralize this spectacle?

FIRST LORD.

O yes, into a thousand similes.
First, for his weeping into the needless stream:
?Poor deer,? quoth he ?thou mak'st a testament
As worldlings do, giving thy sum of more

To that which had too much.? Then, being there alone,
Left and abandoned of his velvet friends:
??Tis right?; quoth he, ?thus misery doth part
The flux of company.? Anon a careless herd,
Full of the pasture, jumps along by him
And never stays to greet him. ?Ay,? quoth Jaques,
?Sweep on, you fat and greasy citizens!
?Tis just the fashion. Wherefore do you look
Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there??
Thus most invectively he pierceth through
The body of the country, city, court,
Yea, and of this our life, swearing that we
Are mere usurpers, tyrants, and what?s worse,
To fright the animals and to kill them up
In their assigned and native dwelling-place.

DUKE SENIOR.

And did you leave him in this contemplation?

SECOND LORD.

We did, my lord, weeping and commenting
Upon the sobbing deer.

DUKE SENIOR.

Show me the place.

I love to cope him in these sullen fits,
For then he?s full of matter.

FIRST LORD.

I?ll bring you to him straight.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. A Room in the Palace

Enter Duke Frederick with Lords.

DUKE FREDERICK.

Can it be possible that no man saw them?
It cannot be! Some villains of my court
Are of consent and sufferance in this.

FIRST LORD.

I cannot hear of any that did see her.
The ladies, her attendants of her chamber,
Saw her abed, and in the morning early
They found the bed untresured of their mistress.

SECOND LORD.

My lord, the roynish clown, at whom so oft
Your grace was wont to laugh, is also missing.
Hesperia, the princess? gentlewoman,
Confesses that she secretly o?erheard
Your daughter and her cousin much commend

The parts and graces of the wrestler
That did but lately foil the sinewy Charles;
And she believes wherever they are gone
That youth is surely in their company.

DUKE FREDERICK.

Send to his brother; fetch that gallant hither.
If he be absent, bring his brother to me.
I'll make him find him. Do this suddenly!
And let not search and inquisition quail
To bring again these foolish runaways.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. Before Oliver's House

Enter Orlando and Adam, meeting.

ORLANDO.

Who's there?

ADAM.

What, my young master? O my gentle master,
O my sweet master, O you memory
Of old Sir Rowland! Why, what make you here?
Why are you virtuous? Why do people love you?
And wherefore are you gentle, strong, and valiant?
Why would you be so fond to overcome
The bonny prizer of the humorous Duke?
Your praise is come too swiftly home before you.
Know you not, master, to some kind of men
Their graces serve them but as enemies?
No more do yours. Your virtues, gentle master,
Are sanctified and holy traitors to you.
O, what a world is this, when what is comely
Envenoms him that bears it!

ORLANDO.

Why, what's the matter?

ADAM.

O unhappy youth,
Come not within these doors! Within this roof
The enemy of all your graces lives.
Your brother? no, no brother, yet the son?
Yet not the son; I will not call him son?
Of him I was about to call his father,
Hath heard your praises, and this night he means
To burn the lodging where you use to lie,
And you within it. If he fail of that,
He will have other means to cut you off;
I overheard him and his practices.
This is no place; this house is but a butchery.
Abhor it, fear it, do not enter it.

ORLANDO.

Why, whither, Adam, wouldst thou have me go?

ADAM.

No matter whither, so you come not here.

ORLANDO.

What, wouldst thou have me go and beg my food,
Or with a base and boisterous sword enforce
A thievish living on the common road?
This I must do, or know not what to do.
Yet this I will not do, do how I can.
I rather will subject me to the malice
Of a diverted blood and bloody brother.

ADAM.

But do not so. I have five hundred crowns,
The thrifty hire I saved under your father,
Which I did store to be my foster-nurse,
When service should in my old limbs lie lame,
And unregarded age in corners thrown.
Take that, and He that doth the ravens feed,
Yea, providently caters for the sparrow,
Be comfort to my age. Here is the gold.
All this I give you. Let me be your servant.
Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty,
For in my youth I never did apply
Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood,
Nor did not with unbashful forehead woo
The means of weakness and debility.
Therefore my age is as a lusty winter,
Frosty but kindly. Let me go with you.
I'll do the service of a younger man
In all your business and necessities.

ORLANDO.

O good old man, how well in thee appears
The constant service of the antique world,
When service sweat for duty, not for meed.
Thou art not for the fashion of these times,
Where none will sweat but for promotion,
And having that do choke their service up
Even with the having. It is not so with thee.
But, poor old man, thou prun'st a rotten tree,
That cannot so much as a blossom yield
In lieu of all thy pains and husbandry.
But come thy ways, we'll go along together,
And ere we have thy youthful wages spent
We'll light upon some settled low content.

ADAM.

Master, go on and I will follow thee
To the last gasp with truth and loyalty.

From seventeen years till now almost fourscore
Here lived I, but now live here no more.
At seventeen years many their fortunes seek,
But at fourscore it is too late a week.
Yet fortune cannot recompense me better
Than to die well and not my master's debtor.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IV. The Forest of Arden

Enter Rosalind as Ganymede, Celia as Aliena, and Touchstone.

ROSALIND.

O Jupiter, how weary are my spirits!

TOUCHSTONE.

I care not for my spirits, if my legs were not weary.

ROSALIND.

I could find in my heart to disgrace my man's apparel, and to cry like a woman, but I must comfort the weaker vessel, as doublet and hose ought to show itself courageous to petticoat. Therefore, courage, good Aliena.

CELIA.

I pray you bear with me, I cannot go no further.

TOUCHSTONE.

For my part, I had rather bear with you than bear you. Yet I should bear no cross if I did bear you, for I think you have no money in your purse.

ROSALIND.

Well, this is the forest of Arden.

TOUCHSTONE.

Ay, now am I in Arden, the more fool I! When I was at home I was in a better place, but travellers must be content.

Enter Corin and Silvius.

ROSALIND.

Ay, be so, good Touchstone. Look you, who comes here? A young man and an old in solemn talk.

CORIN.

That is the way to make her scorn you still.

SILVIUS.

O Corin, that thou knew'st how I do love her!

CORIN.

I partly guess, for I have loved ere now.

SILVIUS.

No, Corin, being old, thou canst not guess,
Though in thy youth thou wast as true a lover
As ever sighed upon a midnight pillow.
But if thy love were ever like to mine?
As sure I think did never man love so?
How many actions most ridiculous
Hast thou been drawn to by thy fantasy?

CORIN.

Into a thousand that I have forgotten.

SILVIUS.

O, thou didst then never love so heartily!
If thou rememb^rest not the slightest folly
That ever love did make thee run into,
Thou hast not loved.
Or if thou hast not sat as I do now,
Wearing thy hearer in thy mistress' praise,
Thou hast not loved.
Or if thou hast not broke from company
Abruptly, as my passion now makes me,
Thou hast not loved.
O Phoebe, Phoebe, Phoebe!

[_Exit Silvius._]

ROSALIND.

Alas, poor shepherd, searching of thy wound,
I have by hard adventure found mine own.

TOUCHSTONE.

And I mine. I remember when I was in love I broke my sword upon a stone
and bid him take that for coming a-night to Jane Smile; and I remember
the kissing of her batlet, and the cow's dugs that her pretty chopped
hands had milked; and I remember the wooing of a peascod instead of
her, from whom I took two cods, and, giving her them again, said with
weeping tears, 'Wear these for my sake.' We that are true lovers run
into strange capers. But as all is mortal in nature, so is all nature
in love mortal in folly.

ROSALIND.

Thou speak'st wiser than thou art ware of.

TOUCHSTONE.

Nay, I shall ne'er be ware of mine own wit till I break my shins
against it.

ROSALIND.

Jove, Jove, this shepherd's passion
Is much upon my fashion.

TOUCHSTONE.

And mine, but it grows something stale with me.

CELIA.

I pray you, one of you question yond man
If he for gold will give us any food.
I faint almost to death.

TOUCHSTONE.

Holla, you clown!

ROSALIND.

Peace, fool, he's not thy kinsman.

CORIN.

Who calls?

TOUCHSTONE.

Your betters, sir.

CORIN.

Else are they very wretched.

ROSALIND.

Peace, I say. Good even to you, friend.

CORIN.

And to you, gentle sir, and to you all.

ROSALIND.

I prithee, shepherd, if that love or gold
Can in this desert place buy entertainment,
Bring us where we may rest ourselves and feed.
Here's a young maid with travel much oppressed,
And fairs for succour.

CORIN.

Fair sir, I pity her
And wish, for her sake more than for mine own,
My fortunes were more able to relieve her.
But I am shepherd to another man
And do not shear the fleeces that I graze.
My master is of churlish disposition
And little recks to find the way to heaven
By doing deeds of hospitality.
Besides, his cote, his flocks, and bounds of feed
Are now on sale, and at our shepcote now,
By reason of his absence, there is nothing
That you will feed on. But what is, come see,
And in my voice most welcome shall you be.

ROSALIND.

What is he that shall buy his flock and pasture?

CORIN.

That young swain that you saw here but erewhile,
That little cares for buying anything.

ROSALIND.

I pray thee, if it stand with honesty,
Buy thou the cottage, pasture, and the flock,
And thou shalt have to pay for it of us.

CELIA.

And we will mend thy wages. I like this place,
And willingly could waste my time in it.

CORIN.

Assuredly the thing is to be sold.
Go with me. If you like upon report
The soil, the profit, and this kind of life,
I will your very faithful feeder be,
And buy it with your gold right suddenly.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE V. Another part of the Forest

Enter Amiens, Jaques and others.

AMIENS.

[_Sings_.]

Under the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

JAQUES.

More, more, I prithee, more.

AMIENS.

It will make you melancholy, Monsieur Jaques.

JAQUES.

I thank it. More, I prithee, more. I can suck melancholy out of a song
as a weasel sucks eggs. More, I prithee, more.

AMIENS.

My voice is ragged. I know I cannot please you.

JAQUES.

I do not desire you to please me; I do desire you to sing. Come, more,
another _stanzo_. Call you ?em _stanzos?_

AMIENS.

What you will, Monsieur Jaques.

JAQUES.

Nay, I care not for their names. They owe me nothing. Will you sing?

AMIENS.

More at your request than to please myself.

JAQUES.

Well then, if ever I thank any man, I'll thank you; but that they call compliment is like the encounter of two dog-apes. And when a man thanks me heartily, methinks I have given him a penny and he renders me the beggarly thanks. Come, sing; and you that will not, hold your tongues.

AMIENS.

Well, I'll end the song. Sirs, cover the while. The Duke will drink under this tree; he hath been all this day to look you.

JAQUES.

And I have been all this day to avoid him. He is too disputable for my company. I think of as many matters as he, but I give heaven thanks and make no boast of them. Come, warble, come.

AMIENS.

[_Sings_.]

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live in the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither.
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

JAQUES.

I'll give you a verse to this note that I made yesterday in despite of my invention.

AMIENS.

And I'll sing it.

JAQUES.

Thus it goes:

If it do come to pass
That any man turn ass,
Leaving his wealth and ease
A stubborn will to please,
Ducdame, ducdame, ducdame;
Here shall he see
Gross fools as he,
An if he will come to me.

AMIENS.

What's that ?ducdame??

JAQUES.

'Tis a Greek invocation to call fools into a circle. I'll go sleep if I can; if I cannot, I'll rail against all the first-born of Egypt.

AMIENS.

And I'll go seek the Duke; his banquet is prepared.

[_Exeunt severally._]

SCENE VI. Another part of the Forest

Enter Orlando and Adam.

ADAM.

Dear master, I can go no further. O, I die for food! Here lie I down and measure out my grave. Farewell, kind master.

ORLANDO.

Why, how now, Adam? No greater heart in thee? Live a little, comfort a little, cheer thyself a little. If this uncouth forest yield anything savage, I will either be food for it or bring it for food to thee. Thy conceit is nearer death than thy powers. For my sake, be comfortable. Hold death awhile at the arm's end. I will here be with thee presently, and if I bring thee not something to eat, I'll give thee leave to die. But if thou diest before I come, thou art a mocker of my labour. Well said, thou look'st cheerly, and I'll be with thee quickly. Yet thou liest in the bleak air. Come, I will bear thee to some shelter and thou shalt not die for lack of a dinner if there live anything in this desert. Cheerly, good Adam!

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VII. Another part of the Forest

Enter Duke Senior, Amiens and Lords as outlaws.

DUKE SENIOR.

I think he be transformed into a beast,
For I can nowhere find him like a man.

FIRST LORD.

My lord, he is but even now gone hence;
Here was he merry, hearing of a song.

DUKE SENIOR.

If he, compact of jars, grow musical,
We shall have shortly discord in the spheres.
Go seek him, tell him I would speak with him.

Enter Jaques.

FIRST LORD.

He saves my labour by his own approach.

DUKE SENIOR.

Why, how now, monsieur? What a life is this
That your poor friends must woo your company?
What, you look merrily.

JAQUES.

A fool, a fool! I met a fool i' th' forest,
A motley fool. A miserable world!
As I do live by food, I met a fool,
Who laid him down and basked him in the sun,
And rail'd on Lady Fortune in good terms,
In good set terms, and yet a motley fool.
?Good morrow, fool,? quoth I. ?No, sir,? quoth he,
?Call me not fool till heaven hath sent me fortune?
And then he drew a dial from his poke,
And, looking on it with lack-lustre eye,
Says very wisely, ?It is ten o'clock.
Thus we may see,? quoth he, ?how the world wags.
?Tis but an hour ago since it was nine,
And after one hour more ?twill be eleven.
And so from hour to hour we ripe and ripe,
And then from hour to hour we rot and rot,
And thereby hangs a tale.? When I did hear
The motley fool thus moral on the time,
My lungs began to crow like chanticleer,
That fools should be so deep-contemplative,
And I did laugh sans intermission
An hour by his dial. O noble fool!
A worthy fool! Motley?s the only wear.

DUKE SENIOR.

What fool is this?

JAQUES.

O worthy fool!?One that hath been a courtier,
And says if ladies be but young and fair,
They have the gift to know it. And in his brain,
Which is as dry as the remainder biscuit
After a voyage, he hath strange places crammed
With observation, the which he vents
In mangled forms. O that I were a fool!
I am ambitious for a motley coat.

DUKE SENIOR.

Thou shalt have one.

JAQUES.

It is my only suit,
Provided that you weed your better judgements
Of all opinion that grows rank in them

That I am wise. I must have liberty
Withal, as large a charter as the wind,
To blow on whom I please, for so fools have.
And they that are most galled with my folly,
They most must laugh. And why, sir, must they so?
The ?why? is plain as way to parish church.
He that a fool doth very wisely hit
Doth very foolishly, although he smart,
Not to seem senseless of the bob. If not,
The wise man?s folly is anatomized
Even by the squandering glances of the fool.
Invest me in my motley. Give me leave
To speak my mind, and I will through and through
Cleanse the foul body of th? infected world,
If they will patiently receive my medicine.

DUKE SENIOR.

Fie on thee! I can tell what thou wouldst do.

JAQUES.

What, for a counter, would I do but good?

DUKE SENIOR.

Most mischievous foul sin, in chiding sin;
For thou thyself hast been a libertine,
As sensual as the brutish sting itself,
And all th? embossed sores and headed evils
That thou with license of free foot hast caught
Wouldst thou disgorge into the general world.

JAQUES.

Why, who cries out on pride
That can therein tax any private party?
Doth it not flow as hugely as the sea
Till that the weary very means do ebb?
What woman in the city do I name
When that I say the city-woman bears
The cost of princes on unworthy shoulders?
Who can come in and say that I mean her,
When such a one as she, such is her neighbour?
Or what is he of basest function
That says his bravery is not on my cost,
Thinking that I mean him, but therein suits
His folly to the mettle of my speech?
There then. How then, what then? Let me see wherein
My tongue hath wronged him. If it do him right,
Then he hath wronged himself. If he be free,
Why then my taxing like a wild-goose flies
Unclaimed of any man. But who comes here?

Enter Orlando with sword drawn.

ORLANDO.

Forbear, and eat no more.

JAQUES.

Why, I have eat none yet.

ORLANDO.

Nor shalt not till necessity be served.

JAQUES.

Of what kind should this cock come of?

DUKE SENIOR.

Art thou thus boldened, man, by thy distress?
Or else a rude despiser of good manners,
That in civility thou seem'st so empty?

ORLANDO.

You touched my vein at first. The thorny point
Of bare distress hath ta'en from me the show
Of smooth civility; yet am I inland bred
And know some nurture. But forbear, I say!
He dies that touches any of this fruit
Till I and my affairs are answered.

JAQUES.

An you will not be answered with reason, I must die.

DUKE SENIOR.

What would you have? Your gentleness shall force
More than your force move us to gentleness.

ORLANDO.

I almost die for food, and let me have it.

DUKE SENIOR.

Sit down and feed, and welcome to our table.

ORLANDO.

Speak you so gently? Pardon me, I pray you.
I thought that all things had been savage here
And therefore put I on the countenance
Of stern commandment. But whate'er you are
That in this desert inaccessible,
Under the shade of melancholy boughs,
Lose and neglect the creeping hours of time,
If ever you have looked on better days,
If ever been where bells have knolled to church,
If ever sat at any good man's feast,
If ever from your eyelids wiped a tear,
And know what 'tis to pity and be pitied,
Let gentleness my strong enforcement be,
In the which hope I blush and hide my sword.

DUKE SENIOR.

True is it that we have seen better days,

And have with holy bell been knolled to church,
And sat at good men?s feasts, and wiped our eyes
Of drops that sacred pity hath engendered.
And therefore sit you down in gentleness,
And take upon command what help we have
That to your wanting may be ministered.

ORLANDO.

Then but forbear your food a little while,
Whiles, like a doe, I go to find my fawn,
And give it food. There is an old poor man
Who after me hath many a weary step
Limped in pure love. Till he be first sufficed,
Oppressed with two weak evils, age and hunger,
I will not touch a bit.

DUKE SENIOR.

Go find him out,
And we will nothing waste till you return.

ORLANDO.

I thank ye, and be blest for your good comfort.

[_Exit._]

DUKE SENIOR.

Thou seest we are not all alone unhappy.
This wide and universal theatre
Presents more woeful pageants than the scene
Wherein we play in.

JAQUES.

All the world?s a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse?s arms;
Then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress? eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon?s mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide

For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

Enter Orlando bearing Adam.

DUKE SENIOR.

Welcome. Set down your venerable burden,
And let him feed.

ORLANDO.

I thank you most for him.

ADAM.

So had you need;
I scarce can speak to thank you for myself.

DUKE SENIOR.

Welcome, fall to. I will not trouble you
As yet to question you about your fortunes.
Give us some music, and good cousin, sing.

SONG.

AMIENS. (_Sings_.)

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude.
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

Heigh-ho, sing heigh-ho, unto the green holly.
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot.
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.

Heigh-ho, sing heigh-ho, unto the green holly.
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

DUKE SENIOR.

If that you were the good Sir Rowland's son,
As you have whispered faithfully you were,

And as mine eye doth his effigies witness
Most truly limned and living in your face,
Be truly welcome hither. I am the Duke
That loved your father. The residue of your fortune
Go to my cave and tell me. Good old man,
Thou art right welcome as thy master is.
Support him by the arm. [_To Orlando_] Give me your hand,
And let me all your fortunes understand.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT III

SCENE I. A Room in the Palace

Enter Duke Frederick, Lords and Oliver.

DUKE FREDERICK.

Not see him since? Sir, sir, that cannot be.
But were I not the better part made mercy,
I should not seek an absent argument
Of my revenge, thou present. But look to it:
Find out thy brother wheresoe'er he is.
Seek him with candle. Bring him dead or living
Within this twelvemonth, or turn thou no more
To seek a living in our territory.
Thy lands, and all things that thou dost call thine
Worth seizure, do we seize into our hands,
Till thou canst quit thee by thy brother's mouth
Of what we think against thee.

OLIVER.

O that your highness knew my heart in this:
I never loved my brother in my life.

DUKE FREDERICK.

More villain thou. Well, push him out of doors,
And let my officers of such a nature
Make an extent upon his house and lands.
Do this expediently, and turn him going.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. The Forest of Arden

Enter Orlando with a paper.

ORLANDO.

Hang there, my verse, in witness of my love.
And thou, thrice-crowned queen of night, survey

With thy chaste eye, from thy pale sphere above,
Thy huntress? name that my full life doth sway.
O Rosalind, these trees shall be my books,
And in their barks my thoughts I'll character,
That every eye which in this forest looks
Shall see thy virtue witnessed everywhere.
Run, run, Orlando, carve on every tree
The fair, the chaste, and unexpressive she.

[_Exit._]

Enter Corin and Touchstone.

CORIN.

And how like you this shepherd?s life, Master Touchstone?

TOUCHSTONE.

Truly, shepherd, in respect of itself, it is a good life; but in respect that it is a shepherd?s life, it is naught. In respect that it is solitary, I like it very well; but in respect that it is private, it is a very vile life. Now in respect it is in the fields, it pleaseth me well; but in respect it is not in the court, it is tedious. As it is a spare life, look you, it fits my humour well; but as there is no more plenty in it, it goes much against my stomach. Hast any philosophy in thee, shepherd?

CORIN.

No more but that I know the more one sickens, the worse at ease he is; and that he that wants money, means, and content is without three good friends; that the property of rain is to wet, and fire to burn; that good pasture makes fat sheep; and that a great cause of the night is lack of the sun; that he that hath learned no wit by nature nor art may complain of good breeding or comes of a very dull kindred.

TOUCHSTONE.

Such a one is a natural philosopher. Wast ever in court, shepherd?

CORIN.

No, truly.

TOUCHSTONE.

Then thou art damned.

CORIN.

Nay, I hope.

TOUCHSTONE.

Truly, thou art damned, like an ill-roasted egg, all on one side.

CORIN.

For not being at court? Your reason.

TOUCHSTONE.

Why, if thou never wast at court, thou never saw?st good manners; if

thou never saw'st good manners, then thy manners must be wicked, and wickedness is sin, and sin is damnation. Thou art in a parlous state, shepherd.

CORIN.

Not a whit, Touchstone. Those that are good manners at the court are as ridiculous in the country as the behaviour of the country is most mockable at the court. You told me you salute not at the court but you kiss your hands. That courtesy would be uncleanly if courtiers were shepherds.

TOUCHSTONE.

Instance, briefly. Come, instance.

CORIN.

Why, we are still handling our ewes, and their fells, you know, are greasy.

TOUCHSTONE.

Why, do not your courtier's hands sweat? And is not the grease of a mutton as wholesome as the sweat of a man? Shallow, shallow. A better instance, I say. Come.

CORIN.

Besides, our hands are hard.

TOUCHSTONE.

Your lips will feel them the sooner. Shallow again. A more sounder instance, come.

CORIN.

And they are often tarred over with the surgery of our sheep; and would you have us kiss tar? The courtier's hands are perfumed with civet.

TOUCHSTONE.

Most shallow man! Thou worm's meat in respect of a good piece of flesh indeed! Learn of the wise and perpend. Civet is of a baser birth than tar, the very uncleanly flux of a cat. Mend the instance, shepherd.

CORIN.

You have too courtly a wit for me. I'll rest.

TOUCHSTONE.

Wilt thou rest damned? God help thee, shallow man! God make incision in thee, thou art raw.

CORIN.

Sir, I am a true labourer. I earn that I eat, get that I wear, owe no man hate, envy no man's happiness, glad of other men's good, content with my harm; and the greatest of my pride is to see my ewes graze and my lambs suck.

TOUCHSTONE.

That is another simple sin in you, to bring the ewes and the rams

together and to offer to get your living by the copulation of cattle;
to be bawd to a bell-wether and to betray a she-lamb of a twelvemonth
to crooked-pated, old, cuckoldly ram, out of all reasonable match. If
thou be'st not damned for this, the devil himself will have no
shepherds. I cannot see else how thou shouldst 'scape.

Enter Rosalind as Ganymede.

CORIN.

Here comes young Master Ganymede, my new mistress's brother.

ROSALIND.

[_Reads_]

_From the east to western Inde
No jewel is like Rosalind.
Her worth being mounted on the wind,
Through all the world bears Rosalind.
All the pictures fairest lined
Are but black to Rosalind.
Let no face be kept in mind
But the fair of Rosalind._

TOUCHSTONE.

I'll rhyme you so eight years together, dinners and suppers and
sleeping hours excepted. It is the right butter-women's rank to market.

ROSALIND.

Out, fool!

TOUCHSTONE.

For a taste:
If a hart do lack a hind,
Let him seek out Rosalind.
If the cat will after kind,
So be sure will Rosalind.
Winter garments must be lined,
So must slender Rosalind.
They that reap must sheaf and bind,
Then to cart with Rosalind.
Sweetest nut hath sourest rind,
Such a nut is Rosalind.
He that sweetest rose will find
Must find love's prick, and Rosalind.

This is the very false gallop of verses. Why do you infect yourself
with them?

ROSALIND.

Peace, you dull fool, I found them on a tree.

TOUCHSTONE.

Truly, the tree yields bad fruit.

ROSALIND.

I'll graft it with you, and then I shall graft it with a medlar. Then

it will be the earliest fruit i? th? country, for you?ll be rotten ere
you be half ripe, and that?s the right virtue of the medlar.

TOUCHSTONE.

You have said, but whether wisely or no, let the forest judge.

Enter Celia as Aliena, reading a paper.

ROSALIND.

Peace, here comes my sister, reading. Stand aside.

CELIA.

[_Reads_.]

_Why should this a desert be?
For it is unpeopled? No!
Tongues I?ll hang on every tree
That shall civil sayings show.
Some, how brief the life of man
Runs his erring pilgrimage,
That the stretching of a span
Buckles in his sum of age;
Some, of violated vows
?Twixt the souls of friend and friend.
But upon the fairest boughs,
Or at every sentence? end,
Will I ?Rosalinda? write,
Teaching all that read to know
The quintessence of every sprite
Heaven would in little show.
Therefore heaven nature charged
That one body should be filled
With all graces wide-enlarged.
Nature presently distilled
Helen?s cheek, but not her heart,
Cleopatra?s majesty;
Atalanta?s better part,
Sad Lucretia?s modesty.
Thus Rosalind of many parts
By heavenly synod was devised,
Of many faces, eyes, and hearts
To have the touches dearest prized.
Heaven would that she these gifts should have,
And I to live and die her slave._

ROSALIND.

O most gentle Jupiter, what tedious homily of love have you wearied
your parishioners withal, and never cried ?Have patience, good people!?

CELIA.

How now! Back, friends. Shepherd, go off a little. Go with him, sirrah.

TOUCHSTONE.

Come, shepherd, let us make an honourable retreat, though not with bag
and baggage, yet with scrip and scrippage.

[_Exeunt Corin and Touchstone._]

CELIA.

Didst thou hear these verses?

ROSALIND.

O yes, I heard them all, and more too, for some of them had in them more feet than the verses would bear.

CELIA.

That's no matter. The feet might bear the verses.

ROSALIND.

Ay, but the feet were lame and could not bear themselves without the verse, and therefore stood lamely in the verse.

CELIA.

But didst thou hear without wondering how thy name should be hanged and carved upon these trees?

ROSALIND.

I was seven of the nine days out of the wonder before you came; for look here what I found on a palm-tree. I was never so berhymed since Pythagoras' time that I was an Irish rat, which I can hardly remember.

CELIA.

Trow you who hath done this?

ROSALIND.

Is it a man?

CELIA.

And a chain, that you once wore, about his neck. Change you colour?

ROSALIND.

I prithee, who?

CELIA.

O Lord, Lord, it is a hard matter for friends to meet; but mountains may be removed with earthquakes and so encounter.

ROSALIND.

Nay, but who is it?

CELIA.

Is it possible?

ROSALIND.

Nay, I prithee now, with most petitionary vehemence, tell me who it is.

CELIA.

O wonderful, wonderful, most wonderful wonderful, and yet again wonderful, and after that, out of all whooping!

ROSALIND.

Good my complexion! Dost thou think, though I am caparisoned like a man, I have a doublet and hose in my disposition? One inch of delay more is a South Sea of discovery. I prithee tell me who is it quickly, and speak apace. I would thou couldst stammer, that thou mightst pour this concealed man out of thy mouth, as wine comes out of narrow-mouthed bottle? either too much at once or none at all. I prithee take the cork out of thy mouth that I may drink thy tidings.

CELIA.

So you may put a man in your belly.

ROSALIND.

Is he of God's making? What manner of man? Is his head worth a hat, or his chin worth a beard?

CELIA.

Nay, he hath but a little beard.

ROSALIND.

Why, God will send more if the man will be thankful. Let me stay the growth of his beard, if thou delay me not the knowledge of his chin.

CELIA.

It is young Orlando, that tripped up the wrestler's heels and your heart both in an instant.

ROSALIND.

Nay, but the devil take mocking! Speak sad brow and true maid.

CELIA.

I? faith, coz, 'tis he.

ROSALIND.

Orlando?

CELIA.

Orlando.

ROSALIND.

Alas the day, what shall I do with my doublet and hose? What did he when thou saw'st him? What said he? How looked he? Wherein went he? What makes he here? Did he ask for me? Where remains he? How parted he with thee? And when shalt thou see him again? Answer me in one word.

CELIA.

You must borrow me Gargantua's mouth first. 'Tis a word too great for any mouth of this age's size. To say ay and no to these particulars is more than to answer in a catechism.

ROSALIND.

But doth he know that I am in this forest and in man's apparel? Looks he as freshly as he did the day he wrestled?

CELIA.

It is as easy to count atomies as to resolve the propositions of a lover. But take a taste of my finding him, and relish it with good observance. I found him under a tree, like a dropped acorn.

ROSALIND.

It may well be called Jove's tree when it drops forth such fruit.

CELIA.

Give me audience, good madam.

ROSALIND.

Proceed.

CELIA.

There lay he, stretched along like a wounded knight.

ROSALIND.

Though it be pity to see such a sight, it well becomes the ground.

CELIA.

Cry 'holla!' to thy tongue, I prithee. It curvets unseasonably. He was furnished like a hunter.

ROSALIND.

O, ominous! He comes to kill my heart.

CELIA.

I would sing my song without a burden. Thou bring'st me out of tune.

ROSALIND.

Do you not know I am a woman? When I think, I must speak. Sweet, say on.

Enter Orlando and Jaques.

CELIA.

You bring me out. Soft, comes he not here?

ROSALIND.

'Tis he! Slink by, and note him.

[_Rosalind and Celia step aside._]

JAQUES.

I thank you for your company but, good faith, I had as lief have been myself alone.

ORLANDO.

And so had I, but yet, for fashion sake, I thank you too for your society.

JAQUES.

God be wi? you, let?s meet as little as we can.

ORLANDO.

I do desire we may be better strangers.

JAQUES.

I pray you, mar no more trees with writing love songs in their barks.

ORLANDO.

I pray you, mar no more of my verses with reading them ill-favouredly.

JAQUES.

Rosalind is your love?s name?

ORLANDO.

Yes, just.

JAQUES.

I do not like her name.

ORLANDO.

There was no thought of pleasing you when she was christened.

JAQUES.

What stature is she of?

ORLANDO.

Just as high as my heart.

JAQUES.

You are full of pretty answers. Have you not been acquainted with goldsmiths? wives, and conned them out of rings?

ORLANDO.

Not so; but I answer you right painted cloth, from whence you have studied your questions.

JAQUES.

You have a nimble wit. I think ?twas made of Atalanta?s heels. Will you sit down with me? And we two will rail against our mistress the world and all our misery.

ORLANDO.

I will chide no breather in the world but myself, against whom I know most faults.

JAQUES.

The worst fault you have is to be in love.

ORLANDO.

?Tis a fault I will not change for your best virtue. I am weary of you.

JAQUES.

By my troth, I was seeking for a fool when I found you.

ORLANDO.

He is drowned in the brook. Look but in, and you shall see him.

JAQUES.

There I shall see mine own figure.

ORLANDO.

Which I take to be either a fool or a cipher.

JAQUES.

I'll tarry no longer with you. Farewell, good Signior Love.

ORLANDO.

I am glad of your departure. Adieu, good Monsieur Melancholy.

[_Exit Jaques.?Celia and Rosalind come forward._]

ROSALIND.

I will speak to him like a saucy lackey, and under that habit play the knave with him.

Do you hear, forester?

ORLANDO.

Very well. What would you?

ROSALIND.

I pray you, what is't o'clock?

ORLANDO.

You should ask me what time o' day. There's no clock in the forest.

ROSALIND.

Then there is no true lover in the forest, else sighing every minute and groaning every hour would detect the lazy foot of time as well as a clock.

ORLANDO.

And why not the swift foot of time? Had not that been as proper?

ROSALIND.

By no means, sir. Time travels in divers paces with divers persons. I'll tell you who time ambles withal, who time trots withal, who time gallops withal, and who he stands still withal.

ORLANDO.

I prithee, who doth he trot withal?

ROSALIND.

Marry, he trots hard with a young maid between the contract of her marriage and the day it is solemnized. If the interim be but a se'nnight, time's pace is so hard that it seems the length of seven year.

ORLANDO.

Who ambles time withal?

ROSALIND.

With a priest that lacks Latin and a rich man that hath not the gout; for the one sleeps easily because he cannot study, and the other lives merrily because he feels no pain; the one lacking the burden of lean and wasteful learning, the other knowing no burden of heavy tedious penury. These time ambles withal.

ORLANDO.

Who doth he gallop withal?

ROSALIND.

With a thief to the gallows; for though he go as softly as foot can fall, he thinks himself too soon there.

ORLANDO.

Who stays it still withal?

ROSALIND.

With lawyers in the vacation; for they sleep between term and term, and then they perceive not how time moves.

ORLANDO.

Where dwell you, pretty youth?

ROSALIND.

With this shepherdess, my sister, here in the skirts of the forest, like fringe upon a petticoat.

ORLANDO.

Are you native of this place?

ROSALIND.

As the coney that you see dwell where she is kindled.

ORLANDO.

Your accent is something finer than you could purchase in so removed a dwelling.

ROSALIND.

I have been told so of many. But indeed an old religious uncle of mine taught me to speak, who was in his youth an inland man, one that knew courtship too well, for there he fell in love. I have heard him read many lectures against it, and I thank God I am not a woman, to be touched with so many giddy offences as he hath generally taxed their whole sex withal.

ORLANDO.

Can you remember any of the principal evils that he laid to the charge of women?

ROSALIND.

There were none principal. They were all like one another as halfpence are, every one fault seeming monstrous till his fellow fault came to match it.

ORLANDO.

I prithee recount some of them.

ROSALIND.

No. I will not cast away my physic but on those that are sick. There is a man haunts the forest that abuses our young plants with carving ?Rosalind? on their barks; hangs odes upon hawthorns and elegies on brambles; all, forsooth, deifying the name of Rosalind. If I could meet that fancy-monger, I would give him some good counsel, for he seems to have the quotidian of love upon him.

ORLANDO.

I am he that is so love-shaked. I pray you tell me your remedy.

ROSALIND.

There is none of my uncle?s marks upon you. He taught me how to know a man in love, in which cage of rushes I am sure you are not prisoner.

ORLANDO.

What were his marks?

ROSALIND.

A lean cheek, which you have not; a blue eye and sunken, which you have not; an unquestionable spirit, which you have not; a beard neglected, which you have not?but I pardon you for that, for simply your having in beard is a younger brother?s revenue. Then your hose should be ungartered, your bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbuttoned, your shoe untied, and everything about you demonstrating a careless desolation. But you are no such man. You are rather point-device in your accoutrements, as loving yourself than seeming the lover of any other.

ORLANDO.

Fair youth, I would I could make thee believe I love.

ROSALIND.

Me believe it? You may as soon make her that you love believe it, which I warrant she is apter to do than to confess she does. That is one of the points in the which women still give the lie to their consciences. But, in good sooth, are you he that hangs the verses on the trees, wherein Rosalind is so admired?

ORLANDO.

I swear to thee, youth, by the white hand of Rosalind, I am that he, that unfortunate he.

ROSALIND.

But are you so much in love as your rhymes speak?

ORLANDO.

Neither rhyme nor reason can express how much.

ROSALIND.

Love is merely a madness, and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do; and the reason why they are not so punished and cured is that the lunacy is so ordinary that the whippers are in love too. Yet I profess curing it by counsel.

ORLANDO.

Did you ever cure any so?

ROSALIND.

Yes, one, and in this manner. He was to imagine me his love, his mistress, and I set him every day to woo me; at which time would I, being but a moonish youth, grieve, be effeminate, changeable, longing and liking, proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles; for every passion something and for no passion truly anything, as boys and women are for the most part cattle of this colour; would now like him, now loathe him; then entertain him, then forswear him; now weep for him, then spit at him; that I drave my suitor from his mad humour of love to a living humour of madness, which was to forswear the full stream of the world and to live in a nook merely monastic. And thus I cured him, and this way will I take upon me to wash your liver as clean as a sound sheep's heart, that there shall not be one spot of love in 't.

ORLANDO.

I would not be cured, youth.

ROSALIND.

I would cure you, if you would but call me Rosalind and come every day to my cote and woo me.

ORLANDO.

Now, by the faith of my love, I will. Tell me where it is.

ROSALIND.

Go with me to it, and I'll show it you; and by the way you shall tell me where in the forest you live. Will you go?

ORLANDO.

With all my heart, good youth.

ROSALIND.

Nay, you must call me Rosalind. Come, sister, will you go?

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. Another part of the Forest

Enter Touchstone and Audrey; Jaques at a distance observing them.

TOUCHSTONE.

Come apace, good Audrey. I will fetch up your goats, Audrey. And how, Audrey? Am I the man yet? Doth my simple feature content you?

AUDREY.

Your features, Lord warrant us! What features?

TOUCHSTONE.

I am here with thee and thy goats, as the most capricious poet, honest Ovid, was among the Goths.

JAQUES.

[_Aside_] O knowledge ill-inhabited, worse than Jove in a thatched house!

TOUCHSTONE.

When a man's verses cannot be understood, nor a man's good wit seconded with the forward child, understanding, it strikes a man more dead than a great reckoning in a little room. Truly, I would the gods had made thee poetical.

AUDREY.

I do not know what 'poetical' is. Is it honest in deed and word? Is it a true thing?

TOUCHSTONE.

No, truly; for the truest poetry is the most feigning, and lovers are given to poetry, and what they swear in poetry may be said, as lovers, they do feign.

AUDREY.

Do you wish, then, that the gods had made me poetical?

TOUCHSTONE.

I do, truly, for thou swear'st to me thou art honest. Now if thou wert a poet, I might have some hope thou didst feign.

AUDREY.

Would you not have me honest?

TOUCHSTONE.

No, truly, unless thou wert hard-favoured; for honesty coupled to beauty is to have honey a sauce to sugar.

JAQUES.

[_Aside_] A material fool!

AUDREY.

Well, I am not fair, and therefore I pray the gods make me honest.

TOUCHSTONE.

Truly, and to cast away honesty upon a foul slut were to put good meat into an unclean dish.

AUDREY.

I am not a slut, though I thank the gods I am foul.

TOUCHSTONE.

Well, praised be the gods for thy foulness; sluttishness may come hereafter. But be it as it may be, I will marry thee. And to that end I have been with Sir Oliver Martext, the vicar of the next village, who hath promised to meet me in this place of the forest and to couple us.

JAQUES.

[_Aside_] I would fain see this meeting.

AUDREY.

Well, the gods give us joy!

TOUCHSTONE.

Amen. A man may, if he were of a fearful heart, stagger in this attempt, for here we have no temple but the wood, no assembly but horn-beasts. But what though? Courage! As horns are odious, they are necessary. It is said, 'Many a man knows no end of his goods.' Right. Many a man has good horns and knows no end of them. Well, that is the dowry of his wife; 'tis none of his own getting. Horns? Even so. Poor men alone? No, no, the noblest deer hath them as huge as the rascal. Is the single man therefore blessed? No. As a walled town is more worthier than a village, so is the forehead of a married man more honourable than the bare brow of a bachelor. And by how much defence is better than no skill, by so much is horn more precious than to want.

Enter Sir Oliver Martext.

Here comes Sir Oliver. Sir Oliver Martext, you are well met. Will you dispatch us here under this tree, or shall we go with you to your chapel?

MARTEXT.

Is there none here to give the woman?

TOUCHSTONE.

I will not take her on gift of any man.

MARTEXT.

Truly, she must be given, or the marriage is not lawful.

JAQUES.

[_Coming forward_] Proceed, proceed. I'll give her.

TOUCHSTONE.

Good even, good Master What-ye-call't, how do you, sir? You are very well met. God 'ild you for your last company. I am very glad to see you. Even a toy in hand here, sir. Nay, pray be covered.

JAQUES.

Will you be married, motley?

TOUCHSTONE.

As the ox hath his bow, sir, the horse his curb, and the falcon her bells, so man hath his desires; and as pigeons bill, so wedlock would

be nibbling.

JAQUES.

And will you, being a man of your breeding, be married under a bush like a beggar? Get you to church, and have a good priest that can tell you what marriage is. This fellow will but join you together as they join wainscot; then one of you will prove a shrunk panel, and like green timber, warp, warp.

TOUCHSTONE.

[_Aside_] I am not in the mind but I were better to be married of him than of another, for he is not like to marry me well, and not being well married, it will be a good excuse for me hereafter to leave my wife.

JAQUES.

Go thou with me, and let me counsel thee.

TOUCHSTONE.

Come, sweet Audrey. We must be married, or we must live in bawdry. Farewell, good Master Oliver. Not

_O sweet Oliver,

O brave Oliver,

Leave me not behind thee._

But

_Wind away,?

Begone, I say,

I will not to wedding with thee._

[_Exeunt Touchstone, Audrey and Jaques._]

MARTEXT.

?Tis no matter. Ne?er a fantastical knave of them all shall flout me out of my calling.

[_Exit._]

SCENE IV. Another part of the Forest. Before a Cottage

Enter Rosalind and Celia.

ROSALIND.

Never talk to me, I will weep.

CELIA.

Do, I prithee, but yet have the grace to consider that tears do not become a man.

ROSALIND.

But have I not cause to weep?

CELIA.

As good cause as one would desire; therefore weep.

ROSALIND.

His very hair is of the dissembling colour.

CELIA.

Something browner than Judas's. Marry, his kisses are Judas's own children.

ROSALIND.

I? faith, his hair is of a good colour.

CELIA.

An excellent colour. Your chestnut was ever the only colour.

ROSALIND.

And his kissing is as full of sanctity as the touch of holy bread.

CELIA.

He hath bought a pair of cast lips of Diana. A nun of winter's sisterhood kisses not more religiously; the very ice of chastity is in them.

ROSALIND.

But why did he swear he would come this morning, and comes not?

CELIA.

Nay, certainly, there is no truth in him.

ROSALIND.

Do you think so?

CELIA.

Yes. I think he is not a pick-purse nor a horse-stealer, but for his verity in love, I do think him as concave as a covered goblet or a worm-eaten nut.

ROSALIND.

Not true in love?

CELIA.

Yes, when he is in, but I think he is not in.

ROSALIND.

You have heard him swear downright he was.

CELIA.

?Was? is not ?is?. Besides, the oath of a lover is no stronger than the word of a tapster. They are both the confirmer of false reckonings. He attends here in the forest on the Duke your father.

ROSALIND.

I met the Duke yesterday, and had much question with him. He asked me of what parentage I was. I told him, of as good as he, so he laughed and let me go. But what talk we of fathers when there is such a man as Orlando?

CELIA.

O, that's a brave man! He writes brave verses, speaks brave words, swears brave oaths, and breaks them bravely, quite traverse, athwart the heart of his lover, as a puny tiler, that spurs his horse but on one side, breaks his staff like a noble goose. But all's brave that youth mounts and folly guides. Who comes here?

Enter Corin.

CORIN.

Mistress and master, you have oft enquired
After the shepherd that complained of love,
Who you saw sitting by me on the turf,
Praising the proud disdainful shepherdess
That was his mistress.

CELIA.

Well, and what of him?

CORIN.

If you will see a pageant truly played
Between the pale complexion of true love
And the red glow of scorn and proud disdain,
Go hence a little, and I shall conduct you,
If you will mark it.

ROSALIND.

O, come, let us remove.
The sight of lovers feedeth those in love.
Bring us to this sight, and you shall say
If I'll prove a busy actor in their play.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE V. Another part of the Forest

Enter Silvius and Phoebe.

SILVIUS.

Sweet Phoebe, do not scorn me, do not, Phoebe.
Say that you love me not, but say not so
In bitterness. The common executioner,
Whose heart th' accustomed sight of death makes hard,
Falls not the axe upon the humbled neck
But first begs pardon. Will you sterner be
Than he that dies and lives by bloody drops?

Enter Rosalind, Celia and Corin, at a distance.

PHOEBE.

I would not be thy executioner;
I fly thee, for I would not injure thee.
Thou tell'st me there is murder in mine eye.

?Tis pretty, sure, and very probable
That eyes, that are the frail?st and softest things,
Who shut their coward gates on atomies,
Should be called tyrants, butchers, murderers.
Now I do frown on thee with all my heart,
And if mine eyes can wound, now let them kill thee.
Now counterfeit to swoon; why, now fall down;
Or if thou canst not, O, for shame, for shame,
Lie not, to say mine eyes are murderers.
Now show the wound mine eye hath made in thee.
Scratch thee but with a pin, and there remains
Some scar of it; lean upon a rush,
The cicatrice and capable impressure
Thy palm some moment keeps. But now mine eyes,
Which I have darted at thee, hurt thee not;
Nor I am sure there is not force in eyes
That can do hurt.

SILVIUS.

O dear Phoebe,
If ever?as that ever may be near?
You meet in some fresh cheek the power of fancy,
Then shall you know the wounds invisible
That love?s keen arrows make.

PHOEBE.

But till that time
Come not thou near me. And when that time comes,
Afflict me with thy mocks, pity me not,
As till that time I shall not pity thee.

ROSALIND.

[_Advancing_] And why, I pray you? Who might be your mother,
That you insult, exult, and all at once,
Over the wretched? What though you have no beauty?
As, by my faith, I see no more in you
Than without candle may go dark to bed?
Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?
Why, what means this? Why do you look on me?
I see no more in you than in the ordinary
Of nature?s sale-work. ?Od?s my little life,
I think she means to tangle my eyes too!
No, faith, proud mistress, hope not after it.
?Tis not your inky brows, your black silk hair,
Your bugle eyeballs, nor your cheek of cream,
That can entame my spirits to your worship.
You foolish shepherd, wherefore do you follow her,
Like foggy south, puffing with wind and rain?
You are a thousand times a properer man
Than she a woman. ?Tis such fools as you
That makes the world full of ill-favoured children.
?Tis not her glass but you that flatters her,
And out of you she sees herself more proper
Than any of her lineaments can show her.

But, mistress, know yourself; down on your knees,
And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love.
For I must tell you friendly in your ear,
Sell when you can; you are not for all markets.
Cry the man mercy, love him, take his offer;
Foul is most foul, being foul to be a scoffer.
So take her to thee, shepherd. Fare you well.

PHOEBE.

Sweet youth, I pray you chide a year together!
I had rather hear you chide than this man woo.

ROSALIND.

He's fall'n in love with your foulness, and she'll fall in love with my
anger. If it be so, as fast as she answers thee with frowning looks,
I'll sauce her with bitter words. Why look you so upon me?

PHOEBE.

For no ill will I bear you.

ROSALIND.

I pray you do not fall in love with me,
For I am false than vows made in wine.
Besides, I like you not. If you will know my house,
'Tis at the tuft of olives here hard by.
Will you go, sister? Shepherd, ply her hard.
Come, sister. Shepherdess, look on him better,
And be not proud. Though all the world could see,
None could be so abused in sight as he.
Come, to our flock.

[_Exeunt Rosalind, Celia and Corin._]

PHOEBE.

Dead shepherd, now I find thy saw of might:
'Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?'

SILVIUS.

Sweet Phoebe?

PHOEBE.

Ha, what sayst thou, Silvius?

SILVIUS.

Sweet Phoebe, pity me.

PHOEBE.

Why, I am sorry for thee, gentle Silvius.

SILVIUS.

Wherever sorrow is, relief would be.
If you do sorrow at my grief in love,
By giving love your sorrow and my grief
Were both extermined.

PHOEBE.

Thou hast my love. Is not that neighbourly?

SILVIUS.

I would have you.

PHOEBE.

Why, that were covetousness.

Silvius, the time was that I hated thee;

And yet it is not that I bear thee love;

But since that thou canst talk of love so well,

Thy company, which erst was irksome to me,

I will endure, and I'll employ thee too.

But do not look for further recompense

Than thine own gladness that thou art employed.

SILVIUS.

So holy and so perfect is my love,

And I in such a poverty of grace,

That I shall think it a most plenteous crop

To glean the broken ears after the man

That the main harvest reaps. Loose now and then

A scattered smile, and that I'll live upon.

PHOEBE.

Know'st thou the youth that spoke to me erewhile?

SILVIUS.

Not very well, but I have met him oft,

And he hath bought the cottage and the bounds

That the old carlot once was master of.

PHOEBE.

Think not I love him, though I ask for him.

'Tis but a peevish boy; yet he talks well.

But what care I for words? Yet words do well

When he that speaks them pleases those that hear.

It is a pretty youth; not very pretty?

But sure he's proud, and yet his pride becomes him.

He'll make a proper man. The best thing in him

Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue

Did make offence, his eye did heal it up.

He is not very tall, yet for his years he's tall;

His leg is but so-so, and yet 'tis well.

There was a pretty redness in his lip,

A little riper and more lusty red

Than that mixed in his cheek. 'Twas just the difference

Between the constant red and mingled damask.

There be some women, Silvius, had they marked him

In parcels as I did, would have gone near

To fall in love with him; but for my part

I love him not nor hate him not; and yet

I have more cause to hate him than to love him.

For what had he to do to chide at me?
He said mine eyes were black and my hair black,
And now I am remembered, scorned at me.
I marvel why I answered not again.
But that's all one: omittance is no quittance.
I'll write to him a very taunting letter,
And thou shalt bear it. Wilt thou, Silvius?

SILVIUS.

Phoebe, with all my heart.

PHOEBE.

I'll write it straight,
The matter's in my head and in my heart.
I will be bitter with him and passing short.
Go with me, Silvius.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT IV

SCENE I. The Forest of Arden

Enter Rosalind, Celia and Jaques.

JAQUES.

I prithee, pretty youth, let me be better acquainted with thee.

ROSALIND.

They say you are a melancholy fellow.

JAQUES.

I am so; I do love it better than laughing.

ROSALIND.

Those that are in extremity of either are abominable fellows, and betray themselves to every modern censure worse than drunkards.

JAQUES.

Why, 'tis good to be sad and say nothing.

ROSALIND.

Why then, 'tis good to be a post.

JAQUES.

I have neither the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation; nor the musician's, which is fantastical; nor the courtier's, which is proud; nor the soldier's, which is ambitious; nor the lawyer's, which is politic; nor the lady's, which is nice; nor the lover's, which is all these; but it is a melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples,

extracted from many objects, and indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels, in which my often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness.

ROSALIND.

A traveller! By my faith, you have great reason to be sad. I fear you have sold your own lands to see other men's. Then to have seen much and to have nothing is to have rich eyes and poor hands.

JAQUES.

Yes, I have gained my experience.

ROSALIND.

And your experience makes you sad. I had rather have a fool to make me merry than experience to make me sad and to travel for it too.

Enter Orlando.

ORLANDO.

Good day and happiness, dear Rosalind!

JAQUES.

Nay, then, God be wi' you, an you talk in blank verse.

ROSALIND.

Farewell, Monsieur Traveller. Look you lisp and wear strange suits; disable all the benefits of your own country; be out of love with your nativity, and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are, or I will scarce think you have swam in a gondola.

[_Exit Jaques._]

Why, how now, Orlando, where have you been all this while? You a lover! An you serve me such another trick, never come in my sight more.

ORLANDO.

My fair Rosalind, I come within an hour of my promise.

ROSALIND.

Break an hour's promise in love? He that will divide a minute into a thousand parts, and break but a part of the thousand part of a minute in the affairs of love, it may be said of him that Cupid hath clapped him o' the shoulder, but I'll warrant him heart-whole.

ORLANDO.

Pardon me, dear Rosalind.

ROSALIND.

Nay, an you be so tardy, come no more in my sight. I had as lief be wooed of a snail.

ORLANDO.

Of a snail?

ROSALIND.

Ay, of a snail, for though he comes slowly, he carries his house on his head? a better jointure, I think, than you make a woman. Besides, he brings his destiny with him.

ORLANDO.

What's that?

ROSALIND.

Why, horns, which such as you are fain to be beholding to your wives for. But he comes armed in his fortune and prevents the slander of his wife.

ORLANDO.

Virtue is no horn-maker and my Rosalind is virtuous.

ROSALIND.

And I am your Rosalind.

CELIA.

It pleases him to call you so, but he hath a Rosalind of a better leer than you.

ROSALIND.

Come, woo me, woo me, for now I am in a holiday humour, and like enough to consent. What would you say to me now, an I were your very, very Rosalind?

ORLANDO.

I would kiss before I spoke.

ROSALIND.

Nay, you were better speak first, and when you were gravelled for lack of matter, you might take occasion to kiss. Very good orators, when they are out, they will spit; and for lovers lacking? God warn us? matter, the cleanliest shift is to kiss.

ORLANDO.

How if the kiss be denied?

ROSALIND.

Then she puts you to entreaty, and there begins new matter.

ORLANDO.

Who could be out, being before his beloved mistress?

ROSALIND.

Marry, that should you, if I were your mistress, or I should think my honesty ranker than my wit.

ORLANDO.

What, of my suit?

ROSALIND.

Not out of your apparel, and yet out of your suit. Am not I your Rosalind?

ORLANDO.

I take some joy to say you are because I would be talking of her.

ROSALIND.

Well, in her person, I say I will not have you.

ORLANDO.

Then, in mine own person, I die.

ROSALIND.

No, faith, die by attorney. The poor world is almost six thousand years old, and in all this time there was not any man died in his own person, *_videlicet_*, in a love-cause. Troilus had his brains dashed out with a Grecian club, yet he did what he could to die before, and he is one of the patterns of love. Leander, he would have lived many a fair year though Hero had turned nun, if it had not been for a hot midsummer night; for, good youth, he went but forth to wash him in the Hellespont and, being taken with the cramp, was drowned; and the foolish chroniclers of that age found it was Hero of Sestos. But these are all lies. Men have died from time to time and worms have eaten them, but not for love.

ORLANDO.

I would not have my right Rosalind of this mind, for I protest her frown might kill me.

ROSALIND.

By this hand, it will not kill a fly. But come, now I will be your Rosalind in a more coming-on disposition, and ask me what you will, I will grant it.

ORLANDO.

Then love me, Rosalind.

ROSALIND.

Yes, faith, will I, Fridays and Saturdays and all.

ORLANDO.

And wilt thou have me?

ROSALIND.

Ay, and twenty such.

ORLANDO.

What sayest thou?

ROSALIND.

Are you not good?

ORLANDO.

I hope so.

ROSALIND.

Why then, can one desire too much of a good thing??Come, sister, you shall be the priest and marry us.?Give me your hand, Orlando.?What do you say, sister?

ORLANDO.

Pray thee, marry us.

CELIA.

I cannot say the words.

ROSALIND.

You must begin ?Will you, Orlando??

CELIA.

Go to.?Will you, Orlando, have to wife this Rosalind?

ORLANDO.

I will.

ROSALIND.

Ay, but when?

ORLANDO.

Why now, as fast as she can marry us.

ROSALIND.

Then you must say ?I take thee, Rosalind, for wife.?

ORLANDO.

I take thee, Rosalind, for wife.

ROSALIND.

I might ask you for your commission. But I do take thee, Orlando, for my husband. There?s a girl goes before the priest, and certainly a woman?s thought runs before her actions.

ORLANDO.

So do all thoughts. They are winged.

ROSALIND.

Now tell me how long you would have her after you have possessed her.

ORLANDO.

For ever and a day.

ROSALIND.

Say ?a day? without the ?ever.? No, no, Orlando, men are April when they woo, December when they wed. Maids are May when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives. I will be more jealous of thee than a Barbary cock-pigeon over his hen, more clamorous than a parrot against rain, more new-fangled than an ape, more giddy in my desires

than a monkey. I will weep for nothing, like Diana in the fountain, and I will do that when you are disposed to be merry. I will laugh like a hyena, and that when thou are inclined to sleep.

ORLANDO.

But will my Rosalind do so?

ROSALIND.

By my life, she will do as I do.

ORLANDO.

O, but she is wise.

ROSALIND.

Or else she could not have the wit to do this. The wiser, the waywarder. Make the doors upon a woman's wit, and it will out at the casement. Shut that, and 'twill out at the keyhole. Stop that, 'twill fly with the smoke out at the chimney.

ORLANDO.

A man that had a wife with such a wit, he might say, 'Wit, whither wilt?'

ROSALIND.

Nay, you might keep that check for it till you met your wife's wit going to your neighbour's bed.

ORLANDO.

And what wit could wit have to excuse that?

ROSALIND.

Marry, to say she came to seek you there. You shall never take her without her answer unless you take her without her tongue. O, that woman that cannot make her fault her husband's occasion, let her never nurse her child herself, for she will breed it like a fool.

ORLANDO.

For these two hours, Rosalind, I will leave thee.

ROSALIND.

Alas, dear love, I cannot lack thee two hours.

ORLANDO.

I must attend the Duke at dinner. By two o'clock I will be with thee again.

ROSALIND.

Ay, go your ways, go your ways. I knew what you would prove. My friends told me as much, and I thought no less. That flattering tongue of yours won me. 'Tis but one cast away, and so, come death! Two o'clock is your hour?

ORLANDO.

Ay, sweet Rosalind.

ROSALIND.

By my troth, and in good earnest, and so God mend me, and by all pretty oaths that are not dangerous, if you break one jot of your promise or come one minute behind your hour, I will think you the most pathological break-promise, and the most hollow lover, and the most unworthy of her you call Rosalind that may be chosen out of the gross band of the unfaithful. Therefore beware my censure, and keep your promise.

ORLANDO.

With no less religion than if thou wert indeed my Rosalind. So, adieu.

ROSALIND.

Well, Time is the old justice that examines all such offenders, and let time try. Adieu.

[_Exit Orlando._]

CELIA.

You have simply misused our sex in your love-prate! We must have your doublet and hose plucked over your head and show the world what the bird hath done to her own nest.

ROSALIND.

O coz, coz, coz, my pretty little coz, that thou didst know how many fathom deep I am in love! But it cannot be sounded; my affection hath an unknown bottom, like the Bay of Portugal.

CELIA.

Or rather, bottomless, that as fast as you pour affection in, it runs out.

ROSALIND.

No, that same wicked bastard of Venus, that was begot of thought, conceived of spleen, and born of madness, that blind rascally boy that abuses everyone's eyes because his own are out, let him be judge how deep I am in love. I'll tell thee, Aliena, I cannot be out of the sight of Orlando. I'll go find a shadow and sigh till he come.

CELIA.

And I'll sleep.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Another part of the Forest

Enter Jaques and Lords, like foresters.

JAQUES.

Which is he that killed the deer?

FIRST LORD.

Sir, it was I.

JAQUES.

Let's present him to the Duke, like a Roman conqueror, and it would do well to set the deer's horns upon his head for a branch of victory. Have you no song, forester, for this purpose?

SECOND LORD.

Yes, sir.

JAQUES.

Sing it. 'Tis no matter how it be in tune, so it make noise enough.

SONG

SECOND LORD.

[_Sings_.]

What shall he have that killed the deer?

His leather skin and horns to wear.

Then sing him home:

[_The rest shall bear this burden_.]

Take thou no scorn to wear the horn.

It was a crest ere thou wast born.

Thy father's father wore it

And thy father bore it.

The horn, the horn, the lusty horn

Is not a thing to laugh to scorn.

[_Exeunt_.]

SCENE III. Another part of the Forest

Enter Rosalind and Celia.

ROSALIND.

How say you now? Is it not past two o'clock? And here much Orlando.

CELIA.

I warrant you, with pure love and troubled brain he hath taken his bow and arrows and is gone forth to sleep.

Enter Silvius.

Look who comes here.

SILVIUS.

My errand is to you, fair youth.

My gentle Phoebe did bid me give you this.

[_Giving a letter_.]

I know not the contents, but, as I guess
By the stern brow and waspish action
Which she did use as she was writing of it,
It bears an angry tenor. Pardon me,
I am but as a guiltless messenger.

ROSALIND.

Patience herself would startle at this letter
And play the swaggerer. Bear this, bear all!
She says I am not fair, that I lack manners;
She calls me proud, and that she could not love me,
Were man as rare as phoenix. 'Od's my will,
Her love is not the hare that I do hunt.
Why writes she so to me? Well, shepherd, well,
This is a letter of your own device.

SILVIUS.

No, I protest, I know not the contents.
Phoebe did write it.

ROSALIND.

Come, come, you are a fool,
And turned into the extremity of love.
I saw her hand. She has a leathern hand,
A freestone-coloured hand. I verily did think
That her old gloves were on, but 'twas her hands.
She has a huswife's hand?but that's no matter.
I say she never did invent this letter;
This is a man's invention, and his hand.

SILVIUS.

Sure, it is hers.

ROSALIND.

Why, 'tis a boisterous and a cruel style,
A style for challengers. Why, she defies me,
Like Turk to Christian. Women's gentle brain
Could not drop forth such giant-rude invention,
Such Ethiop words, blacker in their effect
Than in their countenance. Will you hear the letter?

SILVIUS.

So please you, for I never heard it yet,
Yet heard too much of Phoebe's cruelty.

ROSALIND.

She Phoebes me. Mark how the tyrant writes.

[_Reads._]

 _Art thou god to shepherd turned,
 That a maiden's heart hath burned?_
Can a woman rail thus?

SILVIUS.

Call you this railing?

ROSALIND.

 _Why, thy godhead laid apart,

Warr'st thou with a woman's heart?_
Did you ever hear such railing?
_Whiles the eye of man did woo me,
That could do no vengeance to me._
Meaning me a beast.

_If the scorn of your bright eyne
Have power to raise such love in mine,
Alack, in me what strange effect
Would they work in mild aspect?
Whiles you chid me, I did love,
How then might your prayers move?
He that brings this love to thee
Little knows this love in me;
And by him seal up thy mind,
Whether that thy youth and kind
Will the faithful offer take
Of me, and all that I can make,
Or else by him my love deny,
And then I'll study how to die._

SILVIUS.

Call you this chiding?

CELIA.

Alas, poor shepherd.

ROSALIND.

Do you pity him? No, he deserves no pity.?Wilt thou love such a woman?
What, to make thee an instrument and play false strains upon thee? Not
to be endured! Well, go your way to her, for I see love hath made thee
a tame snake, and say this to her: that if she love me, I charge her to
love thee; if she will not, I will never have her unless thou entreat
for her. If you be a true lover, hence, and not a word, for here comes
more company.

[_Exit Silvius._]

Enter Oliver.

OLIVER.

Good morrow, fair ones. Pray you, if you know,
Where in the purlieu of this forest stands
A sheepcote fenced about with olive trees?

CELIA.

West of this place, down in the neighbour bottom;
The rank of osiers, by the murmuring stream,
Left on your right hand, brings you to the place.
But at this hour the house doth keep itself.
There's none within.

OLIVER.

If that an eye may profit by a tongue,
Then should I know you by description,

Such garments, and such years. ?The boy is fair,
Of female favour, and bestows himself
Like a ripe sister; the woman low,
And browner than her brother.? Are not you
The owner of the house I did inquire for?

CELIA.

It is no boast, being asked, to say we are.

OLIVER.

Orlando doth commend him to you both,
And to that youth he calls his Rosalind
He sends this bloody napkin. Are you he?

ROSALIND.

I am. What must we understand by this?

OLIVER.

Some of my shame, if you will know of me
What man I am, and how, and why, and where
This handkerchief was stained.

CELIA.

I pray you tell it.

OLIVER.

When last the young Orlando parted from you,
He left a promise to return again
Within an hour, and pacing through the forest,
Chewing the food of sweet and bitter fancy,
Lo, what befell. He threw his eye aside,
And mark what object did present itself.
Under an oak, whose boughs were mossed with age
And high top bald with dry antiquity,
A wretched ragged man, o?ergrown with hair,
Lay sleeping on his back; about his neck
A green and gilded snake had wreathed itself,
Who with her head, nimble in threats, approached
The opening of his mouth. But suddenly,
Seeing Orlando, it unlinked itself
And with indented glides did slip away
Into a bush; under which bush?s shade
A lioness, with udders all drawn dry,
Lay couching, head on ground, with catlike watch
When that the sleeping man should stir. For ?tis
The royal disposition of that beast
To prey on nothing that doth seem as dead.
This seen, Orlando did approach the man
And found it was his brother, his elder brother.

CELIA.

O, I have heard him speak of that same brother,
And he did render him the most unnatural
That lived amongst men.

OLIVER.

And well he might so do,
For well I know he was unnatural.

ROSALIND.

But, to Orlando: did he leave him there,
Food to the sucked and hungry lioness?

OLIVER.

Twice did he turn his back and purposed so;
But kindness, nobler ever than revenge,
And nature, stronger than his just occasion,
Made him give battle to the lioness,
Who quickly fell before him; in which hurtling
From miserable slumber I awaked.

CELIA.

Are you his brother?

ROSALIND.

Was it you he rescued?

CELIA.

Was't you that did so oft contrive to kill him?

OLIVER.

?Twas I; but ?tis not I. I do not shame
To tell you what I was, since my conversion
So sweetly tastes, being the thing I am.

ROSALIND.

But, for the bloody napkin?

OLIVER.

By and by.
When from the first to last betwixt us two
Tears our recountments had most kindly bathed?
As how I came into that desert place?
In brief, he led me to the gentle Duke,
Who gave me fresh array and entertainment,
Committing me unto my brother?s love,
Who led me instantly unto his cave,
There stripped himself, and here upon his arm
The lioness had torn some flesh away,
Which all this while had bled; and now he fainted,
And cried in fainting upon Rosalind.
Brief, I recovered him, bound up his wound,
And after some small space, being strong at heart,
He sent me hither, stranger as I am,
To tell this story, that you might excuse
His broken promise, and to give this napkin,
Dyed in his blood, unto the shepherd youth
That he in sport doth call his Rosalind.

[_Rosalind faints._]

CELIA.

Why, how now, Ganymede, sweet Ganymede!

OLIVER.

Many will swoon when they do look on blood.

CELIA.

There is more in it. Cousin? Ganymede!

OLIVER.

Look, he recovers.

ROSALIND.

I would I were at home.

CELIA.

We?ll lead you thither.

I pray you, will you take him by the arm?

OLIVER.

Be of good cheer, youth. You a man? You lack a man?s heart.

ROSALIND.

I do so, I confess it. Ah, sirrah, a body would think this was well counterfeited. I pray you tell your brother how well I counterfeited. Heigh-ho.

OLIVER.

This was not counterfeit. There is too great testimony in your complexion that it was a passion of earnest.

ROSALIND.

Counterfeit, I assure you.

OLIVER.

Well then, take a good heart, and counterfeit to be a man.

ROSALIND.

So I do. But, i? faith, I should have been a woman by right.

CELIA.

Come, you look paler and paler. Pray you draw homewards. Good sir, go with us.

OLIVER.

That will I, for I must bear answer back
How you excuse my brother, Rosalind.

ROSALIND.

I shall devise something. But I pray you commend my counterfeiting to him. Will you go?

[_Exeunt._]

ACT V

SCENE I. The Forest of Arden

Enter Touchstone and Audrey.

TOUCHSTONE.

We shall find a time, Audrey; patience, gentle Audrey.

AUDREY.

Faith, the priest was good enough, for all the old gentleman's saying.

TOUCHSTONE.

A most wicked Sir Oliver, Audrey, a most vile Martext. But Audrey, there is a youth here in the forest lays claim to you.

AUDREY.

Ay, I know who 'tis. He hath no interest in me in the world.

Enter William.

Here comes the man you mean.

TOUCHSTONE.

It is meat and drink to me to see a clown. By my troth, we that have good wits have much to answer for. We shall be flouting; we cannot hold.

WILLIAM.

Good ev'n, Audrey.

AUDREY.

God ye good ev'n, William.

WILLIAM.

And good ev'n to you, sir.

TOUCHSTONE.

Good ev'n, gentle friend. Cover thy head, cover thy head. Nay, prithee, be covered. How old are you, friend?

WILLIAM.

Five-and-twenty, sir.

TOUCHSTONE.

A ripe age. Is thy name William?

WILLIAM.
William, sir.

TOUCHSTONE.
A fair name. Wast born i? th? forest here?

WILLIAM.
Ay, sir, I thank God.

TOUCHSTONE.
?Thank God.? A good answer. Art rich?

WILLIAM.
Faith, sir, so-so.

TOUCHSTONE.
?So-so? is good, very good, very excellent good. And yet it is not, it is but so-so. Art thou wise?

WILLIAM.
Ay, sir, I have a pretty wit.

TOUCHSTONE.
Why, thou sayst well. I do now remember a saying: ?The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool.? The heathen philosopher, when he had a desire to eat a grape, would open his lips when he put it into his mouth, meaning thereby that grapes were made to eat and lips to open. You do love this maid?

WILLIAM.
I do, sir.

TOUCHSTONE.
Give me your hand. Art thou learned?

WILLIAM.
No, sir.

TOUCHSTONE.
Then learn this of me: to have is to have. For it is a figure in rhetoric that drink, being poured out of cup into a glass, by filling the one doth empty the other. For all your writers do consent that _ipse_ is ?he.? Now, you are not _ipse_, for I am he.

WILLIAM.
Which he, sir?

TOUCHSTONE.
He, sir, that must marry this woman. Therefore, you clown, abandon?which is in the vulgar, ?leave??the society?which in the boorish is ?company??of this female?which in the common is ?woman?; which together is, abandon the society of this female, or, clown, thou perishest; or, to thy better understanding, diest; or, to wit, I kill thee, make thee away, translate thy life into death, thy liberty into

bondage. I will deal in poison with thee, or in bastinado, or in steel.
I will bandy with thee in faction; will o'errun thee with policy. I
will kill thee a hundred and fifty ways! Therefore tremble and depart.

AUDREY.

Do, good William.

WILLIAM.

God rest you merry, sir.

[_Exit._]

Enter Corin.

CORIN.

Our master and mistress seek you. Come away, away.

TOUCHSTONE.

Trip, Audrey, trip, Audrey! I attend, I attend.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Another part of the Forest

Enter Orlando and Oliver.

ORLANDO.

Is't possible that on so little acquaintance you should like her? That
but seeing, you should love her? And loving woo? And wooing, she should
grant? And will you persever to enjoy her?

OLIVER.

Neither call the giddiness of it in question, the poverty of her, the
small acquaintance, my sudden wooing, nor her sudden consenting. But
say with me, I love Aliena; say with her that she loves me; consent
with both that we may enjoy each other. It shall be to your good, for
my father's house and all the revenue that was old Sir Rowland's will I
estate upon you, and here live and die a shepherd.

Enter Rosalind.

ORLANDO.

You have my consent. Let your wedding be tomorrow. Thither will I
invite the Duke and all's contented followers. Go you and prepare
Aliena; for, look you, here comes my Rosalind.

ROSALIND.

God save you, brother.

OLIVER.

And you, fair sister.

[_Exit._]

ROSALIND.

O my dear Orlando, how it grieves me to see thee wear thy heart in a scarf!

ORLANDO.

It is my arm.

ROSALIND.

I thought thy heart had been wounded with the claws of a lion.

ORLANDO.

Wounded it is, but with the eyes of a lady.

ROSALIND.

Did your brother tell you how I counterfeited to swoon when he showed me your handkercher?

ORLANDO.

Ay, and greater wonders than that.

ROSALIND.

O, I know where you are. Nay, 'tis true. There was never anything so sudden but the fight of two rams, and Caesar's thrasonical brag of 'I came, saw and overcame.' For your brother and my sister no sooner met but they looked; no sooner looked but they loved; no sooner loved but they sighed; no sooner sighed but they asked one another the reason; no sooner knew the reason but they sought the remedy; and in these degrees have they made pair of stairs to marriage, which they will climb incontinent, or else be incontinent before marriage. They are in the very wrath of love, and they will together. Clubs cannot part them.

ORLANDO.

They shall be married tomorrow, and I will bid the Duke to the nuptial. But O, how bitter a thing it is to look into happiness through another man's eyes! By so much the more shall I tomorrow be at the height of heart-heaviness, by how much I shall think my brother happy in having what he wishes for.

ROSALIND.

Why, then, tomorrow I cannot serve your turn for Rosalind?

ORLANDO.

I can live no longer by thinking.

ROSALIND.

I will weary you then no longer with idle talking. Know of me then? for now I speak to some purpose? that I know you are a gentleman of good conceit. I speak not this that you should bear a good opinion of my knowledge, insomuch I say I know you are. Neither do I labour for a greater esteem than may in some little measure draw a belief from you, to do yourself good, and not to grace me. Believe then, if you please, that I can do strange things. I have, since I was three year old, conversed with a magician, most profound in his art and yet not damnable. If you do love Rosalind so near the heart as your gesture

cries it out, when your brother marries Aliena shall you marry her. I know into what straits of fortune she is driven and it is not impossible to me, if it appear not inconvenient to you, to set her before your eyes tomorrow, human as she is, and without any danger.

ORLANDO.

Speak'st thou in sober meanings?

ROSALIND.

By my life, I do, which I tender dearly, though I say I am a magician. Therefore put you in your best array, bid your friends; for if you will be married tomorrow, you shall, and to Rosalind, if you will.

Enter Silvius and Phoebe.

Look, here comes a lover of mine and a lover of hers.

PHOEBE.

Youth, you have done me much ungentleness
To show the letter that I writ to you.

ROSALIND.

I care not if I have; it is my study
To seem spiteful and ungentle to you.
You are there followed by a faithful shepherd.
Look upon him, love him; he worships you.

PHOEBE.

Good shepherd, tell this youth what 'tis to love.

SILVIUS.

It is to be all made of sighs and tears,
And so am I for Phoebe.

PHOEBE.

And I for Ganymede.

ORLANDO.

And I for Rosalind.

ROSALIND.

And I for no woman.

SILVIUS.

It is to be all made of faith and service,
And so am I for Phoebe.

PHOEBE.

And I for Ganymede.

ORLANDO.

And I for Rosalind.

ROSALIND.

And I for no woman.

SILVIUS.

It is to be all made of fantasy,
All made of passion, and all made of wishes,
All adoration, duty, and observance,
All humbleness, all patience, and impatience,
All purity, all trial, all observance,
And so am I for Phoebe.

PHOEBE.

And so am I for Ganymede.

ORLANDO.

And so am I for Rosalind.

ROSALIND.

And so am I for no woman.

PHOEBE.

[_To Rosalind_.] If this be so, why blame you me to love you?

SILVIUS.

[_To Phoebe_.] If this be so, why blame you me to love you?

ORLANDO.

If this be so, why blame you me to love you?

ROSALIND.

Why do you speak too, ?Why blame you me to love you??

ORLANDO.

To her that is not here, nor doth not hear.

ROSALIND.

Pray you, no more of this, ?tis like the howling of Irish wolves
against the moon.

[_to Silvius_.] I will help you if I can.

[_to Phoebe_.] I would love you if I could.?Tomorrow meet me all
together.

[_to Phoebe_.] I will marry you, if ever I marry woman, and I?ll be
married tomorrow.

[_to Orlando_.] I will satisfy you if ever I satisfied man, and you
shall be married tomorrow.

[_to Silvius_.] I will content you, if what pleases you contents you,
and you shall be married tomorrow.

[_to Orlando_.] As you love Rosalind, meet.

[_to Silvius_.] As you love Phoebe, meet.?And as I love no woman, I?ll
meet. So fare you well. I have left you commands.

SILVIUS.

I?ll not fail, if I live.

PHOEBE.

Nor I.

ORLANDO.

Nor I.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. Another part of the Forest

Enter Touchstone and Audrey.

TOUCHSTONE.

Tomorrow is the joyful day, Audrey, tomorrow will we be married.

AUDREY.

I do desire it with all my heart; and I hope it is no dishonest desire to desire to be a woman of the world.

Enter two Pages.

Here come two of the banished Duke's pages.

FIRST PAGE.

Well met, honest gentleman.

TOUCHSTONE.

By my troth, well met. Come sit, sit, and a song.

SECOND PAGE.

We are for you, sit i' th' middle.

FIRST PAGE.

Shall we clap into't roundly, without hawking or spitting or saying we are hoarse, which are the only prologues to a bad voice?

SECOND PAGE.

I'faith, i'faith, and both in a tune like two gipsies on a horse.

SONG

PAGES.

[_Sing_.]

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That o'er the green cornfield did pass
In the spring-time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding.
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
These pretty country folks would lie,
In the spring-time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding.

Sweet lovers love the spring.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
How that a life was but a flower,
In the spring-time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding.
Sweet lovers love the spring.

And therefore take the present time,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
For love is crowned with the prime,
In the spring-time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding.
Sweet lovers love the spring.

TOUCHSTONE

Truly, young gentlemen, though there was no great matter in the ditty,
yet the note was very untuneable.

FIRST PAGE.

You are deceived, sir, we kept time, we lost not our time.

TOUCHSTONE.

By my troth, yes. I count it but time lost to hear such a foolish song.
God be wi' you, and God mend your voices. Come, Audrey.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IV. Another part of the Forest

Enter Duke Senior, Amiens, Jaques, Orlando, Oliver and Celia.

DUKE SENIOR.

Dost thou believe, Orlando, that the boy
Can do all this that he hath promised?

ORLANDO.

I sometimes do believe and sometimes do not,
As those that fear they hope, and know they fear.

Enter Rosalind, Silvius and Phoebe.

ROSALIND.

Patience once more whiles our compact is urged.
[_To the Duke._] You say, if I bring in your Rosalind,
You will bestow her on Orlando here?

DUKE SENIOR.

That would I, had I kingdoms to give with her.

ROSALIND.

[_To Orlando._] And you say you will have her when I bring her?

ORLANDO.

That would I, were I of all kingdoms king.

ROSALIND.

[_To Phoebe_] You say you?ll marry me if I be willing?

PHOEBE.

That will I, should I die the hour after.

ROSALIND.

But if you do refuse to marry me,
You?ll give yourself to this most faithful shepherd?

PHOEBE.

So is the bargain.

ROSALIND.

[_To Silvius_] You say that you?ll have Phoebe if she will?

SILVIUS.

Though to have her and death were both one thing.

ROSALIND.

I have promised to make all this matter even.
Keep you your word, O Duke, to give your daughter,
You yours, Orlando, to receive his daughter.
Keep your word, Phoebe, that you?ll marry me,
Or else, refusing me, to wed this shepherd.
Keep your word, Silvius, that you?ll marry her
If she refuse me. And from hence I go
To make these doubts all even.

[_Exeunt Rosalind and Celia._]

DUKE SENIOR.

I do remember in this shepherd boy
Some lively touches of my daughter?s favour.

ORLANDO.

My lord, the first time that I ever saw him
Methought he was a brother to your daughter.
But, my good lord, this boy is forest-born
And hath been tutored in the rudiments
Of many desperate studies by his uncle,
Whom he reports to be a great magician,
Obscured in the circle of this forest.

Enter Touchstone and Audrey.

JAQUES.

There is sure another flood toward, and these couples are coming to the
ark. Here comes a pair of very strange beasts, which in all tongues are
called fools.

TOUCHSTONE.

Salutation and greeting to you all.

JAQUES.

Good my lord, bid him welcome. This is the motley-minded gentleman that I have so often met in the forest. He hath been a courtier, he swears.

TOUCHSTONE.

If any man doubt that, let him put me to my purgation. I have trod a measure; I have flattered a lady; I have been politic with my friend, smooth with mine enemy; I have undone three tailors; I have had four quarrels, and like to have fought one.

JAQUES.

And how was that taken up?

TOUCHSTONE.

Faith, we met, and found the quarrel was upon the seventh cause.

JAQUES.

How seventh cause? Good my lord, like this fellow?

DUKE SENIOR.

I like him very well.

TOUCHSTONE.

God bless you, sir, I desire you of the like. I press in here, sir, amongst the rest of the country copulatives, to swear and to forswear according as marriage binds and blood breaks. A poor virgin, sir, an ill-favoured thing, sir, but mine own; a poor humour of mine, sir, to take that that no man else will. Rich honesty dwells like a miser, sir, in a poor house, as your pearl in your foul oyster.

DUKE SENIOR.

By my faith, he is very swift and sententious.

TOUCHSTONE.

According to the fool's bolt, sir, and such dulcet diseases.

JAQUES.

But, for the seventh cause. How did you find the quarrel on the seventh cause?

TOUCHSTONE.

Upon a lie seven times removed? bear your body more seeming, Audrey? as thus, sir. I did dislike the cut of a certain courtier's beard. He sent me word if I said his beard was not cut well, he was in the mind it was. This is called the 'retort courteous'. If I sent him word again it was not well cut, he would send me word he cut it to please himself. This is called the 'quip modest'. If again it was not well cut, he disabled my judgement. This is called the 'reply churlish'. If again it was not well cut, he would answer I spake not true. This is called the 'reproof valiant'. If again it was not well cut, he would say I lie. This is called the 'countercheck quarrelsome', and so, to the 'lie

circumstantial?, and the ?lie direct?.

JAQUES.

And how oft did you say his beard was not well cut?

TOUCHSTONE.

I durst go no further than the lie circumstantial, nor he durst not give me the lie direct; and so we measured swords and parted.

JAQUES.

Can you nominate in order now the degrees of the lie?

TOUCHSTONE.

O sir, we quarrel in print, by the book, as you have books for good manners. I will name you the degrees: the first, the retort courteous; the second, the quip modest; the third, the reply churlish; the fourth, the reproof valiant; the fifth, the countercheck quarrelsome; the sixth, the lie with circumstance; the seventh, the lie direct. All these you may avoid but the lie direct and you may avoid that too with an ?if?. I knew when seven justices could not take up a quarrel, but when the parties were met themselves, one of them thought but of an ?if?, as, ?if you said so, then I said so;? and they shook hands, and swore brothers. Your ?if? is the only peacemaker; much virtue in ?if.?

JAQUES.

Is not this a rare fellow, my lord? He?s as good at anything, and yet a fool.

DUKE SENIOR.

He uses his folly like a stalking-horse, and under the presentation of that he shoots his wit.

Enter Hymen, Rosalind in woman?s clothes, and Celia. Still music.

HYMEN.

Then is there mirth in heaven

When earthly things made even

Atone together.

Good Duke, receive thy daughter.

Hymen from heaven brought her,

Yea, brought her hither,

That thou mightst join her hand with his,

Whose heart within his bosom is.

ROSALIND.

[_To Duke Senior_] To you I give myself, for I am yours.

[_To Orlando_] To you I give myself, for I am yours.

DUKE SENIOR.

If there be truth in sight, you are my daughter.

ORLANDO.

If there be truth in sight, you are my Rosalind.

PHOEBE.

If sight and shape be true,
Why then, my love adieu.

ROSALIND.

[_To Duke Senior_] I?ll have no father, if you be not he.
[_To Orlando_] I?ll have no husband, if you be not he.
[_To Phoebe_] Nor ne?er wed woman, if you be not she.

HYMEN.

Peace, ho! I bar confusion.
?Tis I must make conclusion
Of these most strange events.
Here?s eight that must take hands
To join in Hymen?s bands,
If truth holds true contents.
[_To Orlando and Rosalind_] You and you no cross shall part.
[_To Celia and Oliver_] You and you are heart in heart.
[_To Phoebe_] You to his love must accord
Or have a woman to your lord.
[_To Audrey and Touchstone_] You and you are sure together
As the winter to foul weather.
Whiles a wedlock hymn we sing,
Feed yourselves with questioning,
That reason wonder may diminish
How thus we met, and these things finish.

SONG

Wedding is great Juno?s crown,
O blessed bond of board and bed.
?Tis Hymen peoples every town,
High wedlock then be honoured.
Honour, high honour, and renown
To Hymen, god of every town.

DUKE SENIOR.

O my dear niece, welcome thou art to me
Even daughter, welcome in no less degree.

PHOEBE.

[_To Silvius_] I will not eat my word, now thou art mine,
Thy faith my fancy to thee doth combine.

Enter Jaques de Boys.

JAQUES DE BOYS.

Let me have audience for a word or two.
I am the second son of old Sir Rowland,
That bring these tidings to this fair assembly.
Duke Frederick, hearing how that every day
Men of great worth resorted to this forest,
Addressed a mighty power, which were on foot
In his own conduct, purposely to take
His brother here and put him to the sword;

And to the skirts of this wild wood he came,
Where, meeting with an old religious man,
After some question with him, was converted
Both from his enterprise and from the world,
His crown bequeathing to his banished brother,
And all their lands restored to them again
That were with him exiled. This to be true
I do engage my life.

DUKE SENIOR.

Welcome, young man.

Thou offer'st fairly to thy brother's wedding:
To one his lands withheld, and to the other
A land itself at large, a potent dukedom.
First, in this forest let us do those ends
That here were well begun and well begot;
And after, every of this happy number
That have endured shrewd days and nights with us
Shall share the good of our returned fortune,
According to the measure of their states.
Meantime, forget this new-fallen dignity,
And fall into our rustic revelry.
Play, music! And you brides and bridegrooms all,
With measure heaped in joy to th' measures fall.

JAQUES.

Sir, by your patience. If I heard you rightly,
The Duke hath put on a religious life
And thrown into neglect the pompous court.

JAQUES DE BOYS.

He hath.

JAQUES.

To him will I. Out of these convertites
There is much matter to be heard and learned.
[_To Duke Senior_] You to your former honour I bequeath;
Your patience and your virtue well deserves it.
[_To Orlando_] You to a love that your true faith doth merit.
[_To Oliver_] You to your land, and love, and great allies.
[_To Silvius_] You to a long and well-deserved bed.
[_To Touchstone_] And you to wrangling, for thy loving voyage
Is but for two months victualled. So to your pleasures,
I am for other than for dancing measures.

DUKE SENIOR.

Stay, Jaques, stay.

JAQUES.

To see no pastime, I. What you would have
I'll stay to know at your abandoned cave.

[_Exit._]

DUKE SENIOR.

Proceed, proceed! We will begin these rites,
As we do trust they'll end, in true delights.

[_Dance. Exeunt all but Rosalind._]

EPILOGUE

ROSALIND.

It is not the fashion to see the lady the epilogue, but it is no more unhandsome than to see the lord the prologue. If it be true that good wine needs no bush, 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue. Yet to good wine they do use good bushes, and good plays prove the better by the help of good epilogues. What a case am I in then, that am neither a good epilogue nor cannot insinuate with you in the behalf of a good play! I am not furnished like a beggar; therefore to beg will not become me. My way is to conjure you, and I'll begin with the women. I charge you, O women, for the love you bear to men, to like as much of this play as please you. And I charge you, O men, for the love you bear to women—as I perceive by your simpering, none of you hates them—that between you and the women the play may please. If I were a woman, I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me, complexions that liked me, and breaths that I defied not. And I am sure as many as have good beards, or good faces, or sweet breaths will for my kind offer, when I make curtsy, bid me farewell.

[_Exit._]

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

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ACT II

Scene I. A public place

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Scene I. The same

Scene II. The same

Scene III. The same

Scene IV. The same

ACT V

Scene I. The same

Dramatis Personæ

SOLINUS, Duke of Ephesus.

EGEON, a Merchant of Syracuse.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS, Twin brothers and sons to Egeon and
ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE, Emilia, but unknown to each other.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS, Twin brothers, and attendants on
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE, the two Antipholuses.

BALTHASAR, a Merchant.

ANGELO, a Goldsmith.

A MERCHANT, friend to Antipholus of Syracuse.

PINCH, a Schoolmaster and a Conjuror.

EMILIA, Wife to Egeon, an Abbess at Ephesus.

ADRIANA, Wife to Antipholus of Ephesus.

LUCIANA, her Sister.

LUCE, her Servant.

A COURTESAN

Messenger, Jailer, Officers, Attendants

SCENE: Ephesus

ACT I

SCENE I. A hall in the Duke's palace

Enter Duke, Egeon, Jailer, Officers and other Attendants.

EGEON.

Proceed, Solinus, to procure my fall,
And by the doom of death end woes and all.

DUKE.

Merchant of Syracuse, plead no more.
I am not partial to infringe our laws.
The enmity and discord which of late
Sprung from the rancorous outrage of your Duke
To merchants, our well-dealing countrymen,
Who, wanting guilders to redeem their lives,
Have seal'd his rigorous statutes with their bloods,
Excludes all pity from our threatening looks.
For since the mortal and intestine jars
Twixt thy seditious countrymen and us,

It hath in solemn synods been decreed,
Both by the Syracusians and ourselves,
To admit no traffic to our adverse towns;
Nay more, if any born at Ephesus
Be seen at Syracusian marts and fairs;
Again, if any Syracusian born
Come to the bay of Ephesus, he dies,
His goods confiscate to the Duke's dispose,
Unless a thousand marks be levied
To quit the penalty and to ransom him.
Thy substance, valued at the highest rate,
Cannot amount unto a hundred marks;
Therefore by law thou art condemn'd to die.

EGEON.

Yet this my comfort; when your words are done,
My woes end likewise with the evening sun.

DUKE.

Well, Syracusian, say in brief the cause
Why thou departedst from thy native home,
And for what cause thou cam'st to Ephesus.

EGEON.

A heavier task could not have been impos'd
Than I to speak my griefs unspeakable;
Yet, that the world may witness that my end
Was wrought by nature, not by vile offence,
I'll utter what my sorrow gives me leave.
In Syracusa was I born, and wed
Unto a woman happy but for me,
And by me, had not our hap been bad.
With her I liv'd in joy; our wealth increas'd
By prosperous voyages I often made
To Epidamnum, till my factor's death,
And the great care of goods at random left,
Drew me from kind embracements of my spouse;
From whom my absence was not six months old
Before herself (almost at fainting under
The pleasing punishment that women bear)
Had made provision for her following me,
And soon and safe arrived where I was.
There had she not been long but she became
A joyful mother of two goodly sons,
And, which was strange, the one so like the other
As could not be distinguish'd but by names.
That very hour, and in the self-same inn,
A mean woman was delivered
Of such a burden, male twins, both alike.
Those, for their parents were exceeding poor,
I bought, and brought up to attend my sons.
My wife, not meanly proud of two such boys,
Made daily motions for our home return.
Unwilling I agreed; alas, too soon

We came aboard.
A league from Epidamnum had we sail?
Before the always-wind-obeying deep
Gave any tragic instance of our harm;
But longer did we not retain much hope;
For what obscured light the heavens did grant
Did but convey unto our fearful minds
A doubtful warrant of immediate death,
Which though myself would gladly have embrac'd,
Yet the incessant weepings of my wife,
Weeping before for what she saw must come,
And piteous plainings of the pretty babes,
That mourn'd for fashion, ignorant what to fear,
Forc'd me to seek delays for them and me.
And this it was (for other means was none).
The sailors sought for safety by our boat,
And left the ship, then sinking-ripe, to us.
My wife, more careful for the latter-born,
Had fast'ned him unto a small spare mast,
Such as sea-faring men provide for storms.
To him one of the other twins was bound,
Whilst I had been like heedful of the other.
The children thus dispos'd, my wife and I,
Fixing our eyes on whom our care was fix'd,
Fast'ned ourselves at either end the mast,
And, floating straight, obedient to the stream,
Was carried towards Corinth, as we thought.
At length the sun, gazing upon the earth,
Dispers'd those vapours that offended us,
And by the benefit of his wished light
The seas wax'd calm, and we discovered
Two ships from far, making amain to us,
Of Corinth that, of Epidaurus this.
But ere they came?O, let me say no more!
Gather the sequel by that went before.

DUKE.

Nay, forward, old man, do not break off so,
For we may pity, though not pardon thee.

EGEON.

O, had the gods done so, I had not now
Worthily term'd them merciless to us.
For, ere the ships could meet by twice five leagues,
We were encountered by a mighty rock,
Which being violently borne upon,
Our helpful ship was splitted in the midst;
So that, in this unjust divorce of us,
Fortune had left to both of us alike
What to delight in, what to sorrow for.
Her part, poor soul, seeming as burdened
With lesser weight, but not with lesser woe,
Was carried with more speed before the wind,
And in our sight they three were taken up

By fishermen of Corinth, as we thought.
At length another ship had seiz'd on us;
And, knowing whom it was their hap to save,
Gave healthful welcome to their ship-wrack'd guests,
And would have reft the fishers of their prey,
Had not their bark been very slow of sail;
And therefore homeward did they bend their course.
Thus have you heard me sever'd from my bliss,
That by misfortunes was my life prolong'd
To tell sad stories of my own mishaps.

DUKE.

And for the sake of them thou sorrowest for,
Do me the favour to dilate at full
What have befall'n of them and thee till now.

EGEON.

My youngest boy, and yet my eldest care,
At eighteen years became inquisitive
After his brother, and importun'd me
That his attendant, so his case was like,
Reft of his brother, but retain'd his name,
Might bear him company in the quest of him;
Whom whilst I laboured of a love to see,
I hazarded the loss of whom I lov'd.
Five summers have I spent in farthest Greece,
Roaming clean through the bounds of Asia,
And, coasting homeward, came to Ephesus,
Hopeless to find, yet loath to leave unsought
Or that or any place that harbours men.
But here must end the story of my life;
And happy were I in my timely death,
Could all my travels warrant me they live.

DUKE.

Hapless Egeon, whom the fates have mark'd
To bear the extremity of dire mishap;
Now, trust me, were it not against our laws,
Against my crown, my oath, my dignity,
Which princes, would they, may not disannul,
My soul should sue as advocate for thee.
But though thou art adjudged to the death,
And passed sentence may not be recall'd
But to our honour's great disparagement,
Yet will I favour thee in what I can.
Therefore, merchant, I'll limit thee this day
To seek thy health by beneficial help.
Try all the friends thou hast in Ephesus;
Beg thou, or borrow, to make up the sum,
And live; if no, then thou art doom'd to die.
Jailer, take him to thy custody.

JAILER.

I will, my lord.

EGEON.

Hopeless and helpless doth Egeon wend,
But to procrastinate his lifeless end.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. A public place

Enter Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse and a Merchant.

MERCHANT.

Therefore give out you are of Epidamnum,
Lest that your goods too soon be confiscate.
This very day a Syracusian merchant
Is apprehended for arrival here,
And, not being able to buy out his life,
According to the statute of the town
Dies ere the weary sun set in the west.
There is your money that I had to keep.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Go bear it to the Centaur, where we host,
And stay there, Dromio, till I come to thee.
Within this hour it will be dinnertime;
Till that, I'll view the manners of the town,
Peruse the traders, gaze upon the buildings,
And then return and sleep within mine inn,
For with long travel I am stiff and weary.
Get thee away.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Many a man would take you at your word,
And go indeed, having so good a mean.

[_Exit Dromio._]

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

A trusty villain, sir, that very oft,
When I am dull with care and melancholy,
Lightens my humour with his merry jests.
What, will you walk with me about the town,
And then go to my inn and dine with me?

MERCHANT.

I am invited, sir, to certain merchants,
Of whom I hope to make much benefit.
I crave your pardon. Soon, at five o'clock,
Please you, I'll meet with you upon the mart,
And afterward consort you till bedtime.
My present business calls me from you now.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Farewell till then: I will go lose myself,

And wander up and down to view the city.

MERCHANT.

Sir, I commend you to your own content.

[_Exit Merchant._]

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

He that commends me to mine own content

Commends me to the thing I cannot get.

I to the world am like a drop of water

That in the ocean seeks another drop,

Who, failing there to find his fellow forth,

Unseen, inquisitive, confounds himself.

So I, to find a mother and a brother,

In quest of them, unhappy, lose myself.

Enter Dromio of Ephesus.

Here comes the almanac of my true date.

What now? How chance thou art return'd so soon?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Return'd so soon? rather approach'd too late.

The capon burns, the pig falls from the spit;

The clock hath strucken twelve upon the bell;

My mistress made it one upon my cheek.

She is so hot because the meat is cold;

The meat is cold because you come not home;

You come not home because you have no stomach;

You have no stomach, having broke your fast;

But we that know what 'tis to fast and pray,

Are penitent for your default today.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Stop in your wind, sir, tell me this, I pray:

Where have you left the money that I gave you?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

O, sixpence that I had o' Wednesday last

To pay the saddler for my mistress' crupper:

The saddler had it, sir, I kept it not.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

I am not in a sportive humour now.

Tell me, and dally not, where is the money?

We being strangers here, how dar'st thou trust

So great a charge from thine own custody?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

I pray you jest, sir, as you sit at dinner:

I from my mistress come to you in post;

If I return, I shall be post indeed,

For she will score your fault upon my pate.

Methinks your maw, like mine, should be your clock,
And strike you home without a messenger.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Come, Dromio, come, these jests are out of season,
Reserve them till a merrier hour than this.
Where is the gold I gave in charge to thee?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

To me, sir? why, you gave no gold to me!

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Come on, sir knave, have done your foolishness,
And tell me how thou hast dispos'd thy charge.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

My charge was but to fetch you from the mart
Home to your house, the Phoenix, sir, to dinner.
My mistress and her sister stay for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Now, as I am a Christian, answer me
In what safe place you have bestow'd my money,
Or I shall break that merry sconce of yours
That stands on tricks when I am undispos'd;
Where is the thousand marks thou hadst of me?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

I have some marks of yours upon my pate,
Some of my mistress' marks upon my shoulders,
But not a thousand marks between you both.
If I should pay your worship those again,
Perchance you will not bear them patiently.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Thy mistress' marks? what mistress, slave, hast thou?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Your worship's wife, my mistress at the Phoenix;
She that doth fast till you come home to dinner,
And prays that you will hie you home to dinner.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

What, wilt thou flout me thus unto my face,
Being forbid? There, take you that, sir knave.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

What mean you, sir? for God's sake hold your hands.
Nay, an you will not, sir, I'll take my heels.

[_Exit Dromio._]

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Upon my life, by some device or other

The villain is o'er-raught of all my money.
They say this town is full of cozenage,
As nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,
Dark-working sorcerers that change the mind,
Soul-killing witches that deform the body,
Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks,
And many such-like liberties of sin:
If it prove so, I will be gone the sooner.
I'll to the Centaur to go seek this slave.
I greatly fear my money is not safe.

[_Exit._]

ACT II

SCENE I. A public place

Enter Adriana, wife to Antipholus (of Ephesus) with Luciana her sister.

ADRIANA.

Neither my husband nor the slave returned
That in such haste I sent to seek his master?
Sure, Luciana, it is two o'clock.

LUCIANA.

Perhaps some merchant hath invited him,
And from the mart he's somewhere gone to dinner.
Good sister, let us dine, and never fret;
A man is master of his liberty;
Time is their master, and when they see time,
They'll go or come. If so, be patient, sister.

ADRIANA.

Why should their liberty than ours be more?

LUCIANA.

Because their business still lies out o' door.

ADRIANA.

Look when I serve him so, he takes it ill.

LUCIANA.

O, know he is the bridle of your will.

ADRIANA.

There's none but asses will be bridled so.

LUCIANA.

Why, headstrong liberty is lash'd with woe.
There's nothing situate under heaven's eye
But hath his bound in earth, in sea, in sky.

The beasts, the fishes, and the winged fowls
Are their males? subjects, and at their controls.
Man, more divine, the masters of all these,
Lord of the wide world and wild wat'ry seas,
Indued with intellectual sense and souls,
Of more pre-eminence than fish and fowls,
Are masters to their females, and their lords:
Then let your will attend on their accords.

ADRIANA.

This servitude makes you to keep unwed.

LUCIANA.

Not this, but troubles of the marriage-bed.

ADRIANA.

But, were you wedded, you would bear some sway.

LUCIANA.

Ere I learn love, I'll practise to obey.

ADRIANA.

How if your husband start some other where?

LUCIANA.

Till he come home again, I would forbear.

ADRIANA.

Patience unmov'd! No marvel though she pause;
They can be meek that have no other cause.
A wretched soul bruis'd with adversity,
We bid be quiet when we hear it cry;
But were we burd'ned with like weight of pain,
As much, or more, we should ourselves complain:
So thou, that hast no unkind mate to grieve thee,
With urging helpless patience would relieve me:
But if thou live to see like right bereft,
This fool-begg'd patience in thee will be left.

LUCIANA.

Well, I will marry one day, but to try.
Here comes your man, now is your husband nigh.

Enter Dromio of Ephesus.

ADRIANA.

Say, is your tardy master now at hand?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Nay, he's at two hands with me, and that my two ears can witness.

ADRIANA.

Say, didst thou speak with him? know'st thou his mind?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Ay, ay, he told his mind upon mine ear.
Beshrew his hand, I scarce could understand it.

LUCIANA.

Spake he so doubtfully thou couldst not feel his meaning?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Nay, he struck so plainly I could too well feel his blows; and withal
so doubtfully that I could scarce understand them.

ADRIANA.

But say, I prithee, is he coming home?
It seems he hath great care to please his wife.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Why, mistress, sure my master is horn-mad.

ADRIANA.

Horn-mad, thou villain?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

I mean not cuckold-mad,
But sure he's stark mad.
When I desir'd him to come home to dinner,
He ask'd me for a thousand marks in gold.
??Tis dinner time,? quoth I. ?My gold,? quoth he.
?Your meat doth burn? quoth I. ?My gold,? quoth he.
?Will you come home?? quoth I. ?My gold,? quoth he.
?Where is the thousand marks I gave thee, villain??
?The pig? quoth I ?is burn'd?. ?My gold,? quoth he.
?My mistress, sir,? quoth I. ?Hang up thy mistress;
I know not thy mistress; out on thy mistress!?

LUCIANA.

Quoth who?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Quoth my master.
?I know,? quoth he, ?no house, no wife, no mistress.?
So that my errand, due unto my tongue,
I thank him, I bare home upon my shoulders;
For, in conclusion, he did beat me there.

ADRIANA.

Go back again, thou slave, and fetch him home.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Go back again, and be new beaten home?
For God's sake, send some other messenger.

ADRIANA.

Back slave, or I will break thy pate across.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

And he will bless that cross with other beating.
Between you I shall have a holy head.

ADRIANA.

Hence, prating peasant. Fetch thy master home.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

Am I so round with you, as you with me,
That like a football you do spurn me thus?
You spurn me hence, and he will spurn me hither.
If I last in this service, you must case me in leather.

[_Exit._]

LUCIANA.

Fie, how impatience loureth in your face.

ADRIANA.

His company must do his minions grace,
Whilst I at home starve for a merry look.
Hath homely age th? alluring beauty took
From my poor cheek? then he hath wasted it.
Are my discourses dull? barren my wit?
If voluble and sharp discourse be marr?d,
Unkindness blunts it more than marble hard.
Do their gay vestments his affections bait?
That?s not my fault; he?s master of my state.
What ruins are in me that can be found
By him not ruin?d? Then is he the ground
Of my defeatures. My decayed fair
A sunny look of his would soon repair;
But, too unruly deer, he breaks the pale
And feeds from home; poor I am but his stale.

LUCIANA.

Self-harming jealousy! fie, beat it hence.

ADRIANA.

Unfeeling fools can with such wrongs dispense.
I know his eye doth homage elsewhere,
Or else what lets it but he would be here?
Sister, you know he promis?d me a chain;
Would that alone, a love he would detain,
So he would keep fair quarter with his bed.
I see the jewel best enamelled
Will lose his beauty; yet the gold bides still
That others touch, yet often touching will
Wear gold; and no man that hath a name
By falsehood and corruption doth it shame.
Since that my beauty cannot please his eye,
I?ll weep what?s left away, and weeping die.

LUCIANA.

How many fond fools serve mad jealousy!

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. The same

Enter Antipholus of Syracuse.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

The gold I gave to Dromio is laid up
Safe at the Centaur, and the heedful slave
Is wander'd forth in care to seek me out.
By computation and mine host's report.
I could not speak with Dromio since at first
I sent him from the mart. See, here he comes.

Enter Dromio of Syracuse.

How now, sir! is your merry humour alter'd?
As you love strokes, so jest with me again.
You know no Centaur? you receiv'd no gold?
Your mistress sent to have me home to dinner?
My house was at the Phoenix? Wast thou mad,
That thus so madly thou didst answer me?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

What answer, sir? when spake I such a word?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Even now, even here, not half an hour since.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

I did not see you since you sent me hence,
Home to the Centaur with the gold you gave me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Villain, thou didst deny the gold's receipt,
And told'st me of a mistress and a dinner,
For which I hope thou felt'st I was displeas'd.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

I am glad to see you in this merry vein.
What means this jest, I pray you, master, tell me?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Yea, dost thou jeer and flout me in the teeth?
Think'st thou I jest? Hold, take thou that, and that.

[_Beats Dromio._]

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Hold, sir, for God's sake, now your jest is earnest.
Upon what bargain do you give it me?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Because that I familiarly sometimes
Do use you for my fool, and chat with you,
Your sauciness will jest upon my love,
And make a common of my serious hours.
When the sun shines let foolish gnats make sport,
But creep in crannies when he hides his beams.
If you will jest with me, know my aspect,
And fashion your demeanour to my looks,
Or I will beat this method in your sconce.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Sconce, call you it? so you would leave battering, I had rather have it
a head. And you use these blows long, I must get a sconce for my head,
and ensconce it too, or else I shall seek my wit in my shoulders. But I
pray, sir, why am I beaten?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Dost thou not know?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Nothing, sir, but that I am beaten.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Shall I tell you why?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Ay, sir, and wherefore; for they say, every why hath a wherefore.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Why, first, for flouting me; and then wherefore,
For urging it the second time to me.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Was there ever any man thus beaten out of season,
When in the why and the wherefore is neither rhyme nor reason?
Well, sir, I thank you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Thank me, sir, for what?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Marry, sir, for this something that you gave me for nothing.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

I'll make you amends next, to give you nothing for something.
But say, sir, is it dinner-time?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

No, sir; I think the meat wants that I have.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

In good time, sir, what's that?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Basting.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Well, sir, then 'twill be dry.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

If it be, sir, I pray you eat none of it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Your reason?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Lest it make you choleric, and purchase me another dry basting.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Well, sir, learn to jest in good time.

There's a time for all things.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

I durst have denied that before you were so choleric.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

By what rule, sir?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Marry, sir, by a rule as plain as the plain bald pate of Father Time himself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Let's hear it.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

There's no time for a man to recover his hair that grows bald by nature.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

May he not do it by fine and recovery?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Yes, to pay a fine for a periwig, and recover the lost hair of another man.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Why is Time such a niggard of hair, being, as it is, so plentiful an excrement?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Because it is a blessing that he bestows on beasts, and what he hath scanted men in hair he hath given them in wit.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Why, but there's many a man hath more hair than wit.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Not a man of those but he hath the wit to lose his hair.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Why, thou didst conclude hairy men plain dealers without wit.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

The plainer dealer, the sooner lost. Yet he loseth it in a kind of jollity.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

For what reason?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

For two, and sound ones too.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Nay, not sound, I pray you.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Sure ones, then.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Nay, not sure, in a thing falsing.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Certain ones, then.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Name them.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

The one, to save the money that he spends in tiring; the other, that at dinner they should not drop in his porridge.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

You would all this time have proved there is no time for all things.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Marry, and did, sir; namely, e?en no time to recover hair lost by nature.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

But your reason was not substantial why there is no time to recover.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Thus I mend it: Time himself is bald, and therefore, to the world?s end will have bald followers.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

I knew ?twould be a bald conclusion.

But soft! who wafts us yonder?

Enter Adriana and Luciana.

ADRIANA.

Ay, ay, Antipholus, look strange and frown,
Some other mistress hath thy sweet aspects.
I am not Adriana, nor thy wife.
The time was once when thou unurg'd wouldst vow
That never words were music to thine ear,
That never object pleasing in thine eye,
That never touch well welcome to thy hand,
That never meat sweet-savour'd in thy taste,
Unless I spake, or look'd, or touch'd, or carv'd to thee.
How comes it now, my husband, O, how comes it,
That thou art then estranged from thyself?
Thyself I call it, being strange to me,
That, undividable, incorporate,
Am better than thy dear self's better part.
Ah, do not tear away thyself from me;
For know, my love, as easy mayst thou fall
A drop of water in the breaking gulf,
And take unmingled thence that drop again
Without addition or diminishing,
As take from me thyself, and not me too.
How dearly would it touch thee to the quick,
Should'st thou but hear I were licentious?
And that this body, consecrate to thee,
By ruffian lust should be contaminate?
Wouldst thou not spit at me, and spurn at me,
And hurl the name of husband in my face,
And tear the stain'd skin off my harlot brow,
And from my false hand cut the wedding-ring,
And break it with a deep-divorcing vow?
I know thou canst; and therefore, see thou do it.
I am possess'd with an adulterate blot;
My blood is mingled with the crime of lust;
For if we two be one, and thou play false,
I do digest the poison of thy flesh,
Being strumpeted by thy contagion.
Keep then fair league and truce with thy true bed,
I live distain'd, thou undishonoured.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Plead you to me, fair dame? I know you not.
In Ephesus I am but two hours old,
As strange unto your town as to your talk,
Who, every word by all my wit being scann'd,
Wants wit in all one word to understand.

LUCIANA.

Fie, brother, how the world is chang'd with you.
When were you wont to use my sister thus?
She sent for you by Dromio home to dinner.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

By Dromio?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

By me?

ADRIANA.

By thee; and this thou didst return from him,
That he did buffet thee, and in his blows
Denied my house for his, me for his wife.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Did you converse, sir, with this gentlewoman?
What is the course and drift of your compact?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

I, sir? I never saw her till this time.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Villain, thou liest, for even her very words
Didst thou deliver to me on the mart.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

I never spake with her in all my life.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

How can she thus, then, call us by our names?
Unless it be by inspiration.

ADRIANA.

How ill agrees it with your gravity
To counterfeit thus grossly with your slave,
Abetting him to thwart me in my mood;
Be it my wrong, you are from me exempt,
But wrong not that wrong with a more contempt.
Come, I will fasten on this sleeve of thine.
Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine,
Whose weakness, married to thy stronger state,
Makes me with thy strength to communicate:
If aught possess thee from me, it is dross,
Usurping ivy, brier, or idle moss,
Who all, for want of pruning, with intrusion
Infect thy sap, and live on thy confusion.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

To me she speaks; she moves me for her theme.
What, was I married to her in my dream?
Or sleep I now, and think I hear all this?
What error drives our eyes and ears amiss?
Until I know this sure uncertainty
I'll entertain the offer'd fallacy.

LUCIANA.

Dromio, go bid the servants spread for dinner.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

O, for my beads! I cross me for a sinner.
This is the fairy land; O spite of spite!
We talk with goblins, owls, and sprites;
If we obey them not, this will ensue:
They'll suck our breath, or pinch us black and blue.

LUCIANA.

Why prat'st thou to thyself, and answer'st not?
Dromio, thou drone, thou snail, thou slug, thou sot.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

I am transformed, master, am I not?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

I think thou art in mind, and so am I.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Nay, master, both in mind and in my shape.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Thou hast thine own form.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

No, I am an ape.

LUCIANA.

If thou art chang'd to aught, 'tis to an ass.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

'Tis true; she rides me, and I long for grass.
'Tis so, I am an ass; else it could never be
But I should know her as well as she knows me.

ADRIANA.

Come, come, no longer will I be a fool,
To put the finger in the eye and weep
Whilst man and master laughs my woes to scorn.
Come, sir, to dinner; Dromio, keep the gate.
Husband, I'll dine above with you today,
And shrieve you of a thousand idle pranks.
Sirrah, if any ask you for your master,
Say he dines forth, and let no creature enter.
Come, sister; Dromio, play the porter well.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Am I in earth, in heaven, or in hell?
Sleeping or waking, mad, or well-advis'd?
Known unto these, and to myself disguis'd!
I'll say as they say, and persevere so,
And in this mist at all adventures go.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Master, shall I be porter at the gate?

ADRIANA.

Ay; and let none enter, lest I break your pate.

LUCIANA.

Come, come, Antipholus, we dine too late.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT III

SCENE I. The same

Enter Antipholus of Ephesus, his man Dromio of Ephesus, Angelo the goldsmith and Balthasar the merchant.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

Good Signior Angelo, you must excuse us all,
My wife is shrewish when I keep not hours.
Say that I linger'd with you at your shop
To see the making of her carcanet,
And that tomorrow you will bring it home.
But here's a villain that would face me down.
He met me on the mart, and that I beat him,
And charg'd him with a thousand marks in gold,
And that I did deny my wife and house.
Thou drunkard, thou, what didst thou mean by this?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Say what you will, sir, but I know what I know.
That you beat me at the mart I have your hand to show;
If the skin were parchment, and the blows you gave were ink,
Your own handwriting would tell you what I think.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

I think thou art an ass.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Marry, so it doth appear
By the wrongs I suffer and the blows I bear.
I should kick, being kick'd; and being at that pass,
You would keep from my heels, and beware of an ass.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

You're sad, Signior Balthasar; pray God our cheer
May answer my good will and your good welcome here.

BALTHASAR.

I hold your dainties cheap, sir, and your welcome dear.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

O, Signior Balthasar, either at flesh or fish
A table full of welcome makes scarce one dainty dish.

BALTHASAR.

Good meat, sir, is common; that every churl affords.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

And welcome more common, for that's nothing but words.

BALTHASAR

Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Ay, to a niggardly host and more sparing guest.

But though my cates be mean, take them in good part;

Better cheer may you have, but not with better heart.

But soft; my door is lock'd. Go bid them let us in.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

Maud, Bridget, Marian, Cicely, Gillian, Ginn!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

[_Within_] Mome, malt-horse, capon, coxcomb, idiot, patch!

Either get thee from the door or sit down at the hatch:

Dost thou conjure for wenches, that thou call'st for such store

When one is one too many? Go, get thee from the door.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

What patch is made our porter? My master stays in the street.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Let him walk from whence he came, lest he catch cold on's feet.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Who talks within there? Ho, open the door.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Right, sir, I'll tell you when an you'll tell me wherefore.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Wherefore? For my dinner. I have not dined today.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Nor today here you must not; come again when you may.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

What art thou that keep'st me out from the house I owe?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

The porter for this time, sir, and my name is Dromio.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

O villain, thou hast stolen both mine office and my name;

The one ne'er got me credit, the other mickle blame.

If thou hadst been Dromio today in my place,

Thou wouldst have chang'd thy face for a name, or thy name for an ass.

Enter Luce concealed from Antipholus of Ephesus and his companions.

LUCE.

[_Within._] What a coil is there, Dromio, who are those at the gate?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Let my master in, Luce.

LUCE.

Faith, no, he comes too late,
And so tell your master.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

O Lord, I must laugh;
Have at you with a proverb: Shall I set in my staff?

LUCE.

Have at you with another: that's when? can you tell?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

If thy name be called Luce, Luce, thou hast answered him well.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

Do you hear, you minion? you'll let us in, I hope?

LUCE.

I thought to have asked you.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

And you said no.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

So, come, help. Well struck, there was blow for blow.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

Thou baggage, let me in.

LUCE.

Can you tell for whose sake?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Master, knock the door hard.

LUCE.

Let him knock till it ache.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

You'll cry for this, minion, if I beat the door down.

LUCE.

What needs all that, and a pair of stocks in the town?

Enter Adriana concealed from Antipholus of Ephesus and his companions.

ADRIANA.

[_Within._] Who is that at the door that keeps all this noise?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

By my troth, your town is troubled with unruly boys.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Are you there, wife? you might have come before.

ADRIANA.

Your wife, sir knave? go, get you from the door.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

If you went in pain, master, this knave would go sore.

ANGELO.

Here is neither cheer, sir, nor welcome. We would fain have either.

BALTHASAR.

In debating which was best, we shall part with neither.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

They stand at the door, master; bid them welcome hither.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

There is something in the wind, that we cannot get in.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

You would say so, master, if your garments were thin.
Your cake here is warm within; you stand here in the cold.
It would make a man mad as a buck to be so bought and sold.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Go, fetch me something, I'll break ope the gate.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Break any breaking here, and I'll break your knave's pate.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

A man may break a word with you, sir, and words are but wind;
Ay, and break it in your face, so he break it not behind.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

It seems thou want'st breaking; out upon thee, hind!

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

Here's too much 'out upon thee?; I pray thee, let me in.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Ay, when fowls have no feathers and fish have no fin.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Well, I'll break in; go, borrow me a crow.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

A crow without feather; master, mean you so?
For a fish without a fin, there's a fowl without a feather.
If a crow help us in, sirrah, we'll pluck a crow together.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Go, get thee gone; fetch me an iron crow.

BALTHASAR.

Have patience, sir. O, let it not be so:
Herein you war against your reputation,
And draw within the compass of suspect
The unviolated honour of your wife.
Once this, your long experience of her wisdom,
Her sober virtue, years, and modesty,
Plead on her part some cause to you unknown;
And doubt not, sir, but she will well excuse
Why at this time the doors are made against you.
Be ruled by me; depart in patience,
And let us to the Tiger all to dinner,
And about evening, come yourself alone
To know the reason of this strange restraint.
If by strong hand you offer to break in
Now in the stirring passage of the day,
A vulgar comment will be made of it;
And that supposed by the common rout
Against your yet ungalled estimation
That may with foul intrusion enter in,
And dwell upon your grave when you are dead;
For slander lives upon succession,
For ever housed where it gets possession.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

You have prevailed. I will depart in quiet,
And, in despite of mirth, mean to be merry.
I know a wench of excellent discourse,
Pretty and witty; wild, and yet, too, gentle;
There will we dine. This woman that I mean,
My wife (but, I protest, without desert)
Hath oftentimes upbraided me withal;
To her will we to dinner. Get you home
And fetch the chain, by this I know 'tis made.
Bring it, I pray you, to the Porpentine,
For there's the house. That chain will I bestow
(Be it for nothing but to spite my wife)
Upon mine hostess there. Good sir, make haste.
Since mine own doors refuse to entertain me,
I'll knock elsewhere, to see if they'll disdain me.

ANGELO.

I'll meet you at that place some hour hence.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Do so; this jest shall cost me some expense.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. The same

Enter Luciana with Antipholus of Syracuse.

LUCIANA.

And may it be that you have quite forgot
A husband's office? Shall, Antipholus,
Even in the spring of love, thy love-springs rot?
Shall love, in building, grow so ruinous?
If you did wed my sister for her wealth,
Then for her wealth's sake use her with more kindness;
Or if you like elsewhere, do it by stealth,
Muffle your false love with some show of blindness.
Let not my sister read it in your eye;
Be not thy tongue thy own shame's orator;
Look sweet, speak fair, become disloyalty;
Apparel vice like virtue's harbinger;
Bear a fair presence though your heart be tainted;
Teach sin the carriage of a holy saint,
Be secret-false. What need she be acquainted?
What simple thief brags of his own attainment?
'Tis double wrong to truant with your bed
And let her read it in thy looks at board.
Shame hath a bastard fame, well managed;
Ill deeds is doubled with an evil word.
Alas, poor women, make us but believe,
Being compact of credit, that you love us.
Though others have the arm, show us the sleeve;
We in your motion turn, and you may move us.
Then, gentle brother, get you in again;
Comfort my sister, cheer her, call her wife.
'Tis holy sport to be a little vain
When the sweet breath of flattery conquers strife.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Sweet mistress, what your name is else, I know not,
Nor by what wonder you do hit on mine;
Less in your knowledge and your grace you show not
Than our earth's wonder, more than earth divine.
Teach me, dear creature, how to think and speak;
Lay open to my earthy gross conceit,
Smother'd in errors, feeble, shallow, weak,
The folded meaning of your words' deceit.
Against my soul's pure truth why labour you
To make it wander in an unknown field?
Are you a god? would you create me new?
Transform me, then, and to your power I'll yield.
But if that I am I, then well I know
Your weeping sister is no wife of mine,
Nor to her bed no homage do I owe.

Far more, far more, to you do I decline.
O, train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note
To drown me in thy sister's flood of tears.
Sing, siren, for thyself, and I will dote;
Spread o'er the silver waves thy golden hairs,
And as a bed I'll take thee, and there lie,
And, in that glorious supposition think
He gains by death that hath such means to die.
Let love, being light, be drowned if she sink!

LUCIANA.

What, are you mad, that you do reason so?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Not mad, but mated; how, I do not know.

LUCIANA.

It is a fault that springeth from your eye.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

For gazing on your beams, fair sun, being by.

LUCIANA.

Gaze where you should, and that will clear your sight.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

As good to wink, sweet love, as look on night.

LUCIANA.

Why call you me love? Call my sister so.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Thy sister's sister.

LUCIANA.

That's my sister.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

No,
It is thyself, mine own self's better part,
Mine eye's clear eye, my dear heart's dearer heart,
My food, my fortune, and my sweet hope's aim,
My sole earth's heaven, and my heaven's claim.

LUCIANA.

All this my sister is, or else should be.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Call thyself sister, sweet, for I aim thee;
Thee will I love, and with thee lead my life;
Thou hast no husband yet, nor I no wife.
Give me thy hand.

LUCIANA.

O, soft, sir, hold you still;
I'll fetch my sister to get her goodwill.

[_Exit Luciana._]

Enter Dromio of Syracuse.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.
Why, how now, Dromio? where runn'st thou so fast?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.
Do you know me, sir? Am I Dromio? Am I your man? Am I myself?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.
Thou art Dromio, thou art my man, thou art thyself.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.
I am an ass, I am a woman's man, and besides myself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.
What woman's man? and how besides thyself?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.
Marry, sir, besides myself, I am due to a woman, one that claims me,
one that haunts me, one that will have me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.
What claim lays she to thee?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.
Marry, sir, such claim as you would lay to your horse, and she would
have me as a beast; not that I being a beast she would have me, but
that she being a very beastly creature lays claim to me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.
What is she?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.
A very reverent body; ay, such a one as a man may not speak of without
he say 'sir-reverence?'. I have but lean luck in the match, and yet is
she a wondrous fat marriage.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.
How dost thou mean a 'fat marriage'?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.
Marry, sir, she's the kitchen wench, and all grease, and I know not
what use to put her to but to make a lamp of her and run from her by
her own light. I warrant her rags and the tallow in them will burn a
Poland winter. If she lives till doomsday, she'll burn a week longer
than the whole world.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.
What complexion is she of?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Swart like my shoe, but her face nothing like so clean kept. For why?
she sweats, a man may go overshoes in the grime of it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

That's a fault that water will mend.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

No, sir, 'tis in grain; Noah's flood could not do it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

What's her name?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Nell, sir; but her name and three quarters, that's an ell and three
quarters, will not measure her from hip to hip.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Then she bears some breadth?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

No longer from head to foot than from hip to hip. She is spherical,
like a globe. I could find out countries in her.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

In what part of her body stands Ireland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Marry, sir, in her buttocks; I found it out by the bogs.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Where Scotland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

I found it by the barrenness, hard in the palm of the hand.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Where France?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

In her forehead; armed and reverted, making war against her hair.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Where England?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

I looked for the chalky cliffs, but I could find no whiteness in them.
But I guess it stood in her chin, by the salt rheum that ran between
France and it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Where Spain?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Faith, I saw it not; but I felt it hot in her breath.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Where America, the Indies?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

O, sir, upon her nose, all o'er-embellished with rubies, carbuncles, sapphires, declining their rich aspect to the hot breath of Spain, who sent whole armadoes of carracks to be ballast at her nose.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Where stood Belgia, the Netherlands?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

O, sir, I did not look so low. To conclude: this drudge or diviner laid claim to me, called me Dromio, swore I was assured to her, told me what privy marks I had about me, as the mark of my shoulder, the mole in my neck, the great wart on my left arm, that I, amazed, ran from her as a witch. And, I think, if my breast had not been made of faith, and my heart of steel, she had transformed me to a curtal dog, and made me turn i? the wheel.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Go, hie thee presently, post to the road;
And if the wind blow any way from shore,
I will not harbour in this town tonight.
If any bark put forth, come to the mart,
Where I will walk till thou return to me.
If everyone knows us, and we know none,
?Tis time, I think, to trudge, pack and be gone.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

As from a bear a man would run for life,
So fly I from her that would be my wife.

[_Exit._]

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

There?s none but witches do inhabit here,
And therefore ?tis high time that I were hence.
She that doth call me husband, even my soul
Doth for a wife abhor. But her fair sister,
Possess?d with such a gentle sovereign grace,
Of such enchanting presence and discourse,
Hath almost made me traitor to myself.
But lest myself be guilty to self-wrong,
I?ll stop mine ears against the mermaid?s song.

Enter Angelo with the chain.

ANGELO.

Master Antipholus.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Ay, that's my name.

ANGELO.

I know it well, sir. Lo, here is the chain;
I thought to have ta'en you at the Porpentine,
The chain unfinish'd made me stay thus long.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

What is your will that I shall do with this?

ANGELO.

What please yourself, sir; I have made it for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Made it for me, sir! I bespoke it not.

ANGELO.

Not once, nor twice, but twenty times you have.
Go home with it, and please your wife withal,
And soon at supper-time I'll visit you,
And then receive my money for the chain.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

I pray you, sir, receive the money now,
For fear you ne'er see chain nor money more.

ANGELO.

You are a merry man, sir; fare you well.

[_Exit._]

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

What I should think of this I cannot tell,
But this I think, there's no man is so vain
That would refuse so fair an offer'd chain.
I see a man here needs not live by shifts,
When in the streets he meets such golden gifts.
I'll to the mart, and there for Dromio stay;
If any ship put out, then straight away.

[_Exit._]

ACT IV

SCENE I. The same

Enter Merchant, Angelo and an Officer.

MERCHANT.

You know since Pentecost the sum is due,
And since I have not much importun'd you,

Nor now I had not, but that I am bound
To Persia, and want guilders for my voyage;
Therefore make present satisfaction,
Or I'll attach you by this officer.

ANGELO.

Even just the sum that I do owe to you
Is growing to me by Antipholus,
And in the instant that I met with you
He had of me a chain; at five o'clock
I shall receive the money for the same.
Pleaseth you walk with me down to his house,
I will discharge my bond, and thank you too.

Enter Antipholus of Ephesus and Dromio of Ephesus from the
Courtesan's.

OFFICER.

That labour may you save. See where he comes.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

While I go to the goldsmith's house, go thou
And buy a rope's end; that will I bestow
Among my wife and her confederates
For locking me out of my doors by day.
But soft, I see the goldsmith; get thee gone;
Buy thou a rope, and bring it home to me.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

I buy a thousand pound a year! I buy a rope!

[_Exit Dromio._]

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

A man is well help up that trusts to you,
I promised your presence and the chain,
But neither chain nor goldsmith came to me.
Belike you thought our love would last too long
If it were chain'd together, and therefore came not.

ANGELO.

Saving your merry humour, here's the note
How much your chain weighs to the utmost carat,
The fineness of the gold, and chargeful fashion,
Which doth amount to three odd ducats more
Than I stand debted to this gentleman.
I pray you, see him presently discharg'd,
For he is bound to sea, and stays but for it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

I am not furnished with the present money;
Besides, I have some business in the town.
Good signior, take the stranger to my house,
And with you take the chain, and bid my wife

Disburse the sum on the receipt thereof;
Perchance I will be there as soon as you.

ANGELO.

Then you will bring the chain to her yourself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

No, bear it with you, lest I come not time enough.

ANGELO.

Well, sir, I will. Have you the chain about you?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

And if I have not, sir, I hope you have,
Or else you may return without your money.

ANGELO.

Nay, come, I pray you, sir, give me the chain;
Both wind and tide stays for this gentleman,
And I, to blame, have held him here too long.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Good Lord, you use this dalliance to excuse
Your breach of promise to the Porpentine.
I should have chid you for not bringing it,
But, like a shrew, you first begin to brawl.

MERCHANT.

The hour steals on; I pray you, sir, dispatch.

ANGELO.

You hear how he importunes me. The chain!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Why, give it to my wife, and fetch your money.

ANGELO.

Come, come, you know I gave it you even now.
Either send the chain or send by me some token.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Fie, now you run this humour out of breath.
Come, where's the chain? I pray you, let me see it.

MERCHANT.

My business cannot brook this dalliance.
Good sir, say whether you'll answer me or no;
If not, I'll leave him to the officer.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

I answer you? What should I answer you?

ANGELO.

The money that you owe me for the chain.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

I owe you none till I receive the chain.

ANGELO.

You know I gave it you half an hour since.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

You gave me none. You wrong me much to say so.

ANGELO.

You wrong me more, sir, in denying it.
Consider how it stands upon my credit.

MERCHANT.

Well, officer, arrest him at my suit.

OFFICER.

I do, and charge you in the duke's name to obey me.

ANGELO.

This touches me in reputation.
Either consent to pay this sum for me,
Or I attach you by this officer.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Consent to pay thee that I never had?
Arrest me, foolish fellow, if thou dar'st.

ANGELO.

Here is thy fee; arrest him, officer.
I would not spare my brother in this case
If he should scorn me so apparently.

OFFICER.

I do arrest you, sir. You hear the suit.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

I do obey thee till I give thee bail.
But, sirrah, you shall buy this sport as dear
As all the metal in your shop will answer.

ANGELO.

Sir, sir, I shall have law in Ephesus,
To your notorious shame, I doubt it not.

Enter Dromio of Syracuse from the bay.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Master, there's a bark of Epidamnum
That stays but till her owner comes aboard,
And then, sir, bears away. Our freightage, sir,
I have convey'd aboard, and I have bought
The oil, the balsamum, and aqua-vitae.

The ship is in her trim; the merry wind
Blows fair from land; they stay for nought at all
But for their owner, master, and yourself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

How now? a madman? Why, thou peevish sheep,
What ship of Epidamnum stays for me?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

A ship you sent me to, to hire waftage.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Thou drunken slave, I sent thee for a rope,
And told thee to what purpose and what end.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

You sent me for a rope's end as soon.
You sent me to the bay, sir, for a bark.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

I will debate this matter at more leisure,
And teach your ears to list me with more heed.
To Adriana, villain, hie thee straight:
Give her this key, and tell her in the desk
That's cover'd o'er with Turkish tapestry
There is a purse of ducats; let her send it.
Tell her I am arrested in the street,
And that shall bail me. Hie thee, slave; be gone.
On, officer, to prison till it come.

[_Exeunt Merchant, Angelo, Officer and Antipholus of Ephesus._]

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

To Adriana, that is where we din'd,
Where Dowsabel did claim me for her husband.
She is too big, I hope, for me to compass.
Thither I must, although against my will,
For servants must their masters' minds fulfil.

[_Exit._]

SCENE II. The same

Enter Adriana and Luciana.

ADRIANA.

Ah, Luciana, did he tempt thee so?
Might'st thou perceive austerely in his eye
That he did plead in earnest, yea or no?
Look'd he or red or pale, or sad or merrily?
What observation mad'st thou in this case
Of his heart's meteors tilting in his face?

LUCIANA.

First he denied you had in him no right.

ADRIANA.

He meant he did me none; the more my spite.

LUCIANA.

Then swore he that he was a stranger here.

ADRIANA.

And true he swore, though yet forsworn he were.

LUCIANA.

Then pleaded I for you.

ADRIANA.

And what said he?

LUCIANA.

That love I begg'd for you he begg'd of me.

ADRIANA.

With what persuasion did he tempt thy love?

LUCIANA.

With words that in an honest suit might move.
First he did praise my beauty, then my speech.

ADRIANA.

Did'st speak him fair?

LUCIANA.

Have patience, I beseech.

ADRIANA.

I cannot, nor I will not hold me still.
My tongue, though not my heart, shall have his will.
He is deformed, crooked, old, and sere,
Ill-fac'd, worse bodied, shapeless everywhere;
Vicious, ungentle, foolish, blunt, unkind,
Stigmatical in making, worse in mind.

LUCIANA.

Who would be jealous then of such a one?
No evil lost is wail'd when it is gone.

ADRIANA.

Ah, but I think him better than I say,
And yet would herein others' eyes were worse:
Far from her nest the lapwing cries away;
My heart prays for him, though my tongue do curse.

Enter Dromio of Syracuse.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Here, go; the desk, the purse, sweet now, make haste.

LUCIANA.

How hast thou lost thy breath?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

By running fast.

ADRIANA.

Where is thy master, Dromio? is he well?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

No, he's in Tartar limbo, worse than hell.
A devil in an everlasting garment hath him,
One whose hard heart is button'd up with steel;
A fiend, a fairy, pitiless and rough;
A wolf, nay worse, a fellow all in buff;
A back-friend, a shoulder-clapper, one that countermands
The passages of alleys, creeks, and narrow lands;
A hound that runs counter, and yet draws dryfoot well,
One that, before the judgement, carries poor souls to hell.

ADRIANA.

Why, man, what is the matter?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

I do not know the matter. He is 'rested on the case.

ADRIANA.

What, is he arrested? Tell me at whose suit?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

I know not at whose suit he is arrested, well;
But he's in a suit of buff which 'rested him, that can I tell.
Will you send him, mistress, redemption, the money in his desk?

ADRIANA.

Go fetch it, sister. This I wonder at,

[_Exit Luciana._]

Thus he unknown to me should be in debt.
Tell me, was he arrested on a band?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Not on a band, but on a stronger thing;
A chain, a chain. Do you not hear it ring?

ADRIANA.

What, the chain?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

No, no, the bell, 'tis time that I were gone.
It was two ere I left him, and now the clock strikes one.

ADRIANA.

The hours come back! That did I never hear.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

O yes, if any hour meet a sergeant, 'a turns back for very fear.

ADRIANA.

As if time were in debt. How fondly dost thou reason!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Time is a very bankrupt, and owes more than he's worth to season.

Nay, he's a thief too. Have you not heard men say

That time comes stealing on by night and day?

If he be in debt and theft, and a sergeant in the way,

Hath he not reason to turn back an hour in a day?

Enter Luciana.

ADRIANA.

Go, Dromio, there's the money, bear it straight,
And bring thy master home immediately.

Come, sister, I am press'd down with conceit;

Conceit, my comfort and my injury.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. The same

Enter Antipholus of Syracuse.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

There's not a man I meet but doth salute me

As if I were their well-acquainted friend,

And everyone doth call me by my name.

Some tender money to me, some invite me;

Some other give me thanks for kindnesses;

Some offer me commodities to buy.

Even now a tailor call'd me in his shop,

And show'd me silks that he had bought for me,

And therewithal took measure of my body.

Sure, these are but imaginary wiles,

And Lapland sorcerers inhabit here.

Enter Dromio of Syracuse.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Master, here's the gold you sent me for.

What, have you got the picture of old Adam new apparelled?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

What gold is this? What Adam dost thou mean?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Not that Adam that kept the paradise, but that Adam that keeps the prison; he that goes in the calf's skin that was killed for the Prodigal; he that came behind you, sir, like an evil angel, and bid you forsake your liberty.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

I understand thee not.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

No? Why, 'tis a plain case: he that went like a bass-viol in a case of leather; the man, sir, that, when gentlemen are tired, gives them a sob, and 'rests them; he, sir, that takes pity on decayed men and gives them suits of durance; he that sets up his rest to do more exploits with his mace than a morris-pike.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

What! thou mean'st an officer?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Ay, sir, the sergeant of the band; he that brings any man to answer it that breaks his band; one that thinks a man always going to bed, and says, 'God give you good rest.'

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Well, sir, there rest in your foolery. Is there any ship puts forth tonight? may we be gone?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Why, sir, I brought you word an hour since that the bark Expedition put forth tonight, and then were you hindered by the sergeant to tarry for the hoy Delay. Here are the angels that you sent for to deliver you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

The fellow is distract, and so am I,
And here we wander in illusions.
Some blessed power deliver us from hence!

Enter a Courtesan.

COURTESAN.

Well met, well met, Master Antipholus.
I see, sir, you have found the goldsmith now.
Is that the chain you promis'd me today?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Satan, avoid! I charge thee, tempt me not.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Master, is this Mistress Satan?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

It is the devil.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Nay, she is worse, she is the devil's dam; and here she comes in the habit of a light wench, and thereof comes that the wenches say 'God damn me', that's as much to say, 'God make me a light wench.' It is written they appear to men like angels of light. Light is an effect of fire, and fire will burn; ergo, light wenches will burn. Come not near her.

COURTESAN.

Your man and you are marvellous merry, sir.
Will you go with me? We'll mend our dinner here.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Master, if you do, expect spoon-meat, or bespeak a long spoon.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Why, Dromio?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Marry, he must have a long spoon that must eat with the devil.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Avoid then, fiend! What tell'st thou me of supping?
Thou art, as you are all, a sorceress.
I conjure thee to leave me and be gone.

COURTESAN.

Give me the ring of mine you had at dinner,
Or, for my diamond, the chain you promis'd,
And I'll be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Some devils ask but the paring of one's nail,
A rush, a hair, a drop of blood, a pin,
A nut, a cherry-stone; but she, more covetous,
Would have a chain.
Master, be wise; and if you give it her,
The devil will shake her chain and fright us with it.

COURTESAN.

I pray you, sir, my ring, or else the chain;
I hope you do not mean to cheat me so.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Avaunt, thou witch! Come, Dromio, let us go.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Fly pride, says the peacock. Mistress, that you know.

[_Exeunt Antipholus of Syracuse and Dromio of Syracuse._]

COURTESAN.

Now, out of doubt Antipholus is mad,
Else would he never so demean himself.

A ring he hath of mine worth forty ducats,
And for the same he promis'd me a chain;
Both one and other he denies me now.
The reason that I gather he is mad,
Besides this present instance of his rage,
Is a mad tale he told today at dinner
Of his own doors being shut against his entrance.
Belike his wife, acquainted with his fits,
On purpose shut the doors against his way.
My way is now to hie home to his house,
And tell his wife that, being lunatic,
He rush'd into my house and took perforce
My ring away. This course I fittest choose,
For forty ducats is too much to lose.

[_Exit._]

SCENE IV. The same

Enter Antipholus of Ephesus with an Officer.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

Fear me not, man, I will not break away:
I'll give thee ere I leave thee so much money,
To warrant thee, as I am 'rested for.
My wife is in a wayward mood today,
And will not lightly trust the messenger
That I should be attach'd in Ephesus;
I tell you 'twill sound harshly in her ears.

Enter Dromio of Ephesus with a rope's end.

Here comes my man. I think he brings the money.
How now, sir! have you that I sent you for?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Here's that, I warrant you, will pay them all.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

But where's the money?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Why, sir, I gave the money for the rope.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

Five hundred ducats, villain, for a rope?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

I'll serve you, sir, five hundred at the rate.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

To what end did I bid thee hie thee home?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

To a rope's end, sir; and to that end am I return'd.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

And to that end, sir, I will welcome you.

[_Beating him._]

OFFICER.

Good sir, be patient.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

Nay, 'tis for me to be patient. I am in adversity.

OFFICER.

Good now, hold thy tongue.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

Nay, rather persuade him to hold his hands.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Thou whoreson, senseless villain.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

I would I were senseless, sir, that I might not feel your blows.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Thou art sensible in nothing but blows, and so is an ass.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

I am an ass indeed; you may prove it by my long ears. I have served him from the hour of my nativity to this instant, and have nothing at his hands for my service but blows. When I am cold, he heats me with beating; when I am warm he cools me with beating. I am waked with it when I sleep, raised with it when I sit, driven out of doors with it when I go from home, welcomed home with it when I return. Nay, I bear it on my shoulders as a beggar wont her brat; and I think when he hath lamed me, I shall beg with it from door to door.

Enter Adriana, Luciana, Courtesan and a Schoolmaster called Pinch.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Come, go along, my wife is coming yonder.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

Mistress, _respice finem_, respect your end, or rather, the prophesy like the parrot, 'Beware the rope's end.'

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Wilt thou still talk?

[_Beats him._]

COURTESAN.

How say you now? Is not your husband mad?

ADRIANA.

His incivility confirms no less.
Good Doctor Pinch, you are a conjurer;
Establish him in his true sense again,
And I will please you what you will demand.

LUCIANA.

Alas, how fiery and how sharp he looks!

COURTESAN.

Mark how he trembles in his ecstasy.

PINCH.

Give me your hand, and let me feel your pulse.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

There is my hand, and let it feel your ear.

PINCH.

I charge thee, Satan, hous'd within this man,
To yield possession to my holy prayers,
And to thy state of darkness hie thee straight.
I conjure thee by all the saints in heaven.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Peace, dotting wizard, peace; I am not mad.

ADRIANA.

O, that thou wert not, poor distressed soul!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

You minion, you, are these your customers?
Did this companion with the saffron face
Revel and feast it at my house today,
Whilst upon me the guilty doors were shut,
And I denied to enter in my house?

ADRIANA.

O husband, God doth know you din'd at home,
Where would you had remain'd until this time,
Free from these slanders and this open shame.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Din'd at home? Thou villain, what sayest thou?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

Sir, sooth to say, you did not dine at home.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Were not my doors lock'd up and I shut out?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

Perdy, your doors were lock'd, and you shut out.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

And did not she herself revile me there?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Sans fable, she herself revild you there.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

Did not her kitchen-maid rail, taunt, and scorn me?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Certes, she did, the kitchen-vestal scorn'd you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

And did not I in rage depart from thence?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

In verity, you did; my bones bear witness,
That since have felt the vigour of his rage.

ADRIANA.

Is't good to soothe him in these contraries?

PINCH.

It is no shame; the fellow finds his vein,
And yielding to him, humours well his frenzy.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

Thou hast suborn'd the goldsmith to arrest me.

ADRIANA.

Alas! I sent you money to redeem you
By Dromio here, who came in haste for it.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Money by me? Heart and goodwill you might,
But surely, master, not a rag of money.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

Went'st not thou to her for a purse of ducats?

ADRIANA.

He came to me, and I deliver'd it.

LUCIANA.

And I am witness with her that she did.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

God and the rope-maker bear me witness
That I was sent for nothing but a rope.

PINCH.

Mistress, both man and master is possess'd,
I know it by their pale and deadly looks.

They must be bound and laid in some dark room.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Say, wherefore didst thou lock me forth today,
And why dost thou deny the bag of gold?

ADRIANA.

I did not, gentle husband, lock thee forth.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

And gentle master, I receiv'd no gold;
But I confess, sir, that we were lock'd out.

ADRIANA.

Dissembling villain, thou speak'st false in both.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Dissembling harlot, thou art false in all,
And art confederate with a damned pack
To make a loathsome abject scorn of me.
But with these nails I'll pluck out these false eyes
That would behold in me this shameful sport.

[_Enter three or four, and offer to bind him. He strives. _]

ADRIANA.

O, bind him, bind him; let him not come near me.

PINCH.

More company; the fiend is strong within him.

LUCIANA.

Ay me, poor man, how pale and wan he looks!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

What, will you murder me? Thou jailer, thou,
I am thy prisoner. Wilt thou suffer them
To make a rescue?

OFFICER.

Masters, let him go.
He is my prisoner, and you shall not have him.

PINCH.

Go, bind this man, for he is frantic too.

ADRIANA.

What wilt thou do, thou peevish officer?
Hast thou delight to see a wretched man
Do outrage and displeasure to himself?

OFFICER.

He is my prisoner. If I let him go,
The debt he owes will be requir'd of me.

ADRIANA.

I will discharge thee ere I go from thee;
Bear me forthwith unto his creditor,
And knowing how the debt grows, I will pay it.
Good master doctor, see him safe convey'd
Home to my house. O most unhappy day!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

O most unhappy strumpet!

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

Master, I am here enter'd in bond for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Out on thee, villain! wherefore dost thou mad me?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

Will you be bound for nothing? Be mad, good master; cry, 'tis the devil?.

LUCIANA.

God help, poor souls, how idly do they talk!

ADRIANA.

Go bear him hence. Sister, go you with me.

[_Exeunt Pinch and Assistants, with Antipholus of Ephesus and Dromio of Ephesus._]

Say now, whose suit is he arrested at?

OFFICER.

One Angelo, a goldsmith; do you know him?

ADRIANA.

I know the man. What is the sum he owes?

OFFICER.

Two hundred ducats.

ADRIANA.

Say, how grows it due?

OFFICER.

Due for a chain your husband had of him.

ADRIANA.

He did bespeak a chain for me, but had it not.

COURTESAN.

When as your husband, all in rage, today
Came to my house and took away my ring,
The ring I saw upon his finger now,
Straight after did I meet him with a chain.

ADRIANA.

It may be so, but I did never see it.
Come, jailer, bring me where the goldsmith is,
I long to know the truth hereof at large.

Enter Antipholus of Syracuse with his rapier drawn, and Dromio of Syracuse.

LUCIANA.

God, for thy mercy, they are loose again!

ADRIANA.

And come with naked swords. Let's call more help
To have them bound again.

OFFICER.

Away, they'll kill us.

[_Exeunt, as fast as may be, frightened._]

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

I see these witches are afraid of swords.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

She that would be your wife now ran from you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Come to the Centaur, fetch our stuff from thence.
I long that we were safe and sound aboard.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Faith, stay here this night, they will surely do us no harm; you saw
they speak us fair, give us gold. Methinks they are such a gentle
nation that, but for the mountain of mad flesh that claims marriage of
me, I could find in my heart to stay here still and turn witch.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

I will not stay tonight for all the town;
Therefore away, to get our stuff aboard.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT V

SCENE I. The same

Enter Merchant and Angelo.

ANGELO.

I am sorry, sir, that I have hinder'd you,
But I protest he had the chain of me,

Though most dishonestly he doth deny it.

MERCHANT.

How is the man esteem'd here in the city?

ANGELO.

Of very reverend reputation, sir,
Of credit infinite, highly belov'd,
Second to none that lives here in the city.
His word might bear my wealth at any time.

MERCHANT.

Speak softly. Yonder, as I think, he walks.

Enter Antipholus of Syracuse and Dromio of Syracuse.

ANGELO.

'Tis so; and that self chain about his neck
Which he forswore most monstrously to have.
Good sir, draw near to me, I'll speak to him.
Signior Antipholus, I wonder much
That you would put me to this shame and trouble,
And not without some scandal to yourself,
With circumstance and oaths so to deny
This chain, which now you wear so openly.
Beside the charge, the shame, imprisonment,
You have done wrong to this my honest friend,
Who, but for staying on our controversy,
Had hoisted sail and put to sea today.
This chain you had of me, can you deny it?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

I think I had: I never did deny it.

MERCHANT.

Yes, that you did, sir, and forswore it too.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Who heard me to deny it or forswear it?

MERCHANT.

These ears of mine, thou know'st, did hear thee.
Fie on thee, wretch. 'Tis pity that thou liv'st
To walk where any honest men resort.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Thou art a villain to impeach me thus;
I'll prove mine honour and mine honesty
Against thee presently, if thou dar'st stand.

MERCHANT.

I dare, and do defy thee for a villain.

[_They draw._]

Enter Adriana, Luciana, Courtesan and others.

ADRIANA.

Hold, hurt him not, for God's sake, he is mad.
Some get within him, take his sword away.
Bind Dromio too, and bear them to my house.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Run, master, run, for God's sake, take a house.
This is some priory; in, or we are spoiled.

[_Exeunt Antipholus of Syracuse and Dromio of Syracuse to the priory._]

Enter Lady Abbess.

ABBESS.

Be quiet, people. Wherefore throng you hither?

ADRIANA.

To fetch my poor distracted husband hence.
Let us come in, that we may bind him fast
And bear him home for his recovery.

ANGELO.

I knew he was not in his perfect wits.

MERCHANT.

I am sorry now that I did draw on him.

ABBESS.

How long hath this possession held the man?

ADRIANA.

This week he hath been heavy, sour, sad,
And much different from the man he was.
But till this afternoon his passion
Never brake into extremity of rage.

ABBESS.

Hath he not lost much wealth by wreck of sea?
Buried some dear friend? Hath not else his eye
Strayed his affection in unlawful love?
A sin prevailing much in youthful men
Who give their eyes the liberty of gazing?
Which of these sorrows is he subject to?

ADRIANA.

To none of these, except it be the last,
Namely, some love that drew him oft from home.

ABBESS.

You should for that have reprehended him.

ADRIANA.

Why, so I did.

ABBESS.

Ay, but not rough enough.

ADRIANA.

As roughly as my modesty would let me.

ABBESS.

Haply in private.

ADRIANA.

And in assemblies too.

ABBESS.

Ay, but not enough.

ADRIANA.

It was the copy of our conference.
In bed he slept not for my urging it;
At board he fed not for my urging it;
Alone, it was the subject of my theme;
In company I often glanced it;
Still did I tell him it was vile and bad.

ABBESS.

And thereof came it that the man was mad.
The venom clamours of a jealous woman
Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.
It seems his sleeps were hindered by thy railing,
And thereof comes it that his head is light.
Thou say'st his meat was sauc'd with thy upbraidings.
Unquiet meals make ill digestions;
Thereof the raging fire of fever bred,
And what's a fever but a fit of madness?
Thou say'st his sports were hinder'd by thy brawls.
Sweet recreation barr'd, what doth ensue
But moody and dull melancholy,
Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair,
And at her heels a huge infectious troop
Of pale distemperatures and foes to life?
In food, in sport, and life-preserving rest
To be disturb'd would mad or man or beast.
The consequence is, then, thy jealous fits
Hath scar'd thy husband from the use of's wits.

LUCIANA.

She never reprehended him but mildly,
When he demean'd himself rough, rude, and wildly.
Why bear you these rebukes and answer not?

ADRIANA.

She did betray me to my own reproof.
Good people, enter and lay hold on him.

ABBESS.

No, not a creature enters in my house.

ADRIANA.

Then let your servants bring my husband forth.

ABBESS.

Neither. He took this place for sanctuary,
And it shall privilege him from your hands
Till I have brought him to his wits again,
Or lose my labour in assaying it.

ADRIANA.

I will attend my husband, be his nurse,
Diet his sickness, for it is my office,
And will have no attorney but myself;
And therefore let me have him home with me.

ABBESS.

Be patient, for I will not let him stir
Till I have used the approved means I have,
With wholesome syrups, drugs, and holy prayers,
To make of him a formal man again.
It is a branch and parcel of mine oath,
A charitable duty of my order;
Therefore depart, and leave him here with me.

ADRIANA.

I will not hence and leave my husband here;
And ill it doth beseem your holiness
To separate the husband and the wife.

ABBESS.

Be quiet and depart. Thou shalt not have him.

[_Exit Abbess._]

LUCIANA.

Complain unto the duke of this indignity.

ADRIANA.

Come, go. I will fall prostrate at his feet,
And never rise until my tears and prayers
Have won his grace to come in person hither
And take perforce my husband from the abbess.

MERCHANT.

By this, I think, the dial points at five.
Anon, I?m sure, the Duke himself in person
Comes this way to the melancholy vale,
The place of death and sorry execution

Behind the ditches of the abbey here.

ANGELO.

Upon what cause?

MERCHANT.

To see a reverend Syracusan merchant,
Who put unluckily into this bay
Against the laws and statutes of this town,
Beheaded publicly for his offence.

ANGELO.

See where they come. We will behold his death.

LUCIANA.

Kneel to the Duke before he pass the abbey.

Enter the Duke, attended; Egeon, bareheaded; with the Headsman and other Officers.

DUKE.

Yet once again proclaim it publicly,
If any friend will pay the sum for him,
He shall not die; so much we tender him.

ADRIANA.

Justice, most sacred duke, against the abbess!

DUKE.

She is a virtuous and a reverend lady,
It cannot be that she hath done thee wrong.

ADRIANA.

May it please your grace, Antipholus, my husband,
Who I made lord of me and all I had
At your important letters, this ill day
A most outrageous fit of madness took him;
That desperately he hurried through the street,
With him his bondman all as mad as he,
Doing displeasure to the citizens
By rushing in their houses, bearing thence
Rings, jewels, anything his rage did like.
Once did I get him bound and sent him home,
Whilst to take order for the wrongs I went,
That here and there his fury had committed.
Anon, I wot not by what strong escape,
He broke from those that had the guard of him,
And with his mad attendant and himself,
Each one with ireful passion, with drawn swords,
Met us again, and, madly bent on us,
Chased us away; till raising of more aid,
We came again to bind them. Then they fled
Into this abbey, whither we pursued them.
And here the abbess shuts the gates on us,

And will not suffer us to fetch him out,
Nor send him forth that we may bear him hence.
Therefore, most gracious duke, with thy command
Let him be brought forth and borne hence for help.

DUKE.

Long since thy husband serv'd me in my wars,
And I to thee engag'd a prince's word,
When thou didst make him master of thy bed,
To do him all the grace and good I could.
Go, some of you, knock at the abbey gate,
And bid the lady abbess come to me.
I will determine this before I stir.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER.

O mistress, mistress, shift and save yourself.
My master and his man are both broke loose,
Beaten the maids a-row, and bound the doctor,
Whose beard they have singed off with brands of fire,
And ever as it blazed they threw on him
Great pails of puddled mire to quench the hair.
My master preaches patience to him, and the while
His man with scissors nicks him like a fool;
And sure (unless you send some present help)
Between them they will kill the conjurer.

ADRIANA.

Peace, fool, thy master and his man are here,
And that is false thou dost report to us.

MESSENGER.

Mistress, upon my life, I tell you true.
I have not breath'd almost since I did see it.
He cries for you, and vows, if he can take you,
To scorch your face and to disfigure you.

[_Cry within._]

Hark, hark, I hear him, mistress. Fly, be gone!

DUKE.

Come, stand by me, fear nothing. Guard with halberds.

ADRIANA.

Ay me, it is my husband. Witness you
That he is borne about invisible.
Even now we hous'd him in the abbey here,
And now he's there, past thought of human reason.

Enter Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

Justice, most gracious duke; O, grant me justice!
Even for the service that long since I did thee
When I bestrid thee in the wars, and took
Deep scars to save thy life; even for the blood
That then I lost for thee, now grant me justice.

EGEON.

Unless the fear of death doth make me dote,
I see my son Antipholus and Dromio.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Justice, sweet prince, against that woman there.
She whom thou gav'st to me to be my wife;
That hath abused and dishonour'd me
Even in the strength and height of injury.
Beyond imagination is the wrong
That she this day hath shameless thrown on me.

DUKE.

Discover how, and thou shalt find me just.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

This day, great duke, she shut the doors upon me
While she with harlots feasted in my house.

DUKE.

A grievous fault. Say, woman, didst thou so?

ADRIANA.

No, my good lord. Myself, he, and my sister
Today did dine together. So befall my soul
As this is false he burdens me withal.

LUCIANA.

Ne'er may I look on day nor sleep on night
But she tells to your highness simple truth.

ANGELO.

O perjur'd woman! They are both forsworn.
In this the madman justly chargeth them.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

My liege, I am advised what I say,
Neither disturb'd with the effect of wine,
Nor heady-rash, provok'd with raging ire,
Albeit my wrongs might make one wiser mad.
This woman lock'd me out this day from dinner.
That goldsmith there, were he not pack'd with her,
Could witness it, for he was with me then,
Who parted with me to go fetch a chain,
Promising to bring it to the Porpentine,
Where Balthasar and I did dine together.
Our dinner done, and he not coming thither,
I went to seek him. In the street I met him,

And in his company that gentleman.
There did this perjur'd goldsmith swear me down
That I this day of him receiv'd the chain,
Which, God he knows, I saw not. For the which
He did arrest me with an officer.
I did obey, and sent my peasant home
For certain ducats. He with none return'd.
Then fairly I bespoke the officer
To go in person with me to my house.
By th' way we met
My wife, her sister, and a rabble more
Of vile confederates. Along with them
They brought one Pinch, a hungry lean-faced villain,
A mere anatomy, a mountebank,
A threadbare juggler, and a fortune-teller;
A needy, hollow-ey'd, sharp-looking wretch;
A living dead man. This pernicious slave,
Forsooth, took on him as a conjurer,
And gazing in mine eyes, feeling my pulse,
And with no face (as 'twere) outfacing me,
Cries out, I was possess'd. Then altogether
They fell upon me, bound me, bore me thence,
And in a dark and dankish vault at home
There left me and my man, both bound together,
Till gnawing with my teeth my bonds in sunder,
I gain'd my freedom and immediately
Ran hither to your Grace, whom I beseech
To give me ample satisfaction
For these deep shames and great indignities.

ANGELO.

My lord, in truth, thus far I witness with him,
That he din'd not at home, but was lock'd out.

DUKE.

But had he such a chain of thee, or no?

ANGELO.

He had, my lord, and when he ran in here
These people saw the chain about his neck.

MERCHANT.

Besides, I will be sworn these ears of mine
Heard you confess you had the chain of him,
After you first forswore it on the mart,
And thereupon I drew my sword on you;
And then you fled into this abbey here,
From whence I think you are come by miracle.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

I never came within these abbey walls,
Nor ever didst thou draw thy sword on me.
I never saw the chain, so help me heaven;
And this is false you burden me withal.

DUKE.

Why, what an intricate impeach is this!
I think you all have drunk of Circe's cup.
If here you hous'd him, here he would have been.
If he were mad, he would not plead so coldly.
You say he din'd at home, the goldsmith here
Denies that saying. Sirrah, what say you?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Sir, he dined with her there, at the Porpentine.

COURTESAN.

He did, and from my finger snatch'd that ring.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

'Tis true, my liege, this ring I had of her.

DUKE.

Saw'st thou him enter at the abbey here?

COURTESAN.

As sure, my liege, as I do see your grace.

DUKE.

Why, this is strange. Go call the abbess hither.
I think you are all mated, or stark mad.

[_Exit one to the Abbess._]

EGEON.

Most mighty Duke, vouchsafe me speak a word;
Haply I see a friend will save my life
And pay the sum that may deliver me.

DUKE.

Speak freely, Syracusan, what thou wilt.

EGEON.

Is not your name, sir, call'd Antipholus?
And is not that your bondman Dromio?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Within this hour I was his bondman, sir,
But he, I thank him, gnaw'd in two my cords.
Now am I Dromio, and his man, unbound.

EGEON.

I am sure you both of you remember me.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Ourselves we do remember, sir, by you.
For lately we were bound as you are now.
You are not Pinch's patient, are you, sir?

EGEON.

Why look you strange on me? you know me well.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

I never saw you in my life till now.

EGEON.

O! grief hath chang'd me since you saw me last,
And careful hours with time's deformed hand,
Have written strange defeatures in my face.
But tell me yet, dost thou not know my voice?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

Neither.

EGEON.

Dromio, nor thou?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

No, trust me, sir, nor I.

EGEON.

I am sure thou dost.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

Ay, sir, but I am sure I do not, and whatsoever a man denies, you are now bound to believe him.

EGEON.

Not know my voice! O time's extremity,
Hast thou so crack'd and splitt'd my poor tongue
In seven short years that here my only son
Knows not my feeble key of untun'd cares?
Though now this grained face of mine be hid
In sap-consuming winter's drizzled snow,
And all the conduits of my blood froze up,
Yet hath my night of life some memory,
My wasting lamps some fading glimmer left,
My dull deaf ears a little use to hear.
All these old witnesses, I cannot err,
Tell me thou art my son Antipholus.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

I never saw my father in my life.

EGEON.

But seven years since, in Syracuse, boy,
Thou know'st we parted; but perhaps, my son,
Thou sham'st to acknowledge me in misery.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

The duke and all that know me in the city,
Can witness with me that it is not so.

I ne?er saw Syracuse in my life.

DUKE.

I tell thee, Syracusan, twenty years
Have I been patron to Antipholus,
During which time he ne?er saw Syracuse.
I see thy age and dangers make thee dote.

Enter the Abbess with Antipholus of Syracuse and Dromio of Syracuse.

ABBESS.

Most mighty duke, behold a man much wrong?d.

[_All gather to see them._]

ADRIANA.

I see two husbands, or mine eyes deceive me.

DUKE.

One of these men is _genius_ to the other;
And so of these, which is the natural man,
And which the spirit? Who deciphers them?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

I, sir, am Dromio, command him away.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

I, sir, am Dromio, pray let me stay.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

Egeon, art thou not? or else his ghost?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

O, my old master, who hath bound him here?

ABBESS.

Whoever bound him, I will loose his bonds,
And gain a husband by his liberty.
Speak, old Egeon, if thou be?st the man
That hadst a wife once called Emilia,
That bore thee at a burden two fair sons.
O, if thou be?st the same Egeon, speak,
And speak unto the same Emilia!

DUKE.

Why, here begins his morning story right:
These two Antipholus?, these two so like,
And these two Dromios, one in semblance,
Besides her urging of her wreck at sea.
These are the parents to these children,
Which accidentally are met together.

EGEON.

If I dream not, thou art Emilia.

If thou art she, tell me where is that son
That floated with thee on the fatal raft?

ABBESS.

By men of Epidamnum, he and I
And the twin Dromio, all were taken up;
But, by and by, rude fishermen of Corinth
By force took Dromio and my son from them,
And me they left with those of Epidamnum.
What then became of them I cannot tell;
I to this fortune that you see me in.

DUKE.

Antipholus, thou cam'st from Corinth first?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

No, sir, not I, I came from Syracuse.

DUKE.

Stay, stand apart, I know not which is which.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

I came from Corinth, my most gracious lord.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

And I with him.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

Brought to this town by that most famous warrior,
Duke Menaphon, your most renowned uncle.

ADRIANA.

Which of you two did dine with me today?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

I, gentle mistress.

ADRIANA.

And are not you my husband?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

No, I say nay to that.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

And so do I, yet did she call me so;
And this fair gentlewoman, her sister here,
Did call me brother. What I told you then,
I hope I shall have leisure to make good,
If this be not a dream I see and hear.

ANGELO.

That is the chain, sir, which you had of me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

I think it be, sir. I deny it not.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

And you, sir, for this chain arrested me.

ANGELO.

I think I did, sir. I deny it not.

ADRIANA.

I sent you money, sir, to be your bail
By Dromio, but I think he brought it not.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS.

No, none by me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

This purse of ducats I receiv'd from you,
And Dromio my man did bring them me.
I see we still did meet each other's man,
And I was ta'en for him, and he for me,
And thereupon these errors are arose.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

These ducats pawn I for my father here.

DUKE.

It shall not need, thy father hath his life.

COURTESAN.

Sir, I must have that diamond from you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS.

There, take it, and much thanks for my good cheer.

ABBESS.

Renowned duke, vouchsafe to take the pains
To go with us into the abbey here,
And hear at large discoursed all our fortunes;
And all that are assembled in this place,
That by this sympathised one day's error
Have suffer'd wrong, go, keep us company,
And we shall make full satisfaction.
Thirty-three years have I but gone in travail
Of you, my sons, and till this present hour
My heavy burden ne'er delivered.
The duke, my husband, and my children both,
And you, the calendars of their nativity,
Go to a gossips' feast, and go with me.
After so long grief, such nativity.

DUKE.

With all my heart, I'll gossip at this feast.

[_Exeunt except the two Dromios and two Brothers._]

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Master, shall I fetch your stuff from shipboard?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS.

Dromio, what stuff of mine hast thou embark'd?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Your goods that lay at host, sir, in the Centaur.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

He speaks to me; I am your master, Dromio.

Come, go with us. We'll look to that anon.

Embrace thy brother there, rejoice with him.

[_Exeunt Antipholus of Syracuse and Antipholus of Ephesus._]

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

There is a fat friend at your master's house,

That kitchen'd me for you today at dinner.

She now shall be my sister, not my wife.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Methinks you are my glass, and not my brother.

I see by you I am a sweet-faced youth.

Will you walk in to see their gossiping?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Not I, sir, you are my elder.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

That's a question, how shall we try it?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

We'll draw cuts for the senior. Till then, lead thou first.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Nay, then, thus:

We came into the world like brother and brother,

And now let's go hand in hand, not one before another.

[_Exeunt._]

THE TRAGEDY OF CORIOLANUS

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Dramatis Personæ

CAIUS MARTIUS CORIOLANUS, a noble Roman
VOLUMNIA, his mother
VIRGILIA, his wife
YOUNG MARTIUS, their son
VALERIA, friend to Volumnia and Virgilia
A GENTLEWOMAN, Volumnia?s attendant

MENENIUS AGRIPPA, Friend to Coriolanus
COMINIUS, General against the Volscians
TITUS LARTIUS, General against the Volscians
SICINIUS VELUTUS, Tribune of the People

JUNIUS BRUTUS, Tribune of the People
A ROMAN HERALD

TULLUS AUFIDIUS, General of the Volscians
LIEUTENANT, to Aufidius
Conspirators with Aufidius
A CITIZEN of Antium
TWO VOLSCIAN GUARDS

Roman and Volscian Senators, Patricians, Aediles, Lictors, Soldiers,
Citizens, Messengers, Servants to Aufidius, and other Attendants

SCENE: Partly in Rome, and partly in the territories of the Volscians
and Antiates.

ACT I

SCENE I. Rome. A street

Enter a company of mutinous Citizens, with staves, clubs, and other
weapons.

FIRST CITIZEN.
Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

ALL.
Speak, speak!

FIRST CITIZEN.
You are all resolved rather to die than to famish?

ALL.
Resolved, resolved!

FIRST CITIZEN.
First, you know Caius Martius is chief enemy to the people.

ALL.
We know't, we know't!

FIRST CITIZEN.
Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict?

ALL.
No more talking on't; let it be done. Away, away!

SECOND CITIZEN.
One word, good citizens.

FIRST CITIZEN.

We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good. What authority surfeits on would relieve us. If they would yield us but the superfluity while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely. But they think we are too dear. The leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them. Let us revenge this with our pikes ere we become rakes; for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Would you proceed especially against Caius Martius?

FIRST CITIZEN.

Against him first. He's a very dog to the commonalty.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Consider you what services he has done for his country?

FIRST CITIZEN.

Very well, and could be content to give him good report for't, but that he pays himself with being proud.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Nay, but speak not maliciously.

FIRST CITIZEN.

I say unto you, what he hath done famously he did it to that end. Though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it to please his mother and to be partly proud, which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

SECOND CITIZEN.

What he cannot help in his nature you account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is covetous.

FIRST CITIZEN.

If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations. He hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. [_Shouts within_.] What shouts are these? The other side o' th' city is risen. Why stay we prating here? To th' Capitol!

ALL.

Come, come!

Enter Menenius Agrippa.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Soft, who comes here?

SECOND CITIZEN.

Worthy Menenius Agrippa, one that hath always loved the people.

FIRST CITIZEN.

He's one honest enough. Would all the rest were so!

MENENIUS.

What work's, my countrymen, in hand? Where go you
With bats and clubs? The matter? Speak, I pray you.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Our business is not unknown to th^e Senate. They have had inkling this
fortnight what we intend to do, which now we'll show 'em in deeds. They
say poor suitors have strong breaths; they shall know we have strong
arms too.

MENENIUS.

Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbours,
Will you undo yourselves?

FIRST CITIZEN.

We cannot, sir; we are undone already.

MENENIUS.

I tell you, friends, most charitable care
Have the patricians of you. For your wants,
Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well
Strike at the heaven with your staves as lift them
Against the Roman state, whose course will on
The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs
Of more strong link asunder than can ever
Appear in your impediment. For the dearth,
The gods, not the patricians, make it, and
Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack,
You are transported by calamity
Thither where more attends you, and you slander
The helms o' th^e state, who care for you like fathers,
When you curse them as enemies.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Care for us? True, indeed! They ne'er cared for us yet. Suffer us to
famish, and their storehouses crammed with grain; make edicts for usury
to support usurers; repeal daily any wholesome act established against
the rich, and provide more piercing statutes daily to chain up and
restrain the poor. If the wars eat us not up, they will; and there's
all the love they bear us.

MENENIUS.

Either you must confess yourselves wondrous malicious
Or be accused of folly. I shall tell you
A pretty tale. It may be you have heard it,
But since it serves my purpose, I will venture
To stale't a little more.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Well, I'll hear it, sir; yet you must not think to fob off our disgrace
with a tale. But, an't please you, deliver.

MENENIUS.

There was a time when all the body's members
Rebelle against the belly, thus accused it:
That only like a gulf it did remain
In the midst of the body, idle and unactive,
Still cupboarling the viand, never bearing
Like labour with the rest, where the other instruments
Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,
And, mutually participate, did minister
Unto the appetite and affection common
Of the whole body. The belly answered?

FIRST CITIZEN.

Well, sir, what answer made the belly?

MENENIUS.

Sir, I shall tell you. With a kind of smile,
Which never came from the lungs, but even thus?
For, look you, I may make the belly smile
As well as speak; it tauntingly replied
To the discontented members, the mutinous parts
That envied his receipt; even so most fitly
As you malign our senators for that
They are not such as you.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Your belly's answer? what?
The kingly crowned head, the vigilant eye,
The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier,
Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter,
With other muniments and petty helps
Is this our fabric, if that they?

MENENIUS.

What then?
Fore me, this fellow speaks. What then? What then?

FIRST CITIZEN.

Should by the cormorant belly be restrained,
Who is the sink of the body?

MENENIUS.

Well, what then?

FIRST CITIZEN.

The former agents, if they did complain,
What could the belly answer?

MENENIUS.

I will tell you,
If you'll bestow a small of what you have little?
Patience awhile, you'll hear the belly's answer.

FIRST CITIZEN.

You are long about it.

MENENIUS.

Note me this, good friend;
Your most grave belly was deliberate,
Not rash like his accusers, and thus answered:
?True is it, my incorporate friends,? quoth he,
?That I receive the general food at first
Which you do live upon; and fit it is,
Because I am the storehouse and the shop
Of the whole body. But, if you do remember,
I send it through the rivers of your blood
Even to the court, the heart, to th? seat o? th? brain;
And, through the cranks and offices of man,
The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
From me receive that natural competency
Whereby they live. And though that all at once,
You, my good friends??this says the belly, mark me?

FIRST CITIZEN.

Ay, sir, well, well.

MENENIUS.

?Though all at once cannot
See what I do deliver out to each,
Yet I can make my audit up, that all
From me do back receive the flour of all,
And leave me but the bran.? What say you to?t?

FIRST CITIZEN.

It was an answer. How apply you this?

MENENIUS.

The senators of Rome are this good belly,
And you the mutinous members. For examine
Their counsels and their cares, digest things rightly
Touching the weal o? th? common, you shall find
No public benefit which you receive
But it proceeds or comes from them to you
And no way from yourselves. What do you think,
You, the great toe of this assembly?

FIRST CITIZEN.

I the great toe? Why the great toe?

MENENIUS.

For that, being one o? th? lowest, basest, poorest,
Of this most wise rebellion, thou goest foremost.
Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,
Lead?st first to win some vantage.
But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs.
Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;
The one side must have bale.

Enter Caius Martius.

Hail, noble Martius.

MARTIUS.

Thanks.?What?s the matter, you dissentious rogues,
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,
Make yourselves scabs?

FIRST CITIZEN.

We have ever your good word.

MARTIUS.

He that will give good words to thee will flatter
Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,
That like nor peace nor war? The one affrights you;
The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
Where foxes, geese. You are no surer, no,
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is
To make him worthy whose offence subdues him,
And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness
Deserves your hate; and your affections are
A sick man?s appetite, who desires most that
Which would increase his evil. He that depends
Upon your favours swims with fins of lead,
And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye! Trust ye?
With every minute you do change a mind
And call him noble that was now your hate,
Him vile that was your garland. What?s the matter,
That in these several places of the city
You cry against the noble senate, who,
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
Would feed on one another??What?s their seeking?

MENENIUS.

For corn at their own rates, whereof they say
The city is well stored.

MARTIUS.

Hang ?em! They say?
They?ll sit by th? fire and presume to know
What?s done i? th? Capitol, who?s like to rise,
Who thrives and who declines; side factions and give out
Conjectural marriages, making parties strong
And feebling such as stand not in their liking
Below their cobbled shoes. They say there?s grain enough?
Would the nobility lay aside their ruth
And let me use my sword, I?d make a quarry
With thousands of these quartered slaves as high
As I could pick my lance.

MENENIUS.

Nay, these are almost thoroughly persuaded;

For though abundantly they lack discretion,
Yet are they passing cowardly. But I beseech you,
What says the other troop?

MARTIUS.

They are dissolved. Hang 'em!
They said they were an-hungry, sighed forth proverbs
That hunger broke stone walls, that dogs must eat,
That meat was made for mouths, that the gods sent not
Corn for the rich men only. With these shreds
They vented their complainings, which being answered
And a petition granted them? a strange one,
To break the heart of generosity
And make bold power look pale? they threw their caps
As they would hang them on the horns o' th' moon,
Shouting their emulation.

MENENIUS.

What is granted them?

MARTIUS.

Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,
Of their own choice. One's Junius Brutus,
Sicinius Velutus, and I know not. 'Sdeath!
The rabble should have first unroofed the city
Ere so prevailed with me. It will in time
Win upon power and throw forth greater themes
For insurrection's arguing.

MENENIUS.

This is strange.

MARTIUS.

Go get you home, you fragments.

Enter a Messenger hastily.

MESSENGER.

Where's Caius Martius?

MARTIUS.

Here. What's the matter?

MESSENGER.

The news is, sir, the Volscies are in arms.

MARTIUS.

I am glad on't. Then we shall ha' means to vent
Our musty superfluity.

Enter Sicinius Velutus, Junius Brutus, two Tribunes; Cominius, Titus
Lartius with other Senators.

See, our best elders.

FIRST SENATOR.

Martius, 'tis true that you have lately told us:
The Volsces are in arms.

MARTIUS.

They have a leader,
Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to't.
I sin in envying his nobility,
And, were I anything but what I am,
I would wish me only he.

COMINIUS.

You have fought together.

MARTIUS.

Were half to half the world by th' ears and he
Upon my party, I'd revolt, to make
Only my wars with him. He is a lion
That I am proud to hunt.

FIRST SENATOR.

Then, worthy Martius,
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.

COMINIUS.

It is your former promise.

MARTIUS.

Sir, it is,
And I am constant. Titus Lartius, thou
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.
What, art thou stiff? Stand'st out?

TITUS LARTIUS.

No, Caius Martius,
I'll lean upon one crutch and fight with th' other
Ere stay behind this business.

MENENIUS.

O, true bred!

FIRST SENATOR.

Your company to th' Capitol, where I know
Our greatest friends attend us.

TITUS LARTIUS.

Lead you on.
Follow Cominius. We must follow you;
Right worthy your priority.

COMINIUS.

Noble Martius.

FIRST SENATOR.

[_To the Citizens_.]

Hence to your homes, begone.

MARTIUS.

Nay, let them follow.

The Volsces have much corn; take these rats thither
To gnaw their garners. Worshipful mutineers,
Your valour puts well forth. Pray follow.

[_Exeunt. Sicinius and Brutus remain_.]

SICINIUS.

Was ever man so proud as is this Martius?

BRUTUS.

He has no equal.

SICINIUS.

When we were chosen tribunes for the people?

BRUTUS.

Marked you his lip and eyes?

SICINIUS.

Nay, but his taunts.

BRUTUS.

Being moved, he will not spare to gird the gods.

SICINIUS.

Bemock the modest moon.

BRUTUS.

The present wars devour him! He is grown
Too proud to be so valiant.

SICINIUS.

Such a nature,
Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow
Which he treads on at noon. But I do wonder
His insolence can brook to be commanded
Under Cominius.

BRUTUS.

Fame, at the which he aims,
In whom already he's well graced, cannot
Better be held nor more attained than by
A place below the first; for what miscarries
Shall be the General's fault, though he perform
To th' utmost of a man, and giddy censure
Will then cry out of Martius ?O, if he
Had borne the business!?

SICINIUS.

Besides, if things go well,
Opinion that so sticks on Martius shall
Of his demerits rob Cominius.

BRUTUS.

Come.
Half all Cominius' honours are to Martius,
Though Martius earned them not, and all his faults
To Martius shall be honours, though indeed
In aught he merit not.

SICINIUS.

Let's hence and hear
How the dispatch is made, and in what fashion,
More than in singularity, he goes
Upon this present action.

BRUTUS.

Let's along.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Corioles. The Senate House

Enter Tullus Aufidius with Senators of Corioles.

FIRST SENATOR.

So, your opinion is, Aufidius,
That they of Rome are entered in our counsels
And know how we proceed.

AUFIDIUS.

Is it not yours?
What ever have been thought on in this state
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome
Had circumvention? 'Tis not four days gone
Since I heard thence. These are the words? I think
I have the letter here. Yes, here it is.
[_Reads_] _They have pressed a power, but it is not known
Whether for east or west. The dearth is great.
The people mutinous; and, it is rumoured,
Cominius, Martius your old enemy,
Who is of Rome worse hated than of you,?
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,
These three lead on this preparation
Whither 'tis bent. Most likely 'tis for you.
Consider of it._

FIRST SENATOR.

Our army's in the field.
We never yet made doubt but Rome was ready
To answer us.

AUFIDIUS.

Nor did you think it folly
To keep your great pretences veiled till when
They needs must show themselves, which, in the hatching,
It seemed, appeared to Rome. By the discovery
We shall be shortened in our aim, which was
To take in many towns ere almost Rome
Should know we were afoot.

SECOND SENATOR.

Noble Aufidius,
Take your commission; hie you to your bands.
Let us alone to guard Corioles.
If they set down before?s, for the remove
Bring up your army. But I think you?ll find
They?ve not prepared for us.

AUFIDIUS.

O, doubt not that;
I speak from certainties. Nay, more,
Some parcels of their power are forth already,
And only hitherward. I leave your Honours.
If we and Caius Martius chance to meet,
?Tis sworn between us we shall ever strike
Till one can do no more.

ALL.

The gods assist you!

AUFIDIUS.

And keep your Honours safe!

FIRST SENATOR.

Farewell.

SECOND SENATOR.

Farewell.

ALL.

Farewell.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. Rome. An apartment in Martius? house

Enter Volumnia and Virgilia, mother and wife to Martius. They set them
down on two low stools and sew.

VOLUMNIA.

I pray you, daughter, sing, or express yourself in a more comfortable
sort. If my son were my husband, I should freelier rejoice in that
absence wherein he won honour than in the embracements of his bed where
he would show most love. When yet he was but tender-bodied and the only
son of my womb, when youth with comeliness plucked all gaze his way,

when for a day of kings? entreaties a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding, I, considering how honour would become such a person?that it was no better than picture-like to hang by th? wall, if renown made it not stir?was pleased to let him seek danger where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him, from whence he returned, his brows bound with oak. I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man.

VIRGILIA.

But had he died in the business, madam, how then?

VOLUMNIA.

Then his good report should have been my son; I therein would have found issue. Hear me profess sincerely: had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike and none less dear than thine and my good Martius, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

Enter a Gentlewoman.

GENTLEWOMAN.

Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

VIRGILIA.

Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.

VOLUMNIA.

Indeed you shall not.

Methinks I hear hither your husband?s drum,
See him pluck Aufidius down by th? hair;
As children from a bear, the Volsces shunning him.
Methinks I see him stamp thus and call thus:
?Come on, you cowards! You were got in fear,
Though you were born in Rome.? His bloody brow
With his mailed hand then wiping, forth he goes
Like to a harvestman that?s tasked to mow
Or all or lose his hire.

VIRGILIA.

His bloody brow? O Jupiter, no blood!

VOLUMNIA.

Away, you fool! It more becomes a man
Than gilt his trophy. The breasts of Hecuba,
When she did suckle Hector, looked not lovelier
Than Hector?s forehead when it spit forth blood
At Grecian sword, contemning.?Tell Valeria
We are fit to bid her welcome.

[_Exit Gentlewoman._]

VIRGILIA.

Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius!

VOLUMNIA.

He'll beat Aufidius? head below his knee
And tread upon his neck.

Enter Valeria with an Usher and a Gentlewoman.

VALERIA.

My ladies both, good day to you.

VOLUMNIA.

Sweet madam.

VIRGILIA.

I am glad to see your Ladyship.

VALERIA.

How do you both? You are manifest housekeepers. What are you sewing here? A fine spot, in good faith. How does your little son?

VIRGILIA.

I thank your Ladyship; well, good madam.

VOLUMNIA.

He had rather see the swords and hear a drum than look upon his schoolmaster.

VALERIA.

O? my word, the father?s son! I'll swear 'tis a very pretty boy. O? my troth, I looked upon him o? Wednesday half an hour together. H?as such a confirmed countenance. I saw him run after a gilded butterfly, and when he caught it, he let it go again, and after it again, and over and over he comes, and up again, caught it again. Or whether his fall enraged him or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth and tear it. O, I warrant how he mammocked it!

VOLUMNIA.

One on?s father?s moods.

VALERIA.

Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.

VIRGILIA.

A crack, madam.

VALERIA.

Come, lay aside your stitchery. I must have you play the idle huswife with me this afternoon.

VIRGILIA.

No, good madam, I will not out of doors.

VALERIA.

Not out of doors?

VOLUMNIA.

She shall, she shall.

VIRGILIA.

Indeed, no, by your patience. I'll not over the threshold till my lord return from the wars.

VALERIA.

Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably. Come, you must go visit the good lady that lies in.

VIRGILIA.

I will wish her speedy strength and visit her with my prayers, but I cannot go thither.

VOLUMNIA.

Why, I pray you?

VIRGILIA.

'Tis not to save labour, nor that I want love.

VALERIA.

You would be another Penelope. Yet they say all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come, I would your cambric were sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

VIRGILIA.

No, good madam, pardon me; indeed, I will not forth.

VALERIA.

In truth, I go with me, and I'll tell you excellent news of your husband.

VIRGILIA.

O, good madam, there can be none yet.

VALERIA.

Verily, I do not jest with you. There came news from him last night.

VIRGILIA.

Indeed, madam!

VALERIA.

In earnest, it's true. I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is: the Volsces have an army forth, against whom Cominius the General is gone with one part of our Roman power. Your lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioles. They nothing doubt prevailing, and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honour, and so, I pray, go with us.

VIRGILIA.

Give me excuse, good madam. I will obey you in everything hereafter.

VOLUMNIA.

Let her alone, lady. As she is now, she will but disease our better mirth.

VALERIA.

In troth, I think she would. ?Fare you well, then. ?Come, good sweet lady. ?Prithee, Virgilia, turn thy solemnness out o' door, and go along with us.

VIRGILIA.

No, at a word, madam. Indeed I must not. I wish you much mirth.

VALERIA.

Well then, farewell.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IV. Before Corioles

Enter Martius, Titus Lartius, with drum and colours, with Captains and Soldiers, as before the city of Corioles. To them a Messenger.

MARTIUS.

Yonder comes news. A wager they have met.

LARTIUS.

My horse to yours, no.

MARTIUS.

?Tis done.

LARTIUS.

Agreed.

MARTIUS.

[_To Messenger_] Say, has our general met the enemy?

MESSENGER.

They lie in view but have not spoke as yet.

LARTIUS.

So the good horse is mine.

MARTIUS.

I?ll buy him of you.

LARTIUS.

No, I?ll nor sell nor give him. Lend you him I will
For half a hundred years. ?Summon the town.

MARTIUS.

How far off lie these armies?

MESSENGER.

Within this mile and half.

MARTIUS.

Then shall we hear their ?larum, and they ours.

Now, Mars, I prithee, make us quick in work,

That we with smoking swords may march from hence

To help our fielded friends! Come, blow thy blast.

[_They sound a parley._]

Enter two Senators with others on the walls of Corioles.

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

FIRST SENATOR.

No, nor a man that fears you less than he:

That's lesser than a little.

[_Drum afar off_.]

Hark, our drums

Are bringing forth our youth. We'll break our walls

Rather than they shall pound us up. Our gates,

Which yet seem shut, we have but pinned with rushes.

They'll open of themselves.

[_Alarum far off_.]

Hark you, far off!

There is Aufidius. List what work he makes

Amongst your cloven army.

MARTIUS.

O, they are at it!

LARTIUS.

Their noise be our instruction. Ladders, ho!

Enter the Army of the Volsces as through the city gates.

MARTIUS.

They fear us not but issue forth their city.?

Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight

With hearts more proof than shields. Advance, brave Titus.

They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts,

Which makes me sweat with wrath. Come on, my fellows!

He that retires, I'll take him for a Volsce,

And he shall feel mine edge.

[_Alarums. The Romans are beat back to their trenches. They exit, with the Volsces following_.]

Enter Martius cursing, with Roman soldiers.

MARTIUS.

All the contagion of the south light on you,

You shames of Rome! You herd of Boils and plagues

Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorred
Farther than seen, and one infect another
Against the wind a mile! You souls of geese,
That bear the shapes of men, how have you run
From slaves that apes would beat! Pluto and hell!
All hurt behind. Backs red, and faces pale
With flight and agued fear! Mend, and charge home,
Or, by the fires of heaven, I'll leave the foe
And make my wars on you. Look to't. Come on!
If you'll stand fast we'll beat them to their wives,
As they us to our trenches. Follow's!

[_Another alarum. The Volsces re-enter and are driven back to the gates
of Corioles, which open to admit them._]

So, now the gates are ope. Now prove good seconds!
'Tis for the followers fortune widens them,
Not for the fliers. Mark me, and do the like.

[_Martius follows the fleeing Volsces through the gates, and is shut
in._]

FIRST SOLDIER.
Foolhardiness, not I.

SECOND SOLDIER.
Nor I.

FIRST SOLDIER.
See, they have shut him in.

[_Alarum continues._]

ALL.
To th' pot, I warrant him.

Enter Titus Lartius.

LARTIUS.
What is become of Martius?

ALL.
Slain, sir, doubtless.

FIRST SOLDIER.
Following the fliers at the very heels,
With them he enters, who upon the sudden
Clapped to their gates. He is himself alone,
To answer all the city.

LARTIUS.
O noble fellow,
Who sensibly outdares his senseless sword,
And when it bows, stand'st up! Thou art left, Martius.

A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,
Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier
Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible
Only in strokes, but with thy grim looks and
The thunderlike percussion of thy sounds
Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as if the world
Were feverous and did tremble.

Enter Martius, bleeding, assaulted by the enemy.

FIRST SOLDIER.

Look, sir.

LARTIUS.

O, 'tis Martius!

Let's fetch him off or make remain alike.

[_They fight, and all enter the city._]

SCENE V. Within Corioles. A street

Enter certain Romans, with spoils.

FIRST ROMAN.

This will I carry to Rome.

SECOND ROMAN.

And I this.

THIRD ROMAN.

A murrain on't! I took this for silver.

Enter Martius and Titus Lartius with a Trumpet.

MARTIUS.

See here these movers that do prize their hours
At a cracked drachma. Cushions, leaden spoons,
Irons of a doit, doublets that hangmen would
Bury with those that wore them, these base slaves,
Ere yet the fight be done, pack up. Down with them!

[_Exit the Romans with spoils._]

[_Alarum continues still afar off._]

And hark, what noise the General makes! To him!
There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,
Piercing our Romans. Then, valiant Titus, take
Convenient numbers to make good the city,
Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste
To help Cominius.

LARTIUS.

Worthy sir, thou bleed'st.

Thy exercise hath been too violent
For a second course of fight.

MARTIUS.

Sir, praise me not.
My work hath yet not warmed me. Fare you well.
The blood I drop is rather physical
Than dangerous to me. To Aufidius thus
I will appear and fight.

LARTIUS.

Now the fair goddess Fortune
Fall deep in love with thee, and her great charms
Misguide thy opposers? swords! Bold gentleman,
Prosperity be thy page!

MARTIUS.

Thy friend no less
Than those she placeth highest! So farewell.

LARTIUS.

Thou worthiest Martius!

[_Exit Martius._]

Go sound thy trumpet in the marketplace.
Call thither all the officers o' th' town,
Where they shall know our mind. Away!

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VI. Near the camp of Cominius

Enter Cominius as it were in retire, with Soldiers.

COMINIUS.

Breathe you, my friends. Well fought! We are come off
Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands
Nor cowardly in retire. Believe me, sirs,
We shall be charged again. Whiles we have struck,
By interims and conveying gusts we have heard
The charges of our friends. The Roman gods
Lead their successes as we wish our own,
That both our powers, with smiling fronts encount'ring,
May give you thankful sacrifice!

Enter a Messenger.

Thy news?

MESSENGER.

The citizens of Corioles have issued,
And given to Lartius and to Martius battle.
I saw our party to their trenches driven,

And then I came away.

COMINIUS.

Though thou speakest truth,
Methinks thou speak'st not well. How long is't since?

MESSENGER.

Above an hour, my lord.

COMINIUS.

'Tis not a mile; briefly we heard their drums.
How couldst thou in a mile confound an hour
And bring thy news so late?

MESSENGER.

Spies of the Volsces
Held me in chase, that I was forced to wheel
Three or four miles about; else had I, sir,
Half an hour since brought my report.

[_Exit Messenger._]

Enter Martius, bloody.

COMINIUS.

Who's yonder,
That does appear as he were flayed? O gods,
He has the stamp of Martius, and I have
Before-time seen him thus.

MARTIUS.

Come I too late?

COMINIUS.

The shepherd knows not thunder from a tabor
More than I know the sound of Martius' tongue
From every meaner man.

MARTIUS.

Come I too late?

COMINIUS.

Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,
But mantled in your own.

MARTIUS.

O, let me clip you
In arms as sound as when I wooed, in heart
As merry as when our nuptial day was done
And tapers burned to bedward!

COMINIUS.

Flower of warriors, how is't with Titus Lartius?

MARTIUS.

As with a man busied about decrees,
Condemning some to death and some to exile;
Ransoming him or pitying, threatening the other;
Holding Corioles in the name of Rome
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,
To let him slip at will.

COMINIUS.

Where is that slave
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches?
Where's he? Call him hither.

MARTIUS.

Let him alone.
He did inform the truth. But for our gentlemen,
The common file? a plague! Tribunes for them!?
The mouse ne'er shunned the cat as they did budge
From rascals worse than they.

COMINIUS.

But how prevailed you?

MARTIUS.

Will the time serve to tell? I do not think.
Where is the enemy? Are you lords o' th' field?
If not, why cease you till you are so?

COMINIUS.

Martius, we have at disadvantage fought,
And did retire to win our purpose.

MARTIUS.

How lies their battle? Know you on which side
They have placed their men of trust?

COMINIUS.

As I guess, Martius,
Their bands i' th' vaward are the Antiates,
Of their best trust; o'er them Aufidius,
Their very heart of hope.

MARTIUS.

I do beseech you,
By all the battles wherein we have fought,
By th' blood we have shed together, by th' vows we have made
To endure friends, that you directly set me
Against Aufidius and his Antiates,
And that you not delay the present, but,
Filling the air with swords advanced and darts,
We prove this very hour.

COMINIUS.

Though I could wish

You were conducted to a gentle bath
And balms applied to you, yet dare I never
Deny your asking. Take your choice of those
That best can aid your action.

MARTIUS.

Those are they
That most are willing. If any such be here?
As it were sin to doubt?that love this painting
Wherein you see me smeared; if any fear
Lesser his person than an ill report;
If any think brave death outweighs bad life,
And that his country?s dearer than himself;
Let him alone, or so many so minded,
Wave thus to express his disposition
And follow Martius.

[_He waves his sword._]

[_They all shout and wave their swords, take him up in their arms, and
cast up their caps._]

O, me alone! Make you a sword of me?
If these shows be not outward, which of you
But is four Volsces? None of you but is
Able to bear against the great Aufidius
A shield as hard as his. A certain number,
Though thanks to all, must I select from all.
The rest shall bear the business in some other fight,
As cause will be obeyed. Please you to march,
And I shall quickly draw out my command,
Which men are best inclined.

COMINIUS.

March on, my fellows.
Make good this ostentation, and you shall
Divide in all with us.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VII. The gates of Corioles

Titus Lartius, having set a guard upon Corioles, going with drum and
trumpet toward Cominius and Caius Martius, enters with a Lieutenant,
other Soldiers, and a Scout.

LARTIUS.

So, let the ports be guarded. Keep your duties
As I have set them down. If I do send, dispatch
Those centuries to our aid; the rest will serve
For a short holding. If we lose the field,
We cannot keep the town.

LIEUTENANT.

Fear not our care, sir.

LARTIUS.

Hence, and shut your gates upon us.

Our guider, come. To th' Roman camp conduct us.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VIII. A field of battle between the Roman and the Volscian camps

Alarum, as in battle. Enter Martius and Aufidius at several doors.

MARTIUS.

I'll fight with none but thee, for I do hate thee

Worse than a promise-breaker.

AUFIDIUS.

We hate alike.

Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor

More than thy fame and envy. Fix thy foot.

MARTIUS.

Let the first budger die the other's slave,

And the gods doom him after!

AUFIDIUS.

If I fly, Martius,

Hollo me like a hare.

MARTIUS.

Within these three hours, Tullus,

Alone I fought in your Corioles' walls,

And made what work I pleased. 'Tis not my blood

Wherein thou seest me masked. For thy revenge

Wrench up thy power to th' highest.

AUFIDIUS.

Wert thou the Hector

That was the whip of your bragged progeny,

Thou shouldst not scape me here.

[_Here they fight, and certain Volsces come to the aid of Aufidius._]

Officious and not valiant, you have shamed me

In your condemned seconds.

[_Martius fights till they be driven in breathless. Aufidius and

Martius exit, separately._]

SCENE IX. The Roman camp

Alarum. A retreat is sounded. Flourish. Enter, at one door, Cominius with the Romans; at another door, Martius, with his arm in a scarf.

COMINIUS.

If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,
Thou'rt not believe thy deeds. But I'll report it
Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles;
Where great patricians shall attend and shrug,
I'll th' end admire; where ladies shall be frightened
And, gladly quaked, hear more; where the dull tribunes,
That with the fusty plebeians hate thine honours,
Shall say against their hearts 'We thank the gods
Our Rome hath such a soldier.'
Yet can'st thou to a morsel of this feast,
Having fully dined before.

Enter Titus Lartius with his power, from the pursuit.

LARTIUS.

O general,
Here is the steed, we the caparison.
Hadst thou beheld?

MARTIUS.

Pray now, no more. My mother,
Who has a charter to extol her blood,
When she does praise me grieves me. I have done
As you have done—that's what I can;
Induced as you have been—that's for my country.
He that has but effected his good will
Hath overta'en mine act.

COMINIUS.

You shall not be
The grave of your deserving. Rome must know
The value of her own. 'Twere a concealment
Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,
To hide your doings and to silence that
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouched,
Would seem but modest. Therefore, I beseech you?
In sign of what you are, not to reward
What you have done—before our army hear me.

MARTIUS.

I have some wounds upon me, and they smart
To hear themselves remembered.

COMINIUS.

Should they not,
Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude
And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses?
Whereof we have ta'en good and good store?of all
The treasure in this field achieved and city,
We render you the tenth, to be ta'en forth
Before the common distribution
At your only choice.

MARTIUS.

I thank you, general,
But cannot make my heart consent to take
A bribe to pay my sword. I do refuse it;
And stand upon my common part with those
That have beheld the doing.

[_A long flourish. They all cry ?Martius, Martius!? and cast up their caps and lances. Cominius and Lartius stand bare._]

May these same instruments which, you profane,
Never sound more! When drums and trumpets shall
I? th? field prove flatterers, let courts and cities be
Made all of false-faced soothing! When steel grows soft
Soft as the parasite?s silk, let him be made
An ovator for the wars! No more, I say.
For that I have not washed my nose that bled,
Or foiled some debile wretch?which, without note,
Here?s many else have done?you shout me forth
In acclamations hyperbolical,
As if I loved my little should be dieted
In praises sauced with lies.

COMINIUS.

Too modest are you,
More cruel to your good report than grateful
To us that give you truly. By your patience,
If ?gainst yourself you be incensed, we?ll put you,
Like one that means his proper harm, in manacles,
Then reason safely with you. Therefore be it known,
As to us to all the world, that Caius Martius
Wears this war?s garland, in token of the which
My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him,
With all his trim belonging. And from this time,
For what he did before Corioles, call him,
With all th? applause and clamour of the host,
Caius Martius Coriolanus! Bear
Th? addition nobly ever!

[_Flourish. Trumpets sound, and drums._]

ALL.

Caius Martius Coriolanus!

CORIOLANUS.

I will go wash;
And when my face is fair, you shall perceive
Whether I blush or no. Howbeit, I thank you.
I mean to stride your steed and at all times
To undercrest your good addition
To th? fairness of my power.

COMINIUS.

So, to our tent,

Where, ere we do repose us, we will write
To Rome of our success. You, Titus Lartius,
Must to Corioles back. Send us to Rome
The best, with whom we may articulate
For their own good and ours.

LARTIUS.

I shall, my lord.

CORIOLANUS.

The gods begin to mock me. I, that now
Refused most princely gifts, am bound to beg
Of my lord general.

COMINIUS.

Take't, 'tis yours. What is't?

CORIOLANUS.

I sometime lay here in Corioles
At a poor man's house; he used me kindly.
He cried to me; I saw him prisoner;
But then Aufidius was within my view,
And wrath o'erwhelmed my pity. I request you
To give my poor host freedom.

COMINIUS.

O, well begged!

Were he the butcher of my son, he should
Be free as is the wind. Deliver him, Titus.

LARTIUS.

Martius, his name?

CORIOLANUS.

By Jupiter, forgot!
I am weary; yea, my memory is tired.
Have we no wine here?

COMINIUS.

Go we to our tent.
The blood upon your visage dries; 'tis time
It should be looked to. Come.

[_A flourish of cornets. Exeunt._]

SCENE X. The camp of the Volsces

A flourish. Cornets. Enter Tullus Aufidius, bloody, with two or three
soldiers.

AUFIDIUS.

The town is taken.

SOLDIER.

?Twill be delivered back on good condition.

AUFIDIUS.

Condition?

I would I were a Roman, for I cannot,
Being a Volsce, be that I am. Condition?
What good condition can a treaty find
I? th? part that is at mercy? Five times, Martius,
I have fought with thee; so often hast thou beat me
And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter
As often as we eat. By th? elements,
If e?er again I meet him beard to beard,
He?s mine or I am his. Mine emulation
Hath not that honour in?t it had; for where
I thought to crush him in an equal force,
True sword to sword, I?ll potch at him some way,
Or wrath or craft may get him.

SOLDIER.

He?s the devil.

AUFIDIUS.

Bolder, though not so subtle. My valour?s poisoned
With only suff?ring stain by him; for him
Shall fly out of itself. Nor sleep nor sanctuary,
Being naked, sick, nor fane nor Capitol,
The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,
Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up
Their rotten privilege and custom ?gainst
My hate to Martius. Where I find him, were it
At home, upon my brother?s guard, even there,
Against the hospitable canon, would I
Wash my fierce hand in?s heart. Go you to th? city;
Learn how ?tis held and what they are that must
Be hostages for Rome.

SOLDIER.

Will not you go?

AUFIDIUS.

I am attended at the cypress grove. I pray you?
?Tis south the city mills,?bring me word thither
How the world goes, that to the pace of it
I may spur on my journey.

SOLDIER.

I shall, sir.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT II

SCENE I. Rome. A public place

Enter Menenius with the two Tribunes of the people, Sicinius and Brutus.

MENENIUS.

The augurer tells me we shall have news tonight.

BRUTUS.

Good or bad?

MENENIUS.

Not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Martius.

SICINIUS.

Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

MENENIUS.

Pray you, who does the wolf love?

SICINIUS.

The lamb.

MENENIUS.

Ay, to devour him, as the hungry plebeians would the noble Martius.

BRUTUS.

He's a lamb indeed, that baas like a bear.

MENENIUS.

He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb. You two are old men; tell me one thing that I shall ask you.

BOTH TRIBUNES.

Well, sir.

MENENIUS.

In what enormity is Martius poor in, that you two have not in abundance?

BRUTUS.

He's poor in no one fault, but stored with all.

SICINIUS.

Especially in pride.

BRUTUS.

And topping all others in boasting.

MENENIUS.

This is strange now. Do you two know how you are censured here in the city, I mean of us o' th' right-hand file, do you?

BOTH TRIBUNES.

Why, how are we censured?

MENENIUS.

Because you talk of pride now, will you not be angry?

BOTH TRIBUNES.

Well, well, sir, well?

MENENIUS.

Why, 'tis no great matter; for a very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of patience. Give your dispositions the reins, and be angry at your pleasures, at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Martius for being proud.

BRUTUS.

We do it not alone, sir.

MENENIUS.

I know you can do very little alone, for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single. Your abilities are too infantlike for doing much alone. You talk of pride. O that you could turn your eyes toward the napes of your necks and make but an interior survey of your good selves! O, that you could!

BOTH TRIBUNES.

What then, sir?

MENENIUS.

Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates, alias fools, as any in Rome.

SICINIUS.

Menenius, you are known well enough, too.

MENENIUS.

I am known to be a humorous patrician and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a drop of allaying Tiber in't; said to be something imperfect in favouring the first complaint, hasty and tinder-like upon too trivial motion; one that converses more with the buttock of the night than with the forehead of the morning. What I think I utter, and spend my malice in my breath. Meeting two such wealsmen as you are? I cannot call you Lycurguses? if the drink you give me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I cannot say your Worships have delivered the matter well when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables. And though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly that tell you have good faces. If you see this in the map of my microcosm, follows it that I am known well enough too? What harm can your bisson conspectuities glean out of this character, if I be known well enough, too?

BRUTUS.

Come, sir, come; we know you well enough.

MENENIUS.

You know neither me, yourselves, nor anything. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs. You wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a faucet-seller, and then rejoin the controversy of threepence to a second day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinched with the colic, you make faces like mummers, set up the bloody flag against all patience, and, in roaring for a chamber pot, dismiss the controversy bleeding, the more entangled by your hearing. All the peace you make in their cause is calling both the parties knaves. You are a pair of strange ones.

BRUTUS.

Come, come. You are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary bencher in the Capitol.

MENENIUS.

Our very priests must become mockers if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards, and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion or to be entombed in an ass's packsaddle. Yet you must be saying Martius is proud, who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors since Deucalion, though peradventure some of the best of 'em were hereditary hangmen. Good even to your Worships. More of your conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians. I will be bold to take my leave of you.

[_He begins to exit. Brutus and Sicinius stand aside._]

Enter Volumnia, Virgilia and Valeria

How now, my as fair as noble ladies? and the moon, were she earthly, no nobler? whither do you follow your eyes so fast?

VOLUMNIA.

Honourable Menenius, my boy Martius approaches. For the love of Juno, let's go!

MENENIUS.

Ha? Martius coming home?

VOLUMNIA.

Ay, worthy Menenius, and with most prosperous approbation.

MENENIUS.

Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee! Hoo! Martius coming home?

VALERIA, VIRGILIA.

Nay, 'tis true.

VOLUMNIA.

Look, here's a letter from him. The state hath another, his wife another, and I think there's one at home for you.

MENENIUS.

I will make my very house reel tonight. A letter for me?

VIRGILIA.

Yes, certain, there's a letter for you; I saw it.

MENENIUS.

A letter for me? It gives me an estate of seven years' health, in which time I will make a lip at the physician. The most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiric and, to this preservative, of no better report than a horse drench. Is he not wounded? He was wont to come home wounded.

VIRGILIA.

O, no, no, no!

VOLUMNIA.

O, he is wounded, I thank the gods for't.

MENENIUS.

So do I too, if it be not too much. Brings he victory in his pocket, the wounds become him.

VOLUMNIA.

On's brows, Menenius. He comes the third time home with the oaken garland.

MENENIUS.

Has he disciplined Aufidius soundly?

VOLUMNIA.

Titus Lartius writes they fought together, but Aufidius got off.

MENENIUS.

And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant him that. An he had stayed by him, I would not have been so 'fidiused for all the chests in Corioles and the gold that's in them. Is the Senate possessed of this?

VOLUMNIA.

Good ladies, let's go. Yes, yes, yes. The Senate has letters from the General, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war. He hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly.

VALERIA.

In troth, there's wondrous things spoke of him.

MENENIUS.

Wondrous? Ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

VIRGILIA.

The gods grant them true.

VOLUMNIA.

True? Pow, waw!

MENENIUS.

True? I'll be sworn they are true. Where is he wounded? [_To the Tribunes_.] God save your good Worships! Martius is coming home; he has more cause to be proud. Where is he wounded?

VOLUMNIA.

I? th? shoulder and i? th? left arm. There will be large cicatrices to show the people when he shall stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin seven hurts i? th? body.

MENENIUS.

One i? th? neck and two i? th? thigh?there?s nine that I know.

VOLUMNIA.

He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him.

MENENIUS.

Now it?s twenty-seven. Every gash was an enemy?s grave.

[_A shout and flourish_.]

Hark, the trumpets!

VOLUMNIA.

These are the ushers of Martius: before him he carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears.

Death, that dark spirit, in?s nery arm doth lie,
Which, being advanced, declines, and then men die.

[_A sennet_.]

Enter Cominius the General and Titus Lartius, between them Coriolanus crowned with an oaken garland, with Captains and Soldiers and a Herald. Trumpets sound.

HERALD.

Know, Rome, that all alone Martius did fight
Within Corioles? gates, where he hath won,
With fame, a name to Caius Martius; these
In honour follows ?Coriolanus.?
Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus.

[_Sound flourish_.]

ALL.

Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus!

CORIOLANUS.

No more of this, it does offend my heart.

Pray now, no more.

COMINIUS.

Look, sir, your mother.

CORIOLANUS.

O,

You have, I know, petitioned all the gods
For my prosperity.

[_Kneels._]

VOLUMNIA.

Nay, my good soldier, up.

[_He stands._]

My gentle Martius, worthy Caius, and
By deed-achieving honour newly named?
What is it? Coriolanus must I call thee?
But, O, thy wife?

CORIOLANUS.

My gracious silence, hail.

Wouldst thou have laughed had I come coffined home,
That weep'st to see me triumph? Ah, my dear,
Such eyes the widows in Corioles wear
And mothers that lack sons.

MENENIUS.

Now the gods crown thee!

CORIOLANUS.

And live you yet? [_To Valeria_] O my sweet lady, pardon.

VOLUMNIA.

I know not where to turn. O, welcome home!
And welcome, general. And you're welcome all.

MENENIUS.

A hundred thousand welcomes! I could weep,
And I could laugh; I am light and heavy. Welcome.
A curse begin at very root on's heart
That is not glad to see thee! You are three
That Rome should dote on; yet, by the faith of men,
We have some old crab trees here at home that will not
Be grafted to your relish. Yet welcome, warriors!
We call a nettle but a nettle, and
The faults of fools but folly.

COMINIUS.

Ever right.

CORIOLANUS.

Menenius ever, ever.

HERALD.

Give way there, and go on!

CORIOLANUS.

[_To Volumnia and Virgilia_.] Your hand, and yours.
Ere in our own house I do shade my head,
The good patricians must be visited,
From whom I have received not only greetings,
But with them change of honours.

VOLUMNIA.

I have lived
To see inherited my very wishes
And the buildings of my fancy. Only
There's one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

CORIOLANUS.

Know, good mother,
I had rather be their servant in my way
Than sway with them in theirs.

COMINIUS.

On, to the Capitol.

[_Flourish of cornets. Exeunt in state, as before._]

Brutus and Sicinius come forward.

BRUTUS.

All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights
Are spectacl'd to see him. Your prattling nurse
Into a rapture lets her baby cry
While she chats him. The kitchen malkin pins
Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,
Clamb'ring the walls to eye him. Stalls, bulks, windows
Are smothered up, leads filled, and ridges horsed
With variable complexions, all agreeing
In earnestness to see him. Seld-shown flamens
Do press among the popular throngs and puff
To win a vulgar station. Our veiled dames
Commit the war of white and damask in
Their nicely-gauded cheeks to th' wanton spoil
Of Phoebus' burning kisses. Such a pother,
As if that whatsoever god who leads him
Were slyly crept into his human powers
And gave him graceful posture.

SICINIUS.

On the sudden
I warrant him consul.

BRUTUS.

Then our office may,
During his power, go sleep.

SICINIUS.

He cannot temporarily transport his honours
From where he should begin and end, but will
Lose those he hath won.

BRUTUS.

In that there's comfort.

SICINIUS.

Doubt not the commoners, for whom we stand,
But they, upon their ancient malice will forget
With the least cause these his new honours which
That he will give them make as little question
As he is proud to do't.

BRUTUS.

I heard him swear,
Were he to stand for consul, never would he
Appear in the marketplace nor on him put
The napless vesture of humility,
Nor showing, as the manner is, his wounds
To the people, beg their stinking breaths.

SICINIUS.

'Tis right.

BRUTUS.

It was his word. O, he would miss it rather
Than carry it but by the suit of the gentry to him
And the desire of the nobles.

SICINIUS.

I wish no better
Than have him hold that purpose and to put it
In execution.

BRUTUS.

'Tis most like he will.

SICINIUS.

It shall be to him then, as our good wills,
A sure destruction.

BRUTUS.

So it must fall out
To him, or our authorities for an end.
We must suggest the people in what hatred
He still hath held them; that to's power he would
Have made them mules, silenced their pleaders, and
Disproportioned their freedoms; holding them

In human action and capacity
Of no more soul nor fitness for the world
Than camels in their war, who have their provand
Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows
For sinking under them.

SICINIUS.

This, as you say, suggested
At some time when his soaring insolence
Shall touch the people?which time shall not want
If it be put upon?t, and that?s as easy
As to set dogs on sheep?will be his fire
To kindle their dry stubble, and their blaze
Shall darken him for ever.

Enter a Messenger.

BRUTUS.

What?s the matter?

MESSENGER.

You are sent for to the Capitol. ?Tis thought
That Martius shall be consul. I have seen
The dumb men throng to see him, and the blind
to hear him speak; matrons flung gloves,
Ladies and maids their scarves and handkerchiefs,
Upon him as he passed; the nobles bended
As to Jove?s statue, and the Commons made
A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts.
I never saw the like.

BRUTUS.

Let?s to the Capitol;
And carry with us ears and eyes for th? time,
But hearts for the event.

SICINIUS.

Have with you.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Rome. The Capitol

Enter two Officers, to lay cushions, as it were in the Capitol.

FIRST OFFICER.

Come, come. They are almost here. How many stand for consulships?

SECOND OFFICER.

Three, they say; but ?tis thought of everyone Coriolanus will carry it.

FIRST OFFICER.

That?s a brave fellow, but he?s vengeance proud and loves not the
common people.

SECOND OFFICER.

’Faith, there have been many great men that have flattered the people who ne’er loved them; and there be many that they have loved they know not wherefore; so that, if they love they know not why, they hate upon no better a ground. Therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care whether they love or hate him manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition and, out of his noble carelessness, lets them plainly see’t.

FIRST OFFICER.

If he did not care whether he had their love or no, he waved indifferently ’twixt doing them neither good nor harm; but he seeks their hate with greater devotion than they can render it him and leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love.

SECOND OFFICER.

He hath deserved worthily of his country, and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those who, having been supple and courteous to the people, bonnetted, without any further deed to have them at all into their estimation and report; but he hath so planted his honours in their eyes and his actions in their hearts that for their tongues to be silent and not confess so much were a kind of ingrateful injury. To report otherwise were a malice that, giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it.

FIRST OFFICER.

No more of him; he’s a worthy man. Make way. They are coming.

A sennet. Enter the Patricians and the Tribunes of the people, Lictors before them; Coriolanus, Menenius, Cominius the consul. The Patricians sit. Sicinius and Brutus take their places by themselves. Coriolanus stands.

MENENIUS.

Having determined of the Volsces and
To send for Titus Lartius, it remains,
As the main point of this our after-meeting,
To gratify his noble service that
Hath thus stood for his country. Therefore please you,
Most reverend and grave elders, to desire
The present consul and last general
In our well-found successes to report
A little of that worthy work performed
By Martius Caius Coriolanus, whom
We met here both to thank and to remember
With honours like himself.

[_Coriolanus sits._]

FIRST SENATOR.

Speak, good Cominius.

Leave nothing out for length, and make us think
Rather our state's defective for requital,
Than we to stretch it out. Masters o' th' people,
We do request your kindest ears and, after,
Your loving motion toward the common body
To yield what passes here.

SICINIUS.

We are convented
Upon a pleasing treaty and have hearts
Inclinable to honour and advance
The theme of our assembly.

BRUTUS.

Which the rather
We shall be blest to do if he remember
A kinder value of the people than
He hath hereto prized them at.

MENENIUS.

That's off, that's off!
I would you rather had been silent. Please you
To hear Cominius speak?

BRUTUS.

Most willingly.
But yet my caution was more pertinent
Than the rebuke you give it.

MENENIUS.

He loves your people,
But tie him not to be their bedfellow.
Worthy Cominius, speak.

[_Coriolanus rises, and offers to go away._]

Nay, keep your place.

FIRST SENATOR.

Sit, Coriolanus. Never shame to hear
What you have nobly done.

CORIOLANUS.

Your Honours, pardon.
I had rather have my wounds to heal again
Than hear say how I got them.

BRUTUS.

Sir, I hope
My words disbenched you not?

CORIOLANUS.

No, sir. Yet oft,
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words.

You soothed not, therefore hurt not; but your people,
I love them as they weigh.

MENENIUS.

Pray now, sit down.

CORIOLANUS.

I had rather have one scratch my head i? th? sun
When the alarum were struck than idly sit
To hear my nothings monstered.

[_Exit._]

MENENIUS.

Masters of the people,
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter?
That?s thousand to one good one?when you now see
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour
Than one on?s ears to hear it??Proceed, Cominius.

COMINIUS.

I shall lack voice. The deeds of Coriolanus
Should not be uttered feebly. It is held
That valour is the chiefest virtue and
Most dignifies the haver; if it be,
The man I speak of cannot in the world
Be singly counterpoised. At sixteen years,
When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought
Beyond the mark of others. Our then dictator,
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight
When with his Amazonian chin he drove
The bristled lips before him. He bestrid
An o?erpressed Roman and i? th? Consul?s view
Slew three opposers. Tarquin?s self he met
And struck him on his knee. In that day?s feats,
When he might act the woman in the scene,
He proved best man i? th? field and for his meed
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil age
Man-entered thus, he waxed like a sea,
And in the brunt of seventeen battles since
He lurched all swords of the garland. For this last,
Before and in Corioles, let me say,
I cannot speak him home. He stopped the flyers
And by his rare example made the coward
Turn terror into sport. As weeds before
A vessel under sail, so men obeyed
And fell below his stem. His sword, Death?s stamp,
Where it did mark, it took; from face to foot
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
Was timed with dying cries. Alone he entered
The mortal gate o? th? city, which he painted
With shunless destiny; aidless came off
And with a sudden reinforcement struck
Corioles like a planet. Now all?s his,

When by and by the din of war gan pierce
His ready sense; then straight his doubled spirit
Requickened what in flesh was fatigate,
And to the battle came he, where he did
Run reeking o'er the lives of men as if
?Twere a perpetual spoil; and till we called
Both field and city ours, he never stood
To ease his breast with panting.

MENENIUS.
Worthy man!

FIRST SENATOR.
He cannot but with measure fit the honours
Which we devise him.

COMINIUS.
Our spoils he kicked at;
And looked upon things precious as they were
The common muck of the world. He covets less
Than misery itself would give, rewards
His deeds with doing them, and is content
To spend the time to end it.

MENENIUS.
He?s right noble.
Let him be called for.

FIRST SENATOR.
Call Coriolanus.

OFFICER.
He doth appear.

Enter Coriolanus.

MENENIUS.
The Senate, Coriolanus, are well pleased
To make thee consul.

CORIOLANUS.
I do owe them still
My life and services.

MENENIUS.
It then remains
That you do speak to the people.

CORIOLANUS.
I do beseech you
Let me o?erleap that custom, for I cannot
Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them
For my wounds? sake to give their suffrage. Please you
That I may pass this doing.

SICINIUS.

Sir, the people
Must have their voices; neither will they bate
One jot of ceremony.

MENENIUS.

Put them not to't.
Pray you, go fit you to the custom, and
Take to you, as your predecessors have,
Your honour with your form.

CORIOLANUS.

It is a part
That I shall blush in acting, and might well
Be taken from the people.

BRUTUS.

Mark you that?

CORIOLANUS.

To brag unto them, 'thus I did, and thus!
Show them th' unaching scars which I should hide,
As if I had received them for the hire
Of their breath only!

MENENIUS.

Do not stand upon't.
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose to them, and to our noble consul
Wish we all joy and honour.

SENATORS.

To Coriolanus come all joy and honour!

[_Flourish cornets. Exeunt all but Sicinius and Brutus._]

BRUTUS.

You see how he intends to use the people.

SICINIUS.

May they perceive's intent! He will require them
As if he did contemn what he requested
Should be in them to give.

BRUTUS.

Come, we'll inform them
Of our proceedings here. On th' marketplace
I know they do attend us.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. Rome. The Forum

Enter seven or eight Citizens.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Once, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

SECOND CITIZEN.

We may, sir, if we will.

THIRD CITIZEN.

We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do; for, if he show us his wounds and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them. So, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous, and for the multitude to be ingrateful were to make a monster of the multitude, of the which we being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

FIRST CITIZEN.

And to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

THIRD CITIZEN.

We have been called so of many; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some auburn, some bald, but that our wits are so diversely coloured; and truly I think if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south, and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' th' compass.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Think you so? Which way do you judge my wit would fly?

THIRD CITIZEN.

Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another man's will; 'tis strongly wedged up in a blockhead. But if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Why that way?

THIRD CITIZEN.

To lose itself in a fog, where being three parts melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return for conscience's sake, to help to get thee a wife.

SECOND CITIZEN.

You are never without your tricks. You may, you may.

THIRD CITIZEN.

Are you all resolved to give your voices? But that's no matter; the greater part carries it. I say, if he would incline to the people, there was never a worthier man.

Enter Coriolanus in a gown of humility, with Menenius.

Here he comes, and in the gown of humility. Mark his behaviour. We are not to stay all together, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He's to make his requests by particulars, wherein everyone of us has a single honour in giving him our own voices with our own tongues. Therefore follow me, and I'll direct you how you shall go by him.

ALL.
Content, content.

[_Exeunt._]

MENENIUS.
O sir, you are not right. Have you not known
The worthiest men have done't?

CORIOLANUS.
What must I say?
?I pray, sir??plague upon?t! I cannot bring
My tongue to such a pace. ?Look, sir, my wounds!
I got them in my country?s service when
Some certain of your brethren roared and ran
From th? noise of our own drums.?

MENENIUS.
O me, the gods!
You must not speak of that. You must desire them
To think upon you.

CORIOLANUS.
Think upon me! Hang ?em!
I would they would forget me, like the virtues
Which our divines lose by ?em.

MENENIUS.
You?ll mar all.
I?ll leave you. Pray you speak to ?em, I pray you,
In wholesome manner.

[_Exit Menenius._]

CORIOLANUS.
Bid them wash their faces
And keep their teeth clean.

Enter three of the Citizens.

So, here comes a brace.
You know the cause, sirs, of my standing here.

THIRD CITIZEN.
We do, sir. Tell us what hath brought you to?t.

CORIO LANUS.

Mine own desert.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Your own desert?

CORIO LANUS.

Ay, but not mine own desire.

THIRD CITIZEN.

How, not your own desire?

CORIO LANUS.

No, sir, 'twas never my desire yet to trouble the poor with begging.

THIRD CITIZEN.

You must think if we give you anything, we hope to gain by you.

CORIO LANUS.

Well then, I pray, your price o' th' consulship?

FIRST CITIZEN.

The price is to ask it kindly.

CORIO LANUS.

Kindly, sir, I pray, let me ha't. I have wounds to show you, which shall be yours in private. Your good voice, sir. What say you?

SECOND CITIZEN.

You shall ha' it, worthy sir.

CORIO LANUS.

A match, sir. There's in all two worthy voices begged. I have your alms. Adieu.

THIRD CITIZEN.

But this is something odd.

SECOND CITIZEN.

An 'twere to give again?but 'tis no matter.

[_Exeunt two citizens._]

Enter two other Citizens.

CORIO LANUS.

Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of your voices that I may be consul, I have here the customary gown.

FOURTH CITIZEN.

You have deserved nobly of your country, and you have not deserved nobly.

CORIO LANUS.

Your enigma?

FOURTH CITIZEN.

You have been a scourge to her enemies; you have been a rod to her friends. You have not indeed loved the common people.

CORIOLANUS.

You should account me the more virtuous that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them; 'tis a condition they account gentle. And since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod and be off to them most counterfeitedly. That is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man and give it bountiful to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you, I may be consul.

FIFTH CITIZEN.

We hope to find you our friend, and therefore give you our voices heartily.

FOURTH CITIZEN.

You have received many wounds for your country.

CORIOLANUS.

I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices and so trouble you no farther.

BOTH CITIZENS.

The gods give you joy, sir, heartily.

[_Exeunt citizens._]

CORIOLANUS.

Most sweet voices!
Better it is to die, better to starve,
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.
Why in this wolvish toge should I stand here
To beg of Hob and Dick that does appear
Their needless vouches? Custom calls me to't.
What custom wills, in all things should we do't?
The dust on antique time would lie unswept
And mountainous error be too highly heaped
For truth to o'erpeer. Rather than fool it so,
Let the high office and the honour go
To one that would do thus. I am half through;
The one part suffered, the other will I do.

Enter three Citizens more.

Here come more voices.

Your voices! For your voices I have fought;
Watched for your voices; for your voices bear
Of wounds two dozen odd. Battles thrice six

I have seen and heard of; for your voices have
Done many things, some less, some more. Your voices!
Indeed, I would be consul.

SIXTH CITIZEN.

He has done nobly, and cannot go without any honest man's voice.

SEVENTH CITIZEN.

Therefore let him be consul. The gods give him joy, and make him good
friend to the people!

ALL THREE CITIZENS.

Amen, amen. God save thee, noble consul.

[_Exeunt citizens._]

CORIOLANUS.

Worthy voices!

Enter Menenius with Brutus and Sicinius.

MENENIUS.

You have stood your limitation, and the Tribunes
Endue you with the people's voice. Remains
That in th' official marks invested, you
Anon do meet the Senate.

CORIOLANUS.

Is this done?

SICINIUS.

The custom of request you have discharged.
The people do admit you, and are summoned
To meet anon upon your approbation.

CORIOLANUS.

Where? At the Senate House?

SICINIUS.

There, Coriolanus.

CORIOLANUS.

May I change these garments?

SICINIUS.

You may, sir.

CORIOLANUS.

That I'll straight do and, knowing myself again,
Repair to th' Senate House.

MENENIUS.

I'll keep you company. Will you along?

BRUTUS.

We stay here for the people.

SICINIUS.

Fare you well.

[_Exeunt Coriolanus and Menenius._]

He has it now; and by his looks, methinks,
?Tis warm at his heart.

BRUTUS.

With a proud heart he wore
His humble weeds. Will you dismiss the people?

Enter the Pebleians.

SICINIUS.

How now, my masters, have you chose this man?

FIRST CITIZEN.

He has our voices, sir.

BRUTUS.

We pray the gods he may deserve your loves.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Amen, sir. To my poor unworthy notice,
He mocked us when he begged our voices.

THIRD CITIZEN.

Certainly, he flouted us downright.

FIRST CITIZEN.

No, ?tis his kind of speech. He did not mock us.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says
He used us scornfully. He should have showed us
His marks of merit, wounds received for?s country.

SICINIUS.

Why, so he did, I am sure.

ALL.

No, no. No man saw ?em.

THIRD CITIZEN.

He said he had wounds, which he could show in private,
And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn,
?I would be consul,? says he; ?aged custom,
But by your voices, will not so permit me;
Your voices therefore.? When we granted that,
Here was ?I thank you for your voices. Thank you.

Your most sweet voices! Now you have left your voices,
I have no further with you.? Was not this mockery?

SICINIUS.

Why either were you ignorant to see?
Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness
To yield your voices?

BRUTUS.

Could you not have told him
As you were lessoned? When he had no power,
But was a petty servant to the state,
He was your enemy, ever spake against
Your liberties and the charters that you bear
I? th? body of the weal; and, now arriving
A place of potency and sway o? th? state,
If he should still malignantly remain
Fast foe to th? plebeii, your voices might
Be curses to yourselves. You should have said
That as his worthy deeds did claim no less
Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature
Would think upon you for your voices, and
Translate his malice towards you into love,
Standing your friendly lord.

SICINIUS.

Thus to have said,
As you were fore-advised, had touched his spirit
And tried his inclination; from him plucked
Either his gracious promise, which you might,
As cause had called you up, have held him to;
Or else it would have galled his surly nature,
Which easily endures not article
Tying him to aught. So putting him to rage,
You should have ta?en th? advantage of his choler
And passed him unelected.

BRUTUS.

Did you perceive
He did solicit you in free contempt
When he did need your loves, and do you think
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you
When he hath power to crush? Why, had your bodies
No heart among you? Or had you tongues to cry
Against the rectorship of judgment?

SICINIUS.

Have you ere now denied the asker, and now
Again, of him that did not ask but mock,
Bestow your sued-for tongues?

THIRD CITIZEN.

He?s not confirmed.
We may deny him yet.

SECOND CITIZEN.

And will deny him.

I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.

FIRST CITIZEN.

I twice five hundred, and their friends to piece 'em.

BRUTUS.

Get you hence instantly, and tell those friends
They have chose a consul that will from them take
Their liberties, make them of no more voice
Than dogs that are as often beat for barking
As therefore kept to do so.

SICINIUS.

Let them assemble
And, on a safer judgment, all revoke
Your ignorant election. Enforce his pride
And his old hate unto you. Besides, forget not
With what contempt he wore the humble weed,
How in his suit he scorned you; but your loves,
Thinking upon his services, took from you
Th' apprehension of his present portance,
Which most gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion
After the inveterate hate he bears you.

BRUTUS.

Lay
A fault on us, your tribunes, that we laboured,
No impediment between, but that you must
Cast your election on him.

SICINIUS.

Say you chose him
More after our commandment than as guided
By your own true affections, and that your minds,
Preoccupied with what you rather must do
Than what you should, made you against the grain
To voice him consul. Lay the fault on us.

BRUTUS.

Ay, spare us not. Say we read lectures to you,
How youngly he began to serve his country,
How long continued, and what stock he springs of,
The noble house o' th' Martians, from whence came
That Ancus Martius, Numa's daughter's son,
Who, after great Hostilius here was king,
Of the same house Publius and Quintus were,
That our best water brought by conduits hither;
And Censorinus, that was so surnamed,
And nobly named so, twice being censor,
Was his great ancestor.

SICINIUS.

One thus descended,
That hath beside well in his person wrought
To be set high in place, we did commend
To your remembrances; but you have found,
Scaling his present bearing with his past,
That he's your fixed enemy, and revoke
Your sudden approbation.

BRUTUS.

Say you ne'er had done't?
Harp on that still?but by our putting on.
And presently when you have drawn your number,
Repair to th' Capitol.

ALL.

We will so. Almost all
Repent in their election.

[_Exeunt Plebeians._]

BRUTUS.

Let them go on.
This mutiny were better put in hazard
Than stay, past doubt, for greater.
If, as his nature is, he fall in rage
With their refusal, both observe and answer
The vantage of his anger.

SICINIUS.

To th' Capitol, come.
We will be there before the stream o' th' people,
And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,
Which we have goaded onward.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT III

SCENE I. Rome. A street

Cornets. Enter Coriolanus, Menenius, all the Gentry, Cominius, Titus
Lartius and other Senators.

CORIOLANUS.

Tullus Aufidius then had made new head?

LARTIUS.

He had, my lord, and that it was which caused
Our swifter composition.

CORIO LANUS.

So then the Volsces stand but as at first,
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road
Upon?s again.

COMINIUS.

They are worn, lord consul, so
That we shall hardly in our ages see
Their banners wave again.

CORIO LANUS.

Saw you Aufidius?

LARTIUS.

On safeguard he came to me, and did curse
Against the Volsces, for they had so vilely
Yielded the town. He is retired to Antium.

CORIO LANUS.

Spoke he of me?

LARTIUS.

He did, my lord.

CORIO LANUS.

How? What?

LARTIUS.

How often he had met you sword to sword;
That of all things upon the earth he hated
Your person most; that he would pawn his fortunes
To hopeless restitution, so he might
Be called your vanquisher.

CORIO LANUS.

At Antium lives he?

LARTIUS.

At Antium.

CORIO LANUS.

I wish I had a cause to seek him there,
To oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home.

Enter Sicinius and Brutus.

Behold, these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o? th? common mouth. I do despise them,
For they do prank them in authority
Against all noble sufferance.

SICINIUS.

Pass no further.

CORIOLANUS.

Ha? What is that?

BRUTUS.

It will be dangerous to go on. No further.

CORIOLANUS.

What makes this change?

MENENIUS.

The matter?

COMINIUS.

Hath he not passed the noble and the common?

BRUTUS.

Cominius, no.

CORIOLANUS.

Have I had children's voices?

FIRST SENATOR.

Tribunes, give way. He shall to the marketplace.

BRUTUS.

The people are incensed against him.

SICINIUS.

Stop,

Or all will fall in broil.

CORIOLANUS.

Are these your herd?

Must these have voices, that can yield them now

And straight disclaim their tongues? What are your offices?

You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth?

Have you not set them on?

MENENIUS.

Be calm, be calm.

CORIOLANUS.

It is a purposed thing, and grows by plot,

To curb the will of the nobility.

Suffer't, and live with such as cannot rule

Nor ever will be ruled.

BRUTUS.

Call't not a plot.

The people cry you mocked them; and, of late,

When corn was given them gratis, you repined,

Scandaled the suppliants for the people, called them

Timepleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

CORIO LANUS.

Why, this was known before.

BRUTUS.

Not to them all.

CORIO LANUS.

Have you informed them sithence?

BRUTUS.

How? I inform them?

COMINIUS.

You are like to do such business.

BRUTUS.

Not unlike, each way, to better yours.

CORIO LANUS.

Why then should I be consul? By yond clouds,
Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me
Your fellow tribune.

SICINIUS.

You show too much of that
For which the people stir. If you will pass
To where you are bound, you must inquire your way,
Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit,
Or never be so noble as a consul,
Nor yoke with him for tribune.

MENENIUS.

Let's be calm.

COMINIUS.

The people are abused, set on. This palt'ring
Becomes not Rome, nor has Coriolanus
Deserved this so dishonoured rub, laid falsely
I? th? plain way of his merit.

CORIO LANUS.

Tell me of corn?

This was my speech, and I will speak't again.

MENENIUS.

Not now, not now.

FIRST SENATOR.

Not in this heat, sir, now.

CORIO LANUS.

Now, as I live, I will.

My nobler friends, I crave their pardons. For

The mutable, rank-scented many, let them
Regard me, as I do not flatter, and
Therein behold themselves. I say again,
In soothing them we nourish 'gainst our senate
The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition,
Which we ourselves have ploughed for, sowed, and scattered
By mingling them with us, the honoured number,
Who lack not virtue, no, nor power, but that
Which they have given to beggars.

MENENIUS.

Well, no more.

FIRST SENATOR.

No more words, we beseech you.

CORIOLANUS.

How? No more?

As for my country I have shed my blood,
Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs
Coin words till their decay against those measles
Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought
The very way to catch them.

BRUTUS.

You speak o' th' people
As if you were a god to punish, not
A man of their infirmity.

SICINIUS.

'Twere well
We let the people know't.

MENENIUS.

What, what? His cholera?

CORIOLANUS.

Cholera?
Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,
By Jove, 'twould be my mind.

SICINIUS.

It is a mind
That shall remain a poison where it is,
Not poison any further.

CORIOLANUS.

'Shall remain??
Hear you this Triton of the minnows? Mark you
His absolute 'shall??

COMINIUS.

'Twas from the canon.

CORIOLANUS.

‘Shall?’

O good but most unwise patricians, why,
You grave but reckless senators, have you thus
Given Hydra leave to choose an officer,
That with his peremptory ‘shall,’ being but
The horn and noise of the monster’s, wants not spirit
To say he’ll turn your current in a ditch
And make your channel his? If he have power,
Then veil your ignorance; if none, awake
Your dangerous lenity. If you are learned,
Be not as common fools; if you are not,
Let them have cushions by you. You are plebeians,
If they be senators; and they are no less
When, both your voices blended, the greatest taste
Most palates theirs. They choose their magistrate,
And such a one as he, who puts his ‘shall,’
His popular ‘shall,’ against a graver bench
Than ever frowned in Greece. By Jove himself,
It makes the consuls base! And my soul aches
To know, when two authorities are up,
Neither supreme, how soon confusion
May enter ’twixt the gap of both and take
The one by the other.

COMINIUS.

Well, on to the marketplace.

CORIOLANUS.

Whoever gave that counsel to give forth
The corn of the storehouse gratis, as ’twas used
Sometime in Greece?

MENENIUS.

Well, well, no more of that.

CORIOLANUS.

Though there the people had more absolute power,
I say they nourished disobedience, fed
The ruin of the state.

BRUTUS.

Why shall the people give
One that speaks thus their voice?

CORIOLANUS.

I’ll give my reasons,
More worthier than their voices. They know the corn
Was not our recompense, resting well assured
They never did service for’t. Being pressed to the war,
Even when the navel of the state was touched,
They would not thread the gates. This kind of service
Did not deserve corn gratis. Being in the war,
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they showed

Most valour, spoke not for them. Th? accusation
Which they have often made against the Senate,
All cause unborn, could never be the native
Of our so frank donation. Well, what then?
How shall this bosom multitude digest
The senate?s courtesy? Let deeds express
What?s like to be their words: ?We did request it;
We are the greater poll, and in true fear
They gave us our demands.? Thus we debase
The nature of our seats and make the rabble
Call our cares fears, which will in time
Break ope the locks o? th? Senate and bring in
The crows to peck the eagles.

MENENIUS.

Come, enough.

BRUTUS.

Enough, with over-measure.

CORIOLANUS.

No, take more!

What may be sworn by, both divine and human,
Seal what I end withal! This double worship?
Where one part does disdain with cause, the other
Insult without all reason, where gentry, title, wisdom
Cannot conclude but by the yea and no
Of general ignorance?it must omit
Real necessities and give way the while
To unstable slightness. Purpose so barred, it follows
Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore, beseech you?
You that will be less fearful than discreet,
That love the fundamental part of state
More than you doubt the change on?t, that prefer
A noble life before a long, and wish
To jump a body with a dangerous physic
That?s sure of death without it?at once pluck out
The multitudinous tongue; let them not lick
The sweet which is their poison. Your dishonour
Mangles true judgment and bereaves the state
Of that integrity which should become?t,
Not having the power to do the good it would
For th? ill which doth control?t.

BRUTUS.

?Has said enough.

SICINIUS.

?Has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer
As traitors do.

CORIOLANUS.

Thou wretch, despite o?erwhelm thee!
What should the people do with these bald tribunes,

On whom depending, their obedience fails
To th' greater bench. In a rebellion,
When what's not meet but what must be was law,
Then were they chosen. In a better hour,
Let what is meet be said it must be meet,
And throw their power i' th' dust.

BRUTUS.

Manifest treason.

SICINIUS.

This a consul? No.

BRUTUS.

The aediles, ho! Let him be apprehended.

Enter an Aedile.

SICINIUS.

Go call the people;

[_Exit Aedile._]

in whose name myself
Attach thee as a traitorous innovator,
A foe to th' public weal. Obey, I charge thee,
And follow to thine answer.

CORIOLANUS.

Hence, old goat.

ALL PATRICIANS.

We'll surety him.

COMINIUS.

[_to Sicinius_] Aged sir, hands off.

CORIOLANUS.

[_to Sicinius_] Hence, rotten thing, or I shall shake thy bones
Out of thy garments.

SICINIUS.

Help, ye citizens!

Enter a rabble of Plebeians with the Aediles.

MENENIUS.

On both sides more respect!

SICINIUS.

Here's he that would take from you all your power.

BRUTUS.

Seize him, aediles.

ALL PLEBEIANS.

Down with him, down with him!

SECOND SENATOR.

Weapons, weapons, weapons!

[_They all bustle about Coriolanus._]

Tribunes, patricians, citizens, what, ho!

Sicinius, Brutus, Coriolanus, citizens!

ALL.

Peace, peace, peace! Stay, hold, peace!

MENENIUS.

What is about to be? I am out of breath.

Confusion? 's near. I cannot speak. You tribunes

To th? people!? Coriolanus, patience!?

Speak, good Sicinius.

SICINIUS.

Hear me, people! Peace!

ALL PLEBEIANS.

Let?s hear our tribune. Peace! Speak, speak, speak.

SICINIUS.

You are at point to lose your liberties.

Martius would have all from you, Martius,

Whom late you have named for consul.

MENENIUS.

Fie, fie, fie!

This is the way to kindle, not to quench.

FIRST SENATOR.

To unbuild the city and to lay all flat.

SICINIUS.

What is the city but the people?

ALL PLEBEIANS.

True,

The people are the city.

BRUTUS.

By the consent of all, we were established

The people?s magistrates.

ALL PLEBEIANS.

You so remain.

MENENIUS.

And so are like to do.

COMINIUS.

That is the way to lay the city flat,
To bring the roof to the foundation
And bury all which yet distinctly ranges
In heaps and piles of ruin.

SICINIUS.

This deserves death.

BRUTUS.

Or let us stand to our authority
Or let us lose it. We do here pronounce,
Upon the part o' th' people, in whose power
We were elected theirs, Martius is worthy
Of present death.

SICINIUS.

Therefore lay hold of him,
Bear him to th' rock Tarpeian, and from thence
Into destruction cast him.

BRUTUS.

Aediles, seize him!

ALL PLEBEIANS.

Yield, Martius, yield!

MENENIUS.

Hear me one word.
Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word.

AEDILES.

Peace, peace!

MENENIUS.

Be that you seem, truly your country's friend,
And temporarily proceed to what you would
Thus violently redress.

BRUTUS.

Sir, those cold ways,
That seem like prudent helps, are very poisonous
Where the disease is violent. Lay hands upon him,
And bear him to the rock.

[_Coriolanus draws his sword._]

CORIOLANUS.

No; I'll die here.
There's some among you have beheld me fighting.
Come, try upon yourselves what you have seen me.

MENENIUS.

Down with that sword! Tribunes, withdraw awhile.

BRUTUS.

Lay hands upon him!

MENENIUS.

Help Martius, help!

You that be noble, help him, young and old!

ALL PLEBEIANS.

Down with him, down with him!

[_In this mutiny the Tribunes, the Aediles and the People are beat in._]

MENENIUS.

Go, get you to your house. Begone, away.

All will be naught else.

SECOND SENATOR.

Get you gone.

CORIOLANUS.

Stand fast!

We have as many friends as enemies.

MENENIUS.

Shall it be put to that?

FIRST SENATOR.

The gods forbid!

I prithee, noble friend, home to thy house;

Leave us to cure this cause.

MENENIUS.

For 'tis a sore upon us

You cannot tent yourself. Begone, beseech you.

COMINIUS.

Come, sir, along with us.

CORIOLANUS.

I would they were barbarians, as they are,

Though in Rome littered, not Romans, as they are not,

Though calved i' th' porch o' th' Capitol.

MENENIUS.

Begone!

Put not your worthy rage into your tongue.

One time will owe another.

CORIOLANUS.

On fair ground

I could beat forty of them.

MENENIUS.

I could myself

Take up a brace o' th' best of them, yea, the two tribunes.

COMINIUS.

But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic,
And manhood is called foolery when it stands
Against a falling fabric. Will you hence,
Before the tag return, whose rage doth rend
Like interrupted waters, and o'erbear
What they are used to bear?

MENENIUS.

Pray you, begone.

I'll try whether my old wit be in request

With those that have but little. This must be patched

With cloth of any colour.

COMINIUS.

Nay, come away.

[_Exeunt Coriolanus and Cominius._]

PATRICIAN.

This man has marred his fortune.

MENENIUS.

His nature is too noble for the world.

He would not flatter Neptune for his trident

Or Jove for 's power to thunder. His heart's his mouth;

What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent,

And, being angry, does forget that ever

He heard the name of death.

[_A noise within._]

Here's goodly work.

PATRICIAN.

I would they were abed!

MENENIUS.

I would they were in Tiber! What the vengeance,

Could he not speak 'em fair?

Enter Brutus and Sicinius with the rabble again.

SICINIUS.

Where is this viper

That would depopulate the city and

Be every man himself?

MENENIUS.

You worthy tribunes?

SICINIUS.

He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock
With rigorous hands. He hath resisted law,
And therefore law shall scorn him further trial
Than the severity of the public power
Which he so sets at naught.

FIRST CITIZEN.

He shall well know
The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,
And we their hands.

ALL PLEBEIANS.

He shall, sure on't.

MENENIUS.

Sir, sir?

SICINIUS.

Peace!

MENENIUS.

Do not cry havoc where you should but hunt
With modest warrant.

SICINIUS.

Sir, how comes't that you
Have help to make this rescue?

MENENIUS.

Hear me speak.
As I do know the Consul's worthiness,
So can I name his faults.

SICINIUS.

Consul? What consul?

MENENIUS.

The consul Coriolanus.

BRUTUS.

He consul?

ALL PLEBEIANS.

No, no, no, no, no!

MENENIUS.

If, by the Tribunes' leave, and yours, good people,
I may be heard, I would crave a word or two,
The which shall turn you to no further harm
Than so much loss of time.

SICINIUS.

Speak briefly then,
For we are peremptory to dispatch
This viperous traitor. To eject him hence
Were but one danger, and to keep him here
Our certain death. Therefore it is decreed
He dies tonight.

MENENIUS.

Now the good gods forbid
That our renowned Rome, whose gratitude
Towards her deserved children is enrolled
In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam
Should now eat up her own.

SICINIUS.

He's a disease that must be cut away.

MENENIUS.

O, he's a limb that has but a disease?
Mortal to cut it off; to cure it easy.
What has he done to Rome that's worthy death?
Killing our enemies, the blood he hath lost?
Which I dare vouch is more than that he hath
By many an ounce he dropt it for his country;
And what is left, to lose it by his country
Were to us all, that do't and suffer it
A brand to th' end o' th' world.

SICINIUS.

This is clean cam.

BRUTUS.

Merely awry. When he did love his country,
It honoured him.

MENENIUS.

The service of the foot,
Being once gangrened, is not then respected
For what before it was.

BRUTUS.

We'll hear no more.
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence,
Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
Spread further.

MENENIUS.

One word more, one word!
This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find
The harm of unscanned swiftness, will too late,
Tie leaden pounds to's heels. Proceed by process,
Lest parties as he is beloved break out

And sack great Rome with Romans.

BRUTUS.

If it were so?

SICINIUS.

What do ye talk?

Have we not had a taste of his obedience?

Our aediles smote! Ourselves resisted? Come.

MENENIUS.

Consider this: he has been bred i? th? wars

Since he could draw a sword, and is ill schooled

In bolted language; meal and bran together

He throws without distinction. Give me leave,

I?ll go to him and undertake to bring him

Where he shall answer by a lawful form,

In peace, to his utmost peril.

FIRST SENATOR.

Noble tribunes,

It is the humane way: the other course

Will prove too bloody, and the end of it

Unknown to the beginning.

SICINIUS.

Noble Menenius,

Be you then as the people?s officer.?

Masters, lay down your weapons.

BRUTUS.

Go not home.

SICINIUS.

Meet on the marketplace. We?ll attend you there,

Where if you bring not Martius, we?ll proceed

In our first way.

MENENIUS.

I?ll bring him to you.

[_To Senators_] Let me desire your company. He must come,

Or what is worst will follow.

FIRST SENATOR.

Pray you, let?s to him.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Rome. A room in Coriolanus?s house

Enter Coriolanus with Nobles.

CORIOLANUS.

Let them pull all about mine ears, present me

Death on the wheel or at wild horses' heels,
Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,
That the precipitation might down stretch
Below the beam of sight, yet will I still
Be thus to them.

FIRST PATRICIAN.

You do the nobler.

CORIOLANUS.

I muse my mother
Does not approve me further, who was wont
To call them woollen vassals, things created
To buy and sell with groats, to show bare heads
In congregations, to yawn, be still, and wonder
When one but of my ordinance stood up
To speak of peace or war.

Enter Volumnia.

I talk of you.
Why did you wish me milder? Would you have me
False to my nature? Rather say I play
The man I am.

VOLUMNIA.

O, sir, sir, sir,
I would have had you put your power well on
Before you had worn it out.

CORIOLANUS.

Let go.

VOLUMNIA.

You might have been enough the man you are
With striving less to be so. Lesser had been
The thwartings of your dispositions if
You had not showed them how ye were disposed
Ere they lacked power to cross you.

CORIOLANUS.

Let them hang!

VOLUMNIA.

Ay, and burn too.

Enter Menenius with the Senators.

MENENIUS.

Come, come, you have been too rough, something too rough.
You must return and mend it.

FIRST SENATOR.

There's no remedy,

Unless, by not so doing, our good city
Cleave in the midst and perish.

VOLUMNIA.

Pray be counselled.

I have a heart as little apt as yours,
But yet a brain that leads my use of anger
To better vantage.

MENENIUS.

Well said, noble woman.

Before he should thus stoop to th' herd? but that
The violent fit o' th' time craves it as physic
For the whole state? I would put mine armour on,
Which I can scarcely bear.

CORIOLANUS.

What must I do?

MENENIUS.

Return to th' Tribunes.

CORIOLANUS.

Well, what then? What then?

MENENIUS.

Repent what you have spoke.

CORIOLANUS.

For them? I cannot do it to the gods.
Must I then do't to them?

VOLUMNIA.

You are too absolute,
Though therein you can never be too noble
But when extremities speak. I have heard you say
Honour and policy, like unsevered friends,
I? th' war do grow together. Grant that, and tell me
In peace what each of them by th' other lose
That they combine not there.

CORIOLANUS.

Tush, tush!

MENENIUS.

A good demand.

VOLUMNIA.

If it be honour in your wars to seem
The same you are not, which for your best ends
You adopt your policy, how is it less or worse
That it shall hold companionship in peace
With honour as in war, since that to both
It stands in like request?

CORIOLANUS.

Why force you this?

VOLUMNIA.

Because that now it lies you on to speak
To th? people, not by your own instruction,
Nor by th? matter which your heart prompts you,
But with such words that are but rooted in
Your tongue, though but bastards and syllables
Of no allowance to your bosom?s truth.
Now, this no more dishonours you at all
Than to take in a town with gentle words,
Which else would put you to your fortune and
The hazard of much blood.
I would dissemble with my nature where
My fortunes and my friends at stake required
I should do so in honour. I am in this
Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles;
And you will rather show our general louts
How you can frown than spend a fawn upon ?em
For the inheritance of their loves and safeguard
Of what that want might ruin.

MENENIUS.

Noble lady!?

Come, go with us; speak fair. You may salve so,
Not what is dangerous present, but the loss
Of what is past.

VOLUMNIA.

I prithee now, my son,
Go to them with this bonnet in thy hand,
And thus far having stretched it?here be with them?
Thy knee bussing the stones?for in such busines
Action is eloquence, and the eyes of th? ignorant
More learned than the ears?waving thy head,
Which often thus correcting thy stout heart,
Now humble as the ripest mulberry
That will not hold the handling. Or say to them
Thou art their soldier and, being bred in broils,
Hast not the soft way, which thou dost confess
Were fit for thee to use, as they to claim,
In asking their good loves; but thou wilt frame
Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
As thou hast power and person.

MENENIUS.

This but done

Even as she speaks, why, their hearts were yours;
For they have pardons, being asked, as free
As words to little purpose.

VOLUMNIA.

Prithee now,
Go, and be ruled; although I know thou hadst rather
Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf
Than flatter him in a bower.

Enter Cominius.

Here is Cominius.

COMINIUS.

I have been i? th? marketplace; and, sir, ?tis fit
You make strong party or defend yourself
By calmness or by absence. All?s in anger.

MENENIUS.

Only fair speech.

COMINIUS.

I think ?twill serve, if he
Can thereto frame his spirit.

VOLUMNIA.

He must, and will.?
Prithee, now, say you will, and go about it.

CORIOLANUS.

Must I go show them my unbarbed sponce? Must I
With my base tongue give to my noble heart
A lie that it must bear? Well, I will do?t.
Yet, were there but this single plot to lose,
This mould of Martius, they to dust should grind it
And throw?t against the wind. To th? marketplace!
You have put me now to such a part which never
I shall discharge to th? life.

COMINIUS.

Come, come, we?ll prompt you.

VOLUMNIA.

I prithee now, sweet son, as thou hast said
My praises made thee first a soldier, so,
To have my praise for this, perform a part
Thou hast not done before.

CORIOLANUS.

Well, I must do?t.
Away, my disposition, and possess me
Some harlot?s spirit! My throat of war be turned,
Which choired with my drum, into a pipe
Small as an eunuch or the virgin voice
That babies lulls asleep! The smiles of knaves
Tent in my cheeks, and schoolboys? tears take up
The glasses of my sight! A beggar?s tongue
Make motion through my lips, and my armed knees,

Who bowed but in my stirrup, bend like his
That hath received an alms! I will not do't,
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth
And, by my body's action, teach my mind
A most inherent baseness.

VOLUMNIA.

At thy choice, then.

To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour
Than thou of them. Come all to ruin. Let
Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear
Thy dangerous stoutness, for I mock at death
With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.
Thy valiantness was mine; thou suck'st it from me,
But owe thy pride thyself.

CORIOLANUS.

Pray, be content.

Mother, I am going to the marketplace.
Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,
Cog their hearts from them, and come home beloved
Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going.
Commend me to my wife. I'll return consul,
Or never trust to what my tongue can do
I'll shun the way of flattery further.

VOLUMNIA.

Do your will.

[_Exit Volumnia._]

COMINIUS.

Away! The Tribunes do attend you. Arm yourself
To answer mildly, for they are prepared
With accusations, as I hear, more strong
Than are upon you yet.

CORIOLANUS.

The word is 'mildly.' Pray you, let us go.
Let them accuse me by invention, I
Will answer in mine honour.

MENENIUS.

Ay, but mildly.

CORIOLANUS.

Well, mildly be it, then. Mildly.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. Rome. The Forum

Enter Sicinius and Brutus.

BRUTUS.

In this point charge him home, that he affects
Tyrannical power. If he evade us there,
Enforce him with his envy to the people,
And that the spoil got on the Antiates
Was never distributed.

Enter an Aedile.

What, will he come?

AEDILE.

He's coming.

BRUTUS.

How accompanied?

AEDILE.

With old Menenius, and those senators
That always favoured him.

SICINIUS.

Have you a catalogue
Of all the voices that we have procured,
Set down by the poll?

AEDILE.

I have. 'Tis ready.

SICINIUS.

Have you collected them by tribes?

AEDILE.

I have.

SICINIUS.

Assemble presently the people hither;
And when they hear me say 'It shall be so
If the right and strength of the commons, be it either
For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them
If I say 'Fine, cry 'Fine, if 'Death, cry 'Death,
Insisting on the old prerogative
And power in the truth of the cause.

AEDILE.

I shall inform them.

BRUTUS.

And when such time they have begun to cry,
Let them not cease, but with a din confused
Enforce the present execution
Of what we chance to sentence.

AEDILE.

Very well.

SICINIUS.

Make them be strong and ready for this hint
When we shall hap to give't them.

BRUTUS.

Go about it.

[_Exit Aedile._]

Put him to choler straight. He hath been used
Ever to conquer and to have his worth
Of contradiction. Being once chafed, he cannot
Be reined again to temperance; then he speaks
What's in his heart; and that is there which looks
With us to break his neck.

Enter Coriolanus, Menenius and Cominius with other Senators.

SICINIUS.

Well, here he comes.

MENENIUS.

Calmly, I do beseech you.

CORIOLANUS.

Ay, as an ostler, that for th' poorest piece
Will bear the knave by th' volume. Th' honoured gods
Keep Rome in safety and the chairs of justice
Supplied with worthy men! Plant love among's!
Throng our large temples with the shows of peace
And not our streets with war!

FIRST SENATOR.

Amen, amen.

MENENIUS.

A noble wish.

Enter the Aedile with the Plebeians.

SICINIUS.

Draw near, ye people.

AEDILE.

List to your tribunes. Audience! Peace, I say!

CORIOLANUS.

First, hear me speak.

BOTH TRIBUNES.

Well, say. Peace, ho!

CORIO LANUS.

Shall I be charged no further than this present?
Must all determine here?

SICINIUS.

I do demand
If you submit you to the people's voices,
Allow their officers, and are content
To suffer lawful censure for such faults
As shall be proved upon you.

CORIO LANUS.

I am content.

MENENIUS.

Lo, citizens, he says he is content.
The warlike service he has done, consider. Think
Upon the wounds his body bears, which show
Like graves in this holy churchyard.

CORIO LANUS.

Scratches with briars,
Scars to move laughter only.

MENENIUS.

Consider further,
That when he speaks not like a citizen,
You find him like a soldier. Do not take
His rougher accents for malicious sounds,
But, as I say, such as become a soldier
Rather than envy you.

COMINIUS.

Well, well, no more.

CORIO LANUS.

What is the matter,
That, being passed for consul with full voice,
I am so dishonoured that the very hour
You take it off again?

SICINIUS.

Answer to us.

CORIO LANUS.

Say then. 'Tis true, I ought so.

SICINIUS.

We charge you that you have contrived to take
From Rome all seasoned office and to wind
Yourself into a power tyrannical,
For which you are a traitor to the people.

CORIO LANUS.

How? Traitor?

MENENIUS.

Nay, temperately! Your promise.

CORIOLANUS.

The fires i? th? lowest hell fold in the people!
Call me their traitor? Thou injurious tribune!
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,
In thy hands clutched as many millions, in
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say
?Thou liest? unto thee with a voice as free
As I do pray the gods.

SICINIUS.

Mark you this, people?

ALL PLEBEIANS.

To th? rock, to th? rock with him!

SICINIUS.

Peace!

We need not put new matter to his charge.
What you have seen him do and heard him speak,
Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,
Opposing laws with strokes, and here defying
Those whose great power must try him?even this,
So criminal and in such capital kind,
Deserves th? extremest death.

BRUTUS.

But since he hath
Served well for Rome?

CORIOLANUS.

What do you prate of service?

BRUTUS.

I talk of that that know it.

CORIOLANUS.

You?

MENENIUS.

Is this the promise that you made your mother?

COMINIUS.

Know, I pray you?

CORIOLANUS.

I?ll know no further.
Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,
Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to linger
But with a grain a day, I would not buy

Their mercy at the price of one fair word,
Nor check my courage for what they can give,
To have't with saying 'Good morrow.?

SICINIUS.

For that he has,
As much as in him lies, from time to time
Envied against the people, seeking means
To pluck away their power, as now at last
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence
Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers
That do distribute it, in the name o' th' people
And in the power of us the Tribunes, we,
Even from this instant, banish him our city
In peril of precipitation
From off the rock Tarpeian, never more
To enter our Rome gates. I' th' people's name,
I say it shall be so.

ALL PLEBEIANS.

It shall be so, it shall be so! Let him away!
He's banished, and it shall be so.

COMINIUS.

Hear me, my masters and my common friends?

SICINIUS.

He's sentenced. No more hearing.

COMINIUS.

Let me speak.
I have been consul and can show for Rome
Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love
My country's good with a respect more tender,
More holy and profound, than mine own life,
My dear wife's estimate, her womb's increase,
And treasure of my loins. Then if I would
Speak that?

SICINIUS.

We know your drift. Speak what?

BRUTUS.

There's no more to be said, but he is banished
As enemy to the people and his country.
It shall be so.

ALL PLEBEIANS.

It shall be so, it shall be so!

CORIOLANUS.

You common cry of curs, whose breath I hate
As reek o' th' rotten fens, whose loves I prize
As the dead carcasses of unburied men

That do corrupt my air, I banish you!
And here remain with your uncertainty;
Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts;
Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
Fan you into despair! Have the power still
To banish your defenders, till at length
Your ignorance?which finds not till it feels,
Making but reservation of yourselves,
Still your own foes?deliver you,
As most abated captives to some nation
That won you without blows! Despising
For you the city, thus I turn my back.
There is a world elsewhere.

[_Exeunt Coriolanus, Cominius, with other Senators._]

AEDILE.

The people?s enemy is gone, is gone.

ALL PLEBEIANS.

Our enemy is banished; he is gone. Hoo, hoo!

[_They all shout and throw up their caps._]

SICINIUS.

Go see him out at gates, and follow him,
As he hath followed you, with all despite.
Give him deserved vexation. Let a guard
Attend us through the city.

ALL PLEBEIANS.

Come, come, let?s see him out at gates! Come!
The gods preserve our noble tribunes! Come.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT IV

SCENE I. Rome. Before a gate of the city

Enter Coriolanus, Volumnia, Virgilia, Menenius, Cominius with the young nobility of Rome.

CORIOLANUS.

Come, leave your tears. A brief farewell. The beast
With many heads butts me away. Nay, mother,
Where is your ancient courage? You were used
To say extremities was the trier of spirits;
That common chances common men could bear;
That when the sea was calm, all boats alike

Showed mastership in floating; fortune's blows
When most struck home, being gentle wounded craves
A noble cunning. You were used to load me
With precepts that would make invincible
The heart that conned them.

VIRGILIA.

O heavens! O heavens!

CORIOLANUS.

Nay, I prithee, woman?

VOLUMNIA.

Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,
And occupations perish!

CORIOLANUS.

What, what, what!

I shall be loved when I am lacked. Nay, mother,
Resume that spirit when you were wont to say
If you had been the wife of Hercules,
Six of his labours you'd have done and saved
Your husband so much sweat. Cominius,
Droop not. Adieu. Farewell, my wife, my mother.
I'll do well yet. Thou old and true Menenius,
Thy tears are salter than a younger man's
And venomous to thine eyes. My sometime general,
I have seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld
Heart-hardning spectacles. Tell these sad women
'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes
As 'tis to laugh at 'em. My mother, you wot well
My hazards still have been your solace, and
Believe't not lightly though I go alone,
Like to a lonely dragon that his fen
Makes feared and talked of more than seen, your son
Will or exceed the common or be caught
With cautelous baits and practice.

VOLUMNIA.

My first son,
Whither wilt thou go? Take good Cominius
With thee awhile. Determine on some course
More than a wild exposture to each chance
That starts i' th' way before thee.

VIRGILIA.

O the gods!

COMINIUS.

I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee
Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us
And we of thee; so if the time thrust forth
A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send
O'er the vast world to seek a single man

And lose advantage, which doth ever cool
I? th? absence of the needer.

CORIOLANUS.

Fare ye well.

Thou hast years upon thee, and thou art too full
Of the wars? surfeits to go rove with one
That?s yet unbruised. Bring me but out at gate?
Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and
My friends of noble touch. When I am forth,
Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you, come.
While I remain above the ground, you shall
Hear from me still, and never of me aught
But what is like me formerly.

MENENIUS.

That?s worthily

As any ear can hear. Come, let?s not weep.
If I could shake off but one seven years
From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,
I?d with thee every foot.

CORIOLANUS.

Give me thy hand.

Come.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. Rome. A street near the gate

Enter two Tribunes, Sicinius, Brutus with the Aedile.

SICINIUS.

Bid them all home. He?s gone, and we?ll no further.
The nobility are vexed, whom we see have sided
In his behalf.

BRUTUS.

Now we have shown our power,
Let us seem humbler after it is done
Than when it was a-doing.

SICINIUS.

Bid them home.
Say their great enemy is gone, and they
Stand in their ancient strength.

BRUTUS.

Dismiss them home.

[_Exit Aedile._]

Here comes his mother.

Enter Volumnia, Virgilia and Menenius.

SICINIUS.

Let's not meet her.

BRUTUS.

Why?

SICINIUS.

They say she's mad.

BRUTUS.

They have taken note of us. Keep on your way.

VOLUMNIA.

O, you're well met. The hoarded plague of the gods
Requite your love!

MENENIUS.

Peace, peace! Be not so loud.

VOLUMNIA.

If that I could for weeping, you should hear?
Nay, and you shall hear some. [To Sicinius.] Will you be gone?

VIRGILIA.

[To Brutus.] You shall stay too. I would I had the power
To say so to my husband.

SICINIUS.

Are you mankind?

VOLUMNIA.

Ay, fool, is that a shame? Note but this, fool.
Was not a man my father? Hadst thou foxship
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome
Than thou hast spoken words?

SICINIUS.

O blessed heavens!

VOLUMNIA.

More noble blows than ever thou wise words,
And for Rome's good. I'll tell thee what yet go.
Nay, but thou shalt stay too. I would my son
Were in Arabia and thy tribe before him,
His good sword in his hand.

SICINIUS.

What then?

VIRGILIA.

What then?
He'd make an end of thy posterity.

VOLUMNIA.

Bastards and all.

Good man, the wounds that he does bear for Rome!

MENENIUS.

Come, come, peace.

SICINIUS.

I would he had continued to his country

As he began, and not unknit himself

The noble knot he made.

BRUTUS.

I would he had.

VOLUMNIA.

?I would he had?? ?Twas you incensed the rabble.

Cats, that can judge as fitly of his worth

As I can of those mysteries which heaven

Will not have Earth to know.

BRUTUS.

Pray, let?s go.

VOLUMNIA.

Now, pray, sir, get you gone.

You have done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear this:

As far as doth the Capitol exceed

The meanest house in Rome, so far my son?

This lady?s husband here, this, do you see??

Whom you have banished, does exceed you all.

BRUTUS.

Well, well, we?ll leave you.

SICINIUS.

Why stay we to be baited

With one that wants her wits?

[_Exeunt Tribunes._]

VOLUMNIA.

Take my prayers with you.

I would the gods had nothing else to do

But to confirm my curses. Could I meet ?em

But once a day, it would unclog my heart

Of what lies heavy to?t.

MENENIUS.

You have told them home,

And, by my troth, you have cause. You?ll sup with me?

VOLUMNIA.

Anger's my meat. I sup upon myself
And so shall starve with feeding. Come, let's go.
Leave this faint puling, and lament as I do,
In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come.

[_Exeunt._]

MENENIUS.
Fie, fie, fie!

[_Exit Menenius._]

SCENE III. A highway between Rome and Antium

Enter a Roman and a Volsce.

ROMAN.
I know you well, sir, and you know me. Your name I think is Adrian.

VOLSCE.
It is so, sir. Truly, I have forgot you.

ROMAN.
I am a Roman, and my services are, as you are, against 'em. Know you me yet?

VOLSCE.
Nicanor, no?

ROMAN.
The same, sir.

VOLSCE.
You had more beard when I last saw you, but your favour is well approved by your tongue. What's the news in Rome? I have a note from the Volscian state to find you out there. You have well saved me a day's journey.

ROMAN.
There hath been in Rome strange insurrections, the people against the senators, patricians, and nobles.

VOLSCE.
Hath been? Is it ended, then? Our state thinks not so. They are in a most warlike preparation and hope to come upon them in the heat of their division.

ROMAN.
The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing would make it flame again; for the nobles receive so to heart the banishment of that worthy Coriolanus that they are in a ripe aptness to take all power from the people and to pluck from them their tribunes for ever. This lies glowing, I can tell you, and is almost mature for the violent breaking out.

VOLSCE.

Coriolanus banished?

ROMAN.

Banished, sir.

VOLSCE.

You will be welcome with this intelligence, Nicanor.

ROMAN.

The day serves well for them now. I have heard it said the fittest time to corrupt a man's wife is when she's fallen out with her husband. Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer Coriolanus being now in no request of his country.

VOLSCE.

He cannot choose. I am most fortunate thus accidentally to encounter you. You have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home.

ROMAN.

I shall between this and supper tell you most strange things from Rome, all tending to the good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you?

VOLSCE.

A most royal one. The centurions and their charges, distinctly billeted, already in th^e entertainment, and to be on foot at an hour's warning.

ROMAN.

I am joyful to hear of their readiness and am the man, I think, that shall set them in present action. So, sir, heartily well met, and most glad of your company.

VOLSCE.

You take my part from me, sir. I have the most cause to be glad of yours.

ROMAN.

Well, let us go together.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IV. Antium. Before Aufidius's house

Enter Coriolanus in mean apparel, disguised and muffled.

CORIOLANUS.

A goodly city is this Antium. City,
'Tis I that made thy widows. Many an heir
Of these fair edifices 'fore my wars
Have I heard groan and drop. Then know me not,
Lest that thy wives with spits and boys with stones

In puny battle slay me.

Enter a Citizen.

Save you, sir.

CITIZEN.

And you.

CORIOLANUS.

Direct me, if it be your will,
Where great Aufidius lies. Is he in Antium?

CITIZEN.

He is, and feasts the nobles of the state
At his house this night.

CORIOLANUS.

Which is his house, beseech you?

CITIZEN.

This here before you.

CORIOLANUS.

Thank you, sir. Farewell.

[_Exit Citizen._]

O world, thy slippery turns! Friends now fast sworn,
Whose double bosoms seems to wear one heart,
Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal and exercise
Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love
Unseparable, shall within this hour,
On a dissension of a doit, break out
To bitterest enmity; so fellest foes,
Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep
To take the one the other, by some chance,
Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends
And interjoin their issues. So with me:
My birthplace hate I, and my love's upon
This enemy town. I'll enter. If he slay me,
He does fair justice; if he give me way,
I'll do his country service.

[_Exit._]

SCENE V. Antium. A hall in Aufidius's house

Music plays. Enter a Servingman.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

Wine, wine, wine! What service is here? I think our fellows are asleep.

[_Exit._]

Enter another Servingman.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Where's Cotus? My master calls for him. Cotus!

[_Exit._]

Enter Coriolanus.

CORIOLANUS.

A goodly house. The feast smells well, but I
Appear not like a guest.

Enter the First Servingman.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

What would you have, friend? Whence are you? Here's no place for you.
Pray go to the door.

[_Exit._]

CORIOLANUS.

I have deserved no better entertainment
In being Coriolanus.

Enter Second Servingman.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Whence are you, sir? Has the porter his eyes in his head, that he gives
entrance to such companions? Pray, get you out.

CORIOLANUS.

Away!

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Away? Get you away.

CORIOLANUS.

Now that art troublesome.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Are you so brave? I'll have you talked with anon.

Enter Third Servingman; the First, entering, meets him.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

What fellow's this?

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

A strange one as ever I looked on. I cannot get him out of that house.
Prithee call my master to him.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

What have you to do here, fellow? Pray you, avoid the house.

CORIOLANUS.

Let me but stand. I will not hurt your hearth.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

What are you?

CORIOLANUS.

A gentleman.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

A marvellous poor one.

CORIOLANUS.

True, so I am.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

Pray you, poor gentleman, take up some other station. Here's no place for you. Pray you, avoid. Come.

CORIOLANUS.

Follow your function, go, and batten on cold bits.

[_Pushes him away from him_.]

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

What, you will not??Prithee, tell my master what a strange guest he has here.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

And I shall.

[_Exit_.]

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

Where dwell'st thou?

CORIOLANUS.

Under the canopy.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

Under the canopy?

CORIOLANUS.

Ay.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

Where's that?

CORIOLANUS.

I? th? city of kites and crows.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

I? th? city of kites and crows? What an ass it is! Then thou dwell?st with daws too?

CORIO LANUS.

No, I serve not thy master.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

How, sir? Do you meddle with my master?

CORIO LANUS.

Ay, 'tis an honest service than to meddle with thy mistress. Thou prat?st and prat?st. Serve with thy trencher, hence!

[_Beats him away_.]

[_Exit Third Servingman._]

Enter Aufidius with the Second Servingman.

AUFIDIUS.

Where is this fellow?

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Here, sir. I'd have beaten him like a dog, but for disturbing the lords within.

AUFIDIUS.

Whence com?st thou? What wouldst thou?

Thy name? Why speak?st not? Speak, man. What?s thy name?

CORIO LANUS.

[_Removing his muffler_.] If, Tullus,
Not yet thou know?st me, and, seeing me, dost not
Think me for the man I am, necessity
Commands me name myself.

AUFIDIUS.

What is thy name?

CORIO LANUS.

A name unmusical to the Volscians? ears
And harsh in sound to thine.

AUFIDIUS.

Say, what?s thy name?
Thou has a grim appearance, and thy face
Bears a command in't. Though thy tackle?s torn,
Thou show?st a noble vessel. What?s thy name?

CORIO LANUS.

Prepare thy brow to frown. Know?st thou me yet?

AUFIDIUS.

I know thee not. Thy name?

CORIO LANUS.

My name is Caius Martius, who hath done
To thee particularly and to all the Volsces
Great hurt and mischief; thereto witness may
My surname Coriolanus. The painful service,
The extreme dangers, and the drops of blood
Shed for my thankless country are requited
But with that surname, a good memory
And witness of the malice and displeasure
Which thou shouldst bear me. Only that name remains.
The cruelty and envy of the people,
Permitted by our dastard nobles, who
Have all forsook me, hath devoured the rest,
And suffered me by th? voice of slaves to be
Whooped out of Rome. Now this extremity
Hath brought me to thy hearth, not out of hope?
Mistake me not?to save my life; for if
I had feared death, of all the men i? th? world
I would have ?voided thee, but in mere spite,
To be full quit of those my banishers,
Stand I before thee here. Then if thou hast
A heart of wreak in thee, that wilt revenge
Thine own particular wrongs and stop those maims
Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee straight
And make my misery serve thy turn. So use it
That my revengeful services may prove
As benefits to thee, for I will fight
Against my cankered country with the spleen
Of all the under fiends. But if so be
Thou dar?st not this, and that to prove more fortunes
Thou ?rt tired, then, in a word, I also am
Longer to live most weary, and present
My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice,
Which not to cut would show thee but a fool,
Since I have ever followed thee with hate,
Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country?s breast,
And cannot live but to thy shame, unless
It be to do thee service.

AUFIDIUS.

O Martius, Martius,
Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my heart
A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter
Should from yond cloud speak divine things
And say ?tis true, I?d not believe them more
Than thee, all-noble Martius. Let me twine
Mine arms about that body, whereagainst
My grained ash an hundred times hath broke
And scarred the moon with splinters. Here I clip
The anvil of my sword and do contest
As hotly and as nobly with thy love
As ever in ambitious strength I did
Contend against thy valour. Know thou first,

I loved the maid I married; never man
Sighed truer breath. But that I see thee here,
Thou noble thing, more dances my rapt heart
Than when I first my wedded mistress saw
Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars, I tell thee
We have a power on foot, and I had purpose
Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn
Or lose mine arm for't. Thou hast beat me out
Twelve several times, and I have nightly since
Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me;
We have been down together in my sleep,
Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,
And waked half dead with nothing. Worthy Martius,
Had we no other quarrel else to Rome but that
Thou art thence banished, we would muster all
From twelve to seventy and, pouring war
Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,
Like a bold flood o'erbear 't. O, come, go in,
And take our friendly senators by th' hands,
Who now are here, taking their leaves of me,
Who am prepared against your territories,
Though not for Rome itself.

CORIOLANUS.

You bless me, gods!

AUFIDIUS.

Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have
The leading of thine own revenges, take
Th' one half of my commission and set down
As best thou art experienced, since thou know'st
Thy country's strength and weakness, thine own ways,
Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
Or rudely visit them in parts remote
To fright them ere destroy. But come in.
Let me commend thee first to those that shall
Say yea to thy desires. A thousand welcomes!
And more a friend than e'er an enemy?
Yet, Martius, that was much. Your hand. Most welcome!

[_Exeunt Coriolanus and Aufidius._]

Two of the Servingmen come forward.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

Here's a strange alteration!

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

By my hand, I had thought to have stricken him with a cudgel, and yet
my mind gave me his clothes made a false report of him.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

What an arm he has! He turned me about with his finger and his thumb as
one would set up a top.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Nay, I knew by his face that there was something in him. He had, sir, a kind of face, methought? I cannot tell how to term it.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

He had so, looking as it were? Would I were hanged, but I thought there was more in him than I could think.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

So did I, I? I'll be sworn. He is simply the rarest man i? th? world.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

I think he is. But a greater soldier than he you wot one.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Who, my master?

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

Nay, it?s no matter for that.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Worth six on him.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

Nay, not so neither. But I take him to be the greater soldier.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to say that. For the defence of a town our general is excellent.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

Ay, and for an assault too.

Enter the Third Servingman.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

O slaves, I can tell you news, news, you rascals!

FIRST and SECOND SERVINGMAN.

What, what, what? Let?s partake.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

I would not be a Roman, of all nations; I had as lief be a condemned man.

FIRST and SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Wherefore? Wherefore?

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

Why, here?s he that was wont to thwack our general, Caius Martius.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

Why do you say, ?thwack our general??

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

I do not say 'thwack our general,' but he was always good enough for him.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Come, we are fellows and friends. He was ever too hard for him; I have heard him say so himself.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

He was too hard for him directly, to say the troth on't, before Corioles; he scotched him and notched him like a carbonado.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

An he had been cannibally given, he might have boiled and eaten him too.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

But, more of thy news?

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

Why, he is so made on here within as if he were son and heir to Mars; set at upper end o' th' table; no question asked him by any of the senators but they stand bald before him. Our general himself makes a mistress of him, sanctifies himself with's hand, and turns up the white o' th' eye to his discourse. But the bottom of the news is, our general is cut i' th' middle and but one half of what he was yesterday, for the other has half, by the entreaty and grant of the whole table. He'll go, he says, and sowl the porter of Rome gates by th' ears. He will mow all down before him and leave his passage polled.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

And he's as like to do't as any man I can imagine.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

Do't? He will do't! For look you, sir, he has as many friends as enemies, which friends, sir, as it were, durst not, look you, sir, show themselves, as we term it, his friends whilst he's in directitude.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

Directitude? What's that?

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

But when they shall see, sir, his crest up again, and the man in blood, they will out of their burrows like coney after rain, and revel all with him.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

But when goes this forward?

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

Tomorrow, today, presently. You shall have the drum struck up this afternoon. 'Tis as it were parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

Why then, we shall have a stirring world again. This peace is nothing but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

Let me have war, say I. It exceeds peace as far as day does night. It's sprightly walking, audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy; mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible; a getter of more bastard children than war's a destroyer of men.

SECOND SERVINGMAN.

'Tis so, and as war in some sort, may be said to be a ravisher, so it cannot be denied but peace is a great maker of cuckolds.

FIRST SERVINGMAN.

Ay, and it makes men hate one another.

THIRD SERVINGMAN.

Reason: because they then less need one another. The wars for my money! I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians. They are rising; they are rising.

ALL.

In, in, in, in!

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VI. Rome. A public place

Enter the two Tribunes. Sicinius and Brutus.

SICINIUS.

We hear not of him, neither need we fear him.
His remedies are tame—the present peace,
And quietness of the people, which before
Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his friends
Blush that the world goes well, who rather had,
Though they themselves did suffer by't, behold
Dissentious numbers pestering streets than see
Our tradesmen singing in their shops and going
About their functions friendly.

BRUTUS.

We stood to't in good time.

Enter Menenius.

Is this Menenius?

SICINIUS.

'Tis he, 'tis he. O, he is grown most kind
Of late.—Hail, sir!

MENENIUS.

Hail to you both.

SICINIUS.

Your Coriolanus is not much missed
But with his friends. The commonwealth doth stand,
And so would do were he more angry at it.

MENENIUS.

All's well, and might have been much better if
He could have temporized.

SICINIUS.

Where is he, hear you?

MENENIUS.

Nay, I hear nothing;
His mother and his wife hear nothing from him.

Enter three or four Citizens.

ALL CITIZENS.

The gods preserve you both!

SICINIUS.

Good even, our neighbours.

BRUTUS.

Good even to you all, good even to you all.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Ourselves, our wives, and children, on our knees
Are bound to pray for you both.

SICINIUS.

Live and thrive!

BRUTUS.

Farewell, kind neighbours. We wished Coriolanus
Had loved you as we did.

CITIZENS.

Now the gods keep you!

BOTH TRIBUNES.

Farewell, farewell.

[_Exeunt Citizens._]

SICINIUS.

This is a happier and more comely time
Than when these fellows ran about the streets
Crying confusion.

BRUTUS.

Caius Martius was
A worthy officer in the war, but insolent,
Overcome with pride, ambitious, past all thinking
Self-loving.

SICINIUS.

And affecting one sole throne, without assistance.

MENENIUS.

I think not so.

SICINIUS.

We should by this, to all our lamentation,
If he had gone forth consul, found it so.

BRUTUS.

The gods have well prevented it, and Rome
Sits safe and still without him.

Enter an Aedile.

AEDILE.

Worthy tribunes,
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,
Reports the Volscies with two several powers
Are entered in the Roman territories,
And with the deepest malice of the war
Destroy what lies before them.

MENENIUS.

'Tis Aufidius,
Who, hearing of our Martius' banishment,
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world,
Which were insheathed when Martius stood for Rome,
And durst not once peep out.

SICINIUS.

Come, what talk you of Martius?

BRUTUS.

Go see this rumourer whipped. It cannot be
The Volscies dare break with us.

MENENIUS.

Cannot be?
We have record that very well it can,
And three examples of the like hath been
Within my age. But reason with the fellow
Before you punish him, where he heard this,
Lest you shall chance to whip your information
And beat the messenger who bids beware
Of what is to be dreaded.

SICINIUS.

Tell not me.

I know this cannot be.

BRUTUS.

Not possible.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER.

The nobles in great earnestness are going
All to the Senate House. Some news is coming
That turns their countenances.

SICINIUS.

'Tis this slave?

Go whip him 'fore the people's eyes his raising,
Nothing but his report.

MESSENGER.

Yes, worthy sir,
The slave's report is seconded, and more,
More fearful, is delivered.

SICINIUS.

What more fearful?

MESSENGER.

It is spoke freely out of many mouths?
How probable I do not know that Martius,
Joined with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome
And vows revenge as spacious as between
The young'st and oldest thing.

SICINIUS.

This is most likely!

BRUTUS.

Raised only that the weaker sort may wish
Good Martius home again.

SICINIUS.

The very trick on 't.

MENENIUS.

This is unlikely;
He and Aufidius can no more atone
Than violent'st contrariety.

Enter a Second Messenger.

SECOND MESSENGER.

You are sent for to the Senate.
A fearful army, led by Caius Martius

Associated with Aufidius, rages
Upon our territories, and have already
O'erborne their way, consumed with fire and took
What lay before them.

Enter Cominius.

COMINIUS.

O, you have made good work!

MENENIUS.

What news? What news?

COMINIUS.

You have hold to ravish your own daughters and
To melt the city leads upon your pates,
To see your wives dishonoured to your noses?

MENENIUS.

What's the news? What's the news?

COMINIUS.

Your temples burned in their cement, and
Your franchises, whereon you stood, confined
Into an auger's bore.

MENENIUS.

Pray now, your news??

You have made fair work, I fear me. Pray, your news?
If Martius should be joined with Volscians?

COMINIUS.

If?

He is their god; he leads them like a thing
Made by some other deity than Nature,
That shapes man better; and they follow him
Against us brats with no less confidence
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies
Or butchers killing flies.

MENENIUS.

You have made good work,
You and your apron-men, you that stood so much
Upon the voice of occupation and
The breath of garlic eaters!

COMINIUS.

He'll shake your Rome about your ears.

MENENIUS.

As Hercules did shake down mellow fruit.
You have made fair work.

BRUTUS.

But is this true, sir?

COMINIUS.

Ay, and you?ll look pale
Before you find it other. All the regions
Do smilingly revolt, and who resists
Are mocked for valiant ignorance
And perish constant fools. Who is't can blame him?
Your enemies and his find something in him.

MENENIUS.

We are all undone unless
The noble man have mercy.

COMINIUS.

Who shall ask it?
The Tribunes cannot do't for shame; the people
Deserve such pity of him as the wolf
Does of the shepherds. For his best friends, if they
Should say 'Be good to Rome,' they charged him even
As those should do that had deserved his hate
And therein showed like enemies.

MENENIUS.

'Tis true.
If he were putting to my house the brand
That should consume it, I have not the face
To say 'Beseech you, cease.'?You have made fair hands,
You and your crafts! You have crafted fair!

COMINIUS.

You have brought
A trembling upon Rome such as was never
S? incapable of help.

TRIBUNES.

Say not we brought it.

MENENIUS.

How? Was it we? We loved him, but like beasts
And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters,
Who did hoot him out o' th' city.

COMINIUS.

But I fear
They'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,
The second name of men, obeys his points
As if he were his officer. Desperation
Is all the policy, strength, and defence
That Rome can make against them.

Enter a troop of Citizens.

MENENIUS.

Here comes the clusters.?
And is Aufidius with him? You are they
That made the air unwholesome when you cast
Your stinking, greasy caps in hooting at
Coriolanus? exile. Now he?s coming,
And not a hair upon a soldier?s head
Which will not prove a whip. As many coxcombs
As you threw caps up will he tumble down
And pay you for your voices. ?Tis no matter.
If he could burn us all into one coal
We have deserved it.

ALL CITIZENS.
Faith, we hear fearful news.

FIRST CITIZEN.
For mine own part,
When I said banish him, I said ?twas pity.

SECOND CITIZEN.
And so did I.

THIRD CITIZEN.
And so did I. And, to say the truth, so did very many of us. That we
did we did for the best; and though we willingly consented to his
banishment, yet it was against our will.

COMINIUS.
You are goodly things, you voices!

MENENIUS.
You have made good work, you and your cry!?
Shall?s to the Capitol?

COMINIUS.
O, ay, what else?

[_Exeunt Cominius and Menenius._]

SICINIUS.
Go, masters, get you home. Be not dismayed.
These are a side that would be glad to have
This true which they so seem to fear. Go home,
And show no sign of fear.

FIRST CITIZEN.
The gods be good to us! Come, masters, let?s home. I ever said we were
i? th? wrong when we banished him.

SECOND CITIZEN.
So did we all. But, come, let?s home.

[_Exeunt Citizens._]

BRUTUS.

I do not like this news.

SICINIUS.

Nor I.

BRUTUS.

Let's to the Capitol. Would half my wealth
Would buy this for a lie!

SICINIUS.

Pray let's go.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VII. A camp at a short distance from Rome

Enter Aufidius with his Lieutenant.

AUFIDIUS.

Do they still fly to th' Roman?

LIEUTENANT.

I do not know what witchcraft's in him, but
Your soldiers use him as the grace 'fore meat,
Their talk at table, and their thanks at end;
And you are dark'ned in this action, sir,
Even by your own.

AUFIDIUS.

I cannot help it now,
Unless by using means I lame the foot
Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier,
Even to my person, than I thought he would
When first I did embrace him. Yet his nature
In that's no changeling, and I must excuse
What cannot be amended.

LIEUTENANT.

Yet I wish, sir?

I mean for your particular?you had not
Joined in commission with him, but either
Had borne the action of yourself or else
To him had left it solely.

AUFIDIUS.

I understand thee well, and be thou sure,
When he shall come to his account, he knows not
What I can urge against him, although it seems,
And so he thinks and is no less apparent
To th' vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,
And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state,
Fights dragonlike, and does achieve as soon
As draw his sword; yet he hath left undone

That which shall break his neck or hazard mine
Whene'er we come to our account.

LIEUTENANT.

Sir, I beseech you, think you he'll carry Rome?

AUFIDIUS.

All places yield to him ere he sits down,
And the nobility of Rome are his;
The Senators and Patricians love him too.
The Tribunes are no soldiers, and their people
Will be as rash in the repeal as hasty
To expel him thence. I think he'll be to Rome
As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it
By sovereignty of nature. First, he was
A noble servant to them, but he could not
Carry his honours even. Whether 'twas pride,
Which out of daily fortune ever taints
The happy man; whether defect of judgment,
To fail in the disposing of those chances
Which he was lord of; or whether nature,
Not to be other than one thing, not moving
From th' casque to th' cushion, but commanding peace
Even with the same austerity and garb
As he controlled the war; but one of these?
As he hath spices of them all?not all,
For I dare so far free him?made him feared,
So hated, and so banished. But he has a merit
To choke it in the utterance. So our virtues
Lie in th' interpretation of the time,
And power, unto itself most commendable,
Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair
To extol what it hath done.
One fire drives out one fire, one nail one nail;
Rights by rights falter; strengths by strengths do fail.
Come, let's away. When, Caius, Rome is thine,
Thou art poor'st of all; then shortly art thou mine.

[_Exeunt._]

ACT V

SCENE I. Rome. A public place

Enter Menenius, Cominius, Sicinius, Brutus (the two Tribunes), with others.

MENENIUS.

No, I'll not go. You hear what he hath said
Which was sometime his general, who loved him

In a most dear particular. He called me father,
But what o' that? Go you that banished him;
A mile before his tent, fall down, and knee
The way into his mercy. Nay, if he coyed
To hear Cominius speak, I'll keep at home.

COMINIUS.

He would not seem to know me.

MENENIUS.

Do you hear?

COMINIUS.

Yet one time he did call me by my name.
I urged our old acquaintance, and the drops
That we have bled together. 'Coriolanus?
He would not answer to, forbade all names.
He was a kind of nothing, titleless,
Till he had forged himself a name i' th' fire
Of burning Rome.

MENENIUS.

Why, so; you have made good work!
A pair of tribunes that have wracked Rome
To make coals cheap! A noble memory!

COMINIUS.

I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon
When it was less expected. He replied
It was a bare petition of a state
To one whom they had punished.

MENENIUS.

Very well.
Could he say less?

COMINIUS.

I offered to awaken his regard
For's private friends. His answer to me was
He could not stay to pick them in a pile
Of noisome musty chaff. He said 'twas folly
For one poor grain or two to leave unburnt
And still to nose th' offence.

MENENIUS.

For one poor grain or two!
I am one of those! His mother, wife, his child,
And this brave fellow too, we are the grains;
You are the musty chaff, and you are smelt
Above the moon. We must be burnt for you.

SICINIUS.

Nay, pray, be patient. If you refuse your aid
In this so-never-needed help, yet do not

Upbraid's with our distress. But sure, if you
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,
More than the instant army we can make,
Might stop our countryman.

MENENIUS.

No, I'll not meddle.

SICINIUS.

Pray you, go to him.

MENENIUS.

What should I do?

BRUTUS.

Only make trial what your love can do
For Rome, towards Martius.

MENENIUS.

Well, and say that Martius
Return me, as Cominius is returned, unheard,
What then? But as a discontented friend,
Grief-shot with his unkindness? Say't be so?

SICINIUS.

Yet your good will
Must have that thanks from Rome after the measure
As you intended well.

MENENIUS.

I'll undertake't.
I think he'll hear me. Yet to bite his lip
And hum at good Cominius much unhearts me.
He was not taken well; he had not dined.
The veins unfilled, our blood is cold, and then
We pout upon the morning, are unapt
To give or to forgive; but when we have stuffed
These pipes and these conveyances of our blood
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
Than in our priestlike fasts. Therefore I'll watch him
Till he be dieted to my request,
And then I'll set upon him.

BRUTUS.

You know the very road into his kindness
And cannot lose your way.

MENENIUS.

Good faith, I'll prove him,
Speed how it will. I shall ere long have knowledge
Of my success.

[_Exit._]

COMINIUS.

He'll never hear him.

SICINIUS.

Not?

COMINIUS.

I tell you, he does sit in gold, his eye
Red as 'twould burn Rome; and his injury
The jailer to his pity. I kneeled before him;
'Twas very faintly he said 'Rise?'; dismissed me
Thus with his speechless hand. What he would do
He sent in writing after me; what he
Would not, bound with an oath to yield to his
Conditions. So that all hope is vain
Unless his noble mother and his wife,
Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him
For mercy to his country. Therefore let's hence
And with our fair entreaties haste them on.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE II. An Advanced post of the Volscian camp before Rome.

Enter Menenius to the Watch, or Guard.

FIRST WATCH.

Stay! Whence are you?

SECOND WATCH.

Stand, and go back.

MENENIUS.

You guard like men; 'tis well. But by your leave,
I am an officer of state and come
To speak with Coriolanus.

FIRST WATCH.

From whence?

MENENIUS.

From Rome.

FIRST WATCH.

You may not pass; you must return. Our general
Will no more hear from thence.

SECOND WATCH.

You'll see your Rome embraced with fire before
You'll speak with Coriolanus.

MENENIUS.

Good my friends,
If you have heard your general talk of Rome

And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks
My name hath touched your ears. It is Menenius.

FIRST WATCH.

Be it so; go back. The virtue of your name
Is not here passable.

MENENIUS.

I tell thee, fellow,
Thy general is my lover. I have been
The book of his good acts, whence men have read
His fame unparalleled happily amplified;
For I have ever verified my friends?
Of whom he's chief? with all the size that verity
Would without lapsing suffer. Nay, sometimes,
Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground,
I have tumbled past the throw, and in his praise
Have almost stamped the leasing. Therefore, fellow,
I must have leave to pass.

FIRST WATCH.

Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his behalf as you have
uttered words in your own, you should not pass here, no, though it were
as virtuous to lie as to live chastely. Therefore, go back.

MENENIUS.

Prithee, fellow, remember my name is Menenius, always factionary on the
party of your general.

SECOND WATCH.

Howsoever you have been his liar, as you say you have, I am one that,
telling true under him, must say you cannot pass. Therefore go back.

MENENIUS.

Has he dined, can'st thou tell? For I would not speak with him till
after dinner.

FIRST WATCH.

You are a Roman, are you?

MENENIUS.

I am, as thy general is.

FIRST WATCH.

Then you should hate Rome as he does. Can you, when you have pushed out
your gates the very defender of them, and, in a violent popular
ignorance given your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges
with the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms of your
daughters, or with the palsied intercession of such a decayed dotant as
you seem to be? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your city
is ready to flame in with such weak breath as this? No, you are
deceived. Therefore back to Rome and prepare for your execution. You
are condemned. Our general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon.

MENENIUS.

Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.

SECOND WATCH.

Come, my captain knows you not.

MENENIUS.

I mean thy general.

FIRST WATCH.

My general cares not for you. Back, I say, go, lest I let forth your half pint of blood. Back! That's the utmost of your having. Back!

MENENIUS.

Nay, but fellow, fellow?

Enter Coriolanus with Aufidius.

CORIOLANUS.

What's the matter?

MENENIUS.

Now, you companion, I'll say an errand for you. You shall know now that I am in estimation; you shall perceive that a Jack guardant cannot office me from my son Coriolanus. Guess but by my entertainment with him if thou stand'st not i' th' state of hanging or of some death more long in spectatorship and crueller in suffering; behold now presently, and swoon for what's to come upon thee. [_to Coriolanus_.] The glorious gods sit in hourly synod about thy particular prosperity and love thee no worse than thy old father Menenius does! O my son, my son! Thou art preparing fire for us; look thee, here's water to quench it. I was hardly moved to come to thee; but being assured none but myself could move thee, I have been blown out of your gates with sighs, and conjure thee to pardon Rome and thy petitionary countrymen. The good gods assuage thy wrath and turn the dregs of it upon this varlet here, this, who, like a block, hath denied my access to thee.

CORIOLANUS.

Away!

MENENIUS.

How? Away?

CORIOLANUS.

Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs
Are servanted to others. Though I owe
My revenge properly, my remission lies
In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar,
Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison rather
Than pity note how much. Therefore begone.
Mine ears against your suits are stronger than
Your gates against my force. Yet, for I loved thee,
Take this along; I writ it for thy sake,

[_He gives Menenius a paper._]

And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,
I will not hear thee speak. This man, Aufidius,
Was my beloved in Rome; yet thou behold'st.

AUFIDIUS.

You keep a constant temper.

[_They exit._]

[_The Guard and Menenius remain._]

FIRST WATCH.

Now, sir, is your name Menenius?

SECOND WATCH.

'Tis a spell, you see, of much power. You know the way home again.

FIRST WATCH.

Do you hear how we are shent for keeping your Greatness back?

SECOND WATCH.

What cause do you think I have to swoon?

MENENIUS.

I neither care for th' world nor your general. For such things as you,
I can scarce think there's any, you're so slight. He that hath a will
to die by himself fears it not from another. Let your general do his
worst. For you, be that you are, long; and your misery increase with
your age! I say to you, as I was said to, away!

[_Exit._]

FIRST WATCH.

A noble fellow, I warrant him.

SECOND WATCH.

The worthy fellow is our general. He is the rock, the oak not to be
wind-shaken.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE III. The tent of Coriolanus

Enter Coriolanus and Aufidius.

CORIOLANUS.

We will before the walls of Rome tomorrow
Set down our host. My partner in this action,
You must report to th' Volscian lords how plainly
I have borne this business.

AUFIDIUS.

Only their ends
You have respected, stopped your ears against
The general suit of Rome; never admitted
A private whisper, no, not with such friends
That thought them sure of you.

CORIOLANUS.

This last old man,
Whom with cracked heart I have sent to Rome,
Loved me above the measure of a father,
Nay, godded me indeed. Their latest refuge
Was to send him, for whose old love I have?
Though I showed sourly to him?once more offered
The first conditions, which they did refuse
And cannot now accept, to grace him only
That thought he could do more. A very little
I have yielded to. Fresh embassies and suits,
Nor from the state nor private friends, hereafter
Will I lend ear to.

[_Shout within._]

Ha? What shout is this?
Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow
In the same time 'tis made? I will not.

Enter Virgilia, Volumnia, Valeria, young Martius with attendants.

My wife comes foremost, then the honoured mold
Wherein this trunk was framed, and in her hand
The grandchild to her blood. But out, affection!
All bond and privilege of nature, break!
Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.
What is that curtsy worth? Or those doves? eyes,
Which can make gods forsworn? I melt and am not
Of stronger earth than others. My mother bows,
As if Olympus to a molehill should
In supplication nod; and my young boy
Hath an aspect of intercession which
Great Nature cries 'Deny not!?' Let the Volsces
Plough Rome and harrow Italy, I'll never
Be such a gosling to obey instinct, but stand
As if a man were author of himself,
And knew no other kin.

VIRGILIA.

My lord and husband.

CORIOLANUS.

These eyes are not the same I wore in Rome.

VIRGILIA.

The sorrow that delivers us thus changed

Makes you think so.

CORIO LANUS.

Like a dull actor now,
I have forgot my part, and I am out,
Even to a full disgrace. Best of my flesh,
Forgive my tyranny, but do not say
For that, ?Forgive our Romans.?

[_They kiss._]

O, a kiss
Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!
Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss
I carried from thee, dear, and my true lip
Hath virgined it e?er since. You gods! I prate
And the most noble mother of the world
Leave unsaluted. Sink, my knee, i? th? earth;

[_Kneels._]

Of thy deep duty more impression show
Than that of common sons.

VOLUMNIA.

O, stand up blest,

[_He rises_.]

Whilst with no softer cushion than the flint
I kneel before thee and unproperly
Show duty, as mistaken all this while
Between the child and parent.

[_She kneels._]

CORIO LANUS.

What is this?
Your knees to me? To your corrected son?

[_He raises her up._]

Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach
Fillip the stars! Then let the mutinous winds
Strike the proud cedars ?gainst the fiery sun,
Murdering impossibility to make
What cannot be slight work.

VOLUMNIA.

Thou art my warrior;
I holp to frame thee. Do you know this lady?

CORIO LANUS.

The noble sister of Publicola,

The moon of Rome, chaste as the icicle
That's curdied by the frost from purest snow
And hangs on Dian's temple! Dear Valeria.

VOLUMNIA.

This is a poor epitome of yours,
Which by th' interpretation of full time
May show like all yourself.

CORIOLANUS.

The god of soldiers,
With the consent of supreme Jove, inform
Thy thoughts with nobleness, that thou mayst prove
To shame invulnerable, and stick i' th' wars
Like a great seamark standing every flaw
And saving those that eye thee.

VOLUMNIA.

[_To young Martius._] Your knee, sirrah.

[_He kneels._]

CORIOLANUS.

That's my brave boy!

VOLUMNIA.

Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself
Are suitors to you.

[_Young Martius rises._]

CORIOLANUS.

I beseech you, peace;
Or, if you'd ask, remember this before:
The thing I have forsworn to grant may never
Be held by you denials. Do not bid me
Dismiss my soldiers or capitulate
Again with Rome's mechanics. Tell me not
Wherein I seem unnatural; desire not
T' allay my rages and revenges with
Your colder reasons.

VOLUMNIA.

O, no more, no more!
You have said you will not grant us anything;
For we have nothing else to ask but that
Which you deny already. Yet we will ask,
That if you fail in our request, the blame
May hang upon your hardness. Therefore hear us.

CORIOLANUS.

Aufidius, and you Volsces, mark, for we'll
Hear naught from Rome in private. Your request?

VOLUMNIA.

Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment
And state of bodies would bewray what life
We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself
How more unfortunate than all living women
Are we come hither; since that thy sight, which should
Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,
Constrains them weep and shake with fear and sorrow,
Making the mother, wife, and child to see
The son, the husband, and the father tearing
His country's bowels out. And to poor we
Thine enmity's most capital. Thou barr'st us
Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort
That all but we enjoy. For how can we?
Alas, how can we? for our country pray,
Whereto we are bound, together with thy victory,
Whereto we are bound? Alack, or we must lose
The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,
Our comfort in the country. We must find
An evident calamity, though we had
Our wish, which side should win, for either thou
Must as a foreign recreant be led
With manacles through our streets, or else
Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin
And bear the palm for having bravely shed
Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,
I purpose not to wait on fortune till
These wars determine. If I cannot persuade thee
Rather to show a noble grace to both parts
Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner
March to assault thy country than to tread?
Trust to't, thou shalt not? on thy mother's womb
That brought thee to this world.

VIRGILIA.

Ay, and mine,
That brought you forth this boy to keep your name
Living to time.

YOUNG MARTIUS.

He shall not tread on me.
I'll run away till I am bigger, but then I'll fight.

CORIOLANUS.

Not of a woman's tenderness to be
Requires nor child nor woman's face to see?
I have sat too long.

[_He rises._]

VOLUMNIA.

Nay, go not from us thus.
If it were so, that our request did tend
To save the Romans, thereby to destroy

The Volsces whom you serve, you might condemn us
As poisonous of your honour. No, our suit
Is that you reconcile them, while the Volsces
May say 'This mercy we have showed,' the Romans
'This we received,' and each in either side
Give the all-hail to thee and cry, 'Be blessed
For making up this peace!' Thou know'st, great son,
The end of war's uncertain, but this certain,
That, if thou conquer Rome, the benefit
Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name
Whose repetition will be dogged with curses,
Whose chronicle thus writ: 'The man was noble,
But with his last attempt he wiped it out;
Destroyed his country, and his name remains
To th' ensuing age abhorred.' Speak to me, son.
Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour
To imitate the graces of the gods,
To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' th' air
And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt
That should but rive an oak. Why dost not speak?
Think'st thou it honourable for a noble man
Still to remember wrongs? Daughter, speak you.
He cares not for your weeping. Speak thou, boy.
Perhaps thy childishness will move him more
Than can our reasons. There's no man in the world
More bound to his mother, yet here he lets me prate
Like one i' th' stocks. Thou hast never in thy life
Showed thy dear mother any courtesy
When she, poor hen, fond of no second brood,
Has clucked thee to the wars and safely home,
Loaden with honour. Say my request's unjust
And spurn me back; but if it be not so,
Thou art not honest, and the gods will plague thee
That thou restrain'st from me the duty which
To a mother's part belongs. He turns away.
Down, ladies! Let us shame him with our knees.
To his surname Coriolanus longs more pride
Than pity to our prayers. Down! An end.

[_They kneel._]

This is the last. So we will home to Rome
And die among our neighbours. Nay, behold's.
This boy that cannot tell what he would have,
But kneels and holds up hands for fellowship,
Does reason our petition with more strength
Than thou hast to deny't. Come, let us go.

[_They rise._]

This fellow had a Volscian to his mother,
His wife is in Corioles, and his child
Like him by chance. Yet give us our dispatch.
I am hushed until our city be afire,

And then I'll speak a little.

[_He holds her by the hand, silent._]

CORIOLANUS.

O mother, mother!

What have you done? Behold, the heavens do ope,
The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
They laugh at. O my mother, mother, O!
You have won a happy victory to Rome,
But, for your son? believe it, O, believe it!
Most dangerously you have with him prevailed,
If not most mortal to him. But let it come.
Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,
I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,
Were you in my stead, would you have heard
A mother less? Or granted less, Aufidius?

AUFIDIUS.

I was moved withal.

CORIOLANUS.

I dare be sworn you were.

And, sir, it is no little thing to make
Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,
What peace you'll make, advise me. For my part,
I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you; and pray you,
Stand to me in this cause. O mother! Wife!

[_He speaks with them aside._]

AUFIDIUS.

[_Aside_] I am glad thou hast set thy mercy and thy honour
At difference in thee. Out of that I'll work
Myself a former fortune.

CORIOLANUS.

[_To the Women_] Ay, by and by;
But we'll drink together, and you shall bear
A better witness back than words, which we,
On like conditions, will have countersealed.
Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve
To have a temple built you. All the swords
In Italy, and her confederate arms,
Could not have made this peace.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE IV. Rome. A public place

Enter Menenius and Sicinius.

MENENIUS.

See you yond coign o' the Capitol, yond cornerstone?

SICINIUS.

Why, what of that?

MENENIUS.

If it be possible for you to displace it with your little finger, there is some hope the ladies of Rome, especially his mother, may prevail with him. But I say there is no hope in't. Our throats are sentenced and stay upon execution.

SICINIUS.

Is't possible that so short a time can alter the condition of a man?

MENENIUS.

There is differency between a grub and a butterfly, yet your butterfly was a grub. This Martius is grown from man to dragon. He has wings; he's more than a creeping thing.

SICINIUS.

He loved his mother dearly.

MENENIUS.

So did he me; and he no more remembers his mother now than an eight-year-old horse. The tartness of his face sours ripe grapes. When he walks, he moves like an engine, and the ground shrinks before his treading. He is able to pierce a corslet with his eye, talks like a knell, and his hum is a battery. He sits in his state as a thing made for Alexander. What he bids be done is finished with his bidding. He wants nothing of a god but eternity and a heaven to throne in.

SICINIUS.

Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

MENENIUS.

I paint him in the character. Mark what mercy his mother shall bring from him. There is no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger. That shall our poor city find, and all this is long of you.

SICINIUS.

The gods be good unto us.

MENENIUS.

No, in such a case the gods will not be good unto us. When we banished him, we respected not them; and he returning to break our necks, they respect not us.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER.

Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your house. The plebeians have got your fellow tribune And hale him up and down, all swearing if The Roman ladies bring not comfort home, They'll give him death by inches.

Enter another Messenger.

SICINIUS.

What's the news?

SECOND MESSENGER.

Good news, good news! The ladies have prevailed.

The Volscians are dislodged and Martius gone.

A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,

No, not th' expulsion of the Tarquins.

SICINIUS.

Friend,

Art thou certain this is true? Is't most certain?

SECOND MESSENGER.

As certain as I know the sun is fire.

Where have you lurked that you make doubt of it?

Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide

As the recomforted through th' gates. Why, hark you!

[_Trumpets, hautboys, drums beat, all together._]

The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries, and fifes,

Tabors and cymbals, and the shouting Romans

Make the sun dance. Hark you!

[_A shout within._]

MENENIUS.

This is good news.

I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia

Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians

A city full; of tribunes such as you

A sea and land full. You have prayed well today.

This morning for ten thousand of your throats

I'd not have given a doit. Hark, how they joy!

[_Sound still with the shouts._]

SICINIUS.

First, the gods bless you for your tidings; next, accept my
thankfulness.

SECOND MESSENGER.

Sir, we have all great cause to give great thanks.

SICINIUS.

They are near the city?

MESSENGER.

Almost at point to enter.

SICINIUS.

We'll meet them, and help the joy.

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE V. Rome. A street near the gate

Enter two Senators, with Ladies (Volumnia, Virgilia, Valeria) passing over the stage, with other Lords.

SENATOR.

Behold our patroness, the life of Rome!
Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,
And make triumphant fires. Strew flowers before them,
Unshout the noise that banished Martius,
Repeal him with the welcome of his mother.
Cry ?Welcome, ladies, welcome!?

ALL.

Welcome, ladies, welcome!

[_A flourish with drums and trumpets._]

[_Exeunt._]

SCENE VI. Antium. A public place

Enter Tullus Aufidius with Attendants.

AUFIDIUS.

Go tell the lords o' th' city I am here.
Deliver them this paper.

[_He gives them a paper_.]

Having read it,
Bid them repair to th' marketplace, where I,
Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,
Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse
The city ports by this hath entered and
Intends t' appear before the people, hoping
To purge himself with words. Dispatch.

[_Exeunt Attendants._]

Enter three or four Conspirators of Aufidius's faction.

Most welcome!

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

How is it with our general?

AUFIDIUS.

Even so

As with a man by his own alms empoisoned
And with his charity slain.

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

Most noble sir,
If you do hold the same intent wherein
You wished us parties, we'll deliver you
Of your great danger.

AUFIDIUS.

Sir, I cannot tell.
We must proceed as we do find the people.

THIRD CONSPIRATOR.

The people will remain uncertain whilst
?Twixt you there?s difference, but the fall of either
Makes the survivor heir of all.

AUFIDIUS.

I know it,
And my pretext to strike at him admits
A good construction. I raised him, and I pawned
Mine honour for his truth, who being so heightened,
He watered his new plants with dews of flattery,
Seducing so my friends; and to this end,
He bowed his nature, never known before
But to be rough, unswayable, and free.

THIRD CONSPIRATOR.

Sir, his stoutness
When he did stand for consul, which he lost
By lack of stooping?

AUFIDIUS.

That I would have spoke of.
Being banished for?t, he came unto my hearth,
Presented to my knife his throat. I took him,
Made him joint servant with me, gave him way
In all his own desires; nay, let him choose
Out of my files, his projects to accomplish,
My best and freshest men; served his designments
In mine own person; help to reap the fame
Which he did end all his; and took some pride
To do myself this wrong; till at the last
I seemed his follower, not partner; and
He waged me with his countenance as if
I had been mercenary.

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

So he did, my lord.
The army marvelled at it, and, in the last,
When he had carried Rome and that we looked
For no less spoil than glory?

AUFIDIUS.

There was it
For which my sinews shall be stretched upon him.
At a few drops of women's rheum, which are
As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labour
Of our great action. Therefore shall he die,
And I'll renew me in his fall. But, hark!

[_Drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of the people._]

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

Your native town you entered like a post
And had no welcomes home, but he returns
Splitting the air with noise.

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

And patient fools,
Whose children he hath slain, their base throats tear
With giving him glory.

THIRD CONSPIRATOR.

Therefore at your vantage,
Ere he express himself or move the people
With what he would say, let him feel your sword,
Which we will second. When he lies along,
After your way his tale pronounced shall bury
His reasons with his body.

AUFIDIUS.

Say no more.
Here come the lords.

Enter the Lords of the city.

ALL LORDS.

You are most welcome home.

AUFIDIUS.

I have not deserved it.
But, worthy lords, have you with heed perused
What I have written to you?

ALL LORDS.

We have.

FIRST LORD.

And grieve to hear't.
What faults he made before the last, I think
Might have found easy fines, but there to end
Where he was to begin and give away
The benefit of our levies, answering us
With our own charge, making a treaty where
There was a yielding?this admits no excuse.

Enter Coriolanus marching with Drum and Colours, the Commoners being with him.

AUFIDIUS.

He approaches. You shall hear him.

CORIOLANUS.

Hail, lords! I am returned your soldier,
No more infected with my country's love
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting
Under your great command. You are to know
That prosperously I have attempted, and
With bloody passage led your wars even to
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home
Doth more than counterpoise a full third part
The charges of the action. We have made peace
With no less honour to the Antiates
Than shame to th' Romans, and we here deliver,
Subscribed by th' Consuls and patricians,
Together with the seal o' th' Senate, what
We have compounded on.

[_He offers the lords a paper._]

AUFIDIUS.

Read it not, noble lords,
But tell the traitor in the highest degree
He hath abused your powers.

CORIOLANUS.

?Traitor?? How now?

AUFIDIUS.

Ay, traitor, Martius.

CORIOLANUS.

Martius?

AUFIDIUS.

Ay, Martius, Caius Martius. Dost thou think
I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name
Coriolanus, in Corioles?
You lords and heads o' th' state, perfidiously
He has betrayed your business and given up
For certain drops of salt your city Rome?
I say your city?to his wife and mother,
Breaking his oath and resolution like
A twist of rotten silk, never admitting
Counsel o' th' war, but at his nurse's tears
He whined and roared away your victory,
That pages blushed at him and men of heart
Looked wond'ring each at other.

CORIOLANUS.

Hear'st thou, Mars?

AUFIDIUS.

Name not the god, thou boy of tears.

CORIOLANUS.

Ha?

AUFIDIUS.

No more.

CORIOLANUS.

Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart
Too great for what contains it. 'Boy? O slave!
Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever
I was forced to scold. Your judgments, my grave lords,
Must give this cur the lie; and his own notion?
Who wears my stripes impressed upon him, that
Must bear my beating to his grave? shall join
To thrust the lie unto him.

FIRST LORD.

Peace, both, and hear me speak.

CORIOLANUS.

Cut me to pieces, Volsces. Men and lads,
Stain all your edges on me. 'Boy? False hound!
If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
That like an eagle in a dovecote, I
Fluttered your Volscians in Corioles,
Alone I did it. 'Boy?!

AUFIDIUS.

Why, noble lords,
Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,
Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,
'Fore your own eyes and ears?

ALL CONSPIRATORS.

Let him die for't.

ALL PEOPLE

Tear him to pieces! Do it presently! He killed my son! My daughter! He
killed my cousin Marcus! He killed my father!

SECOND LORD.

Peace, ho! No outrage! Peace!
The man is noble, and his fame folds in
This orb o' th' Earth. His last offences to us
Shall have judicious hearing. Stand, Aufidius,
And trouble not the peace.

CORIOLANUS.

O that I had him,

With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe,
To use my lawful sword.

AUFIDIUS.
Insolent villain!

ALL CONSPIRATORS.
Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!

[_Draw the Conspirators, and kills Martius, who falls. Aufidius stands
on him._]

LORDS.
Hold, hold, hold, hold!

AUFIDIUS.
My noble masters, hear me speak.

FIRST LORD.
O Tullus!

SECOND LORD.
Thou hast done a deed whereat valour will weep.

THIRD LORD.
Tread not upon him. Masters, all be quiet.
Put up your swords.

AUFIDIUS.
My lords, when you shall know as in this rage,
Provoked by him, you cannot the great danger
Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice
That he is thus cut off. Please it your Honours
To call me to your senate, I'll deliver
Myself your loyal servant, or endure
Your heaviest censure.

FIRST LORD.
Bear from hence his body,
And mourn you for him. Let him be regarded
As the most noble corse that ever herald
Did follow to his urn.

SECOND LORD.
His own impatience
Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.
Let's make the best of it.

AUFIDIUS.
My rage is gone,
And I am struck with sorrow. Take him up.
Help, three of the chiefest soldiers; I'll be one.
Beat thou the drum that it speak mournfully.

Trail your steel pikes. Though in this city he
Hath widowed and unchilded many a one,
Which to this hour bewail the injury,
Yet he shall have a noble memory.
Assist.

[_Exeunt, bearing the body of Martius. A dead march sounded._]

CYMBELINE

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Dramatis Personæ

CYMBELINE, King of Britain

CLOTEN, son to the Queen by a former husband

POSTHUMUS LEONATUS, a gentleman, husband to Imogen

BELARIUS, a banished lord, disguised under the name of Morgan

GUIDERIUS and ARVIRAGUS, sons to Cymbeline, disguised under the names of POLYDORE and CADWAL, supposed sons to Belarius

PHILARIO, Italian, friend to Posthumus

IACHIMO, Italian, friend to Philario

CAIUS LUCIUS, General of the Roman forces

PISANIO, servant to Posthumus

CORNELIUS, a physician

A SOOTHSAYER

A ROMAN CAPTAIN

TWO BRITISH CAPTAINS

A FRENCH GENTLEMAN, friend to Philario

TWO LORDS of Cymbeline's court

TWO GENTLEMEN of the same

TWO GAOLERS

QUEEN, wife to Cymbeline

IMOGEN, daughter to Cymbeline by a former queen

HELEN, a lady attending on Imogen

APPARITIONS

Lords, Ladies, Roman Senators, Tribunes, a Dutch Gentleman, a Spanish Gentleman, Musicians, Officers, Captains, Soldiers, Messengers, and Attendants

SCENE: Britain; Italy.

ACT I

SCENE I. Britain. The garden of Cymbeline's palace.

Enter two Gentlemen.

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

You do not meet a man but frowns; our bloods

No more obey the heavens than our courtiers
Still seem as does the King's.

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

But what's the matter?

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

His daughter, and the heir of's kingdom, whom
He purpos'd to his wife's sole son—a widow
That late he married—hath referr'd herself
Unto a poor but worthy gentleman. She's wedded;
Her husband banish'd; she imprison'd. All
Is outward sorrow, though I think the King
Be touch'd at very heart.

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

None but the King?

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

He that hath lost her too. So is the Queen,
That most desir'd the match. But not a courtier,
Although they wear their faces to the bent
Of the King's looks, hath a heart that is not
Glad at the thing they scowl at.

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

And why so?

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

He that hath miss'd the Princess is a thing
Too bad for bad

[Truncated]