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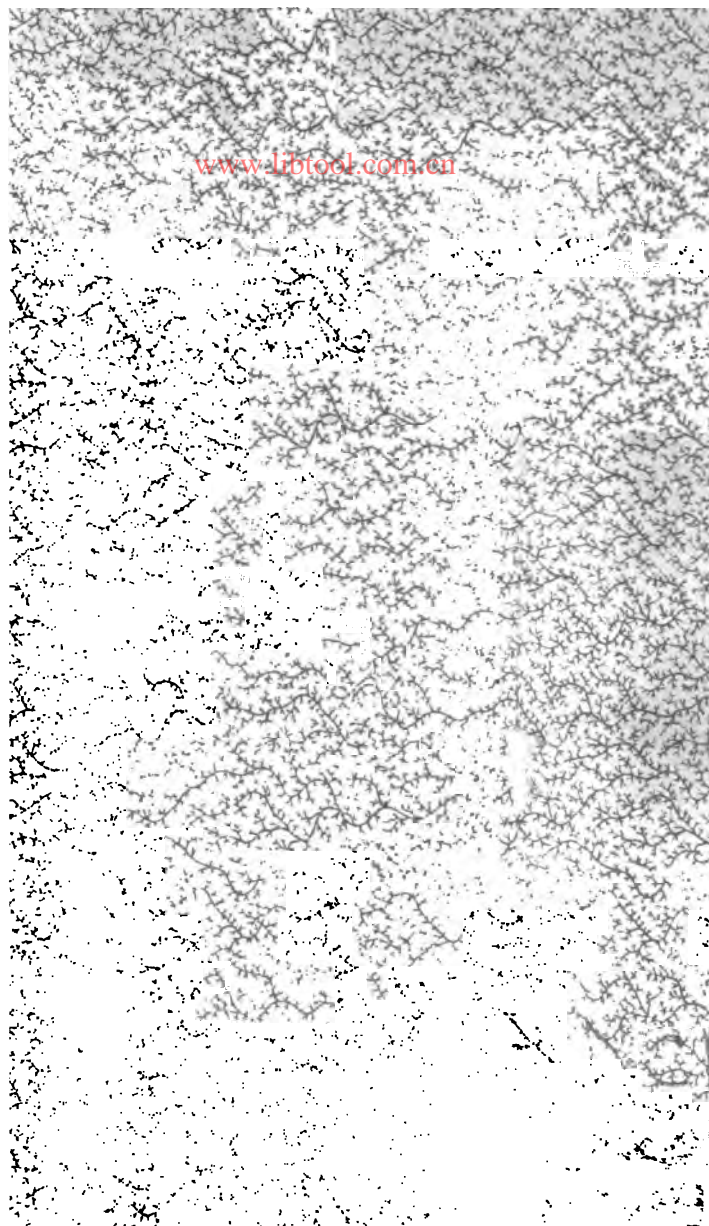
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THE  
**WORKS**  
OF  
**WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.**

*IN NINE VOLUMES.*

WITH  
THE CORRECTIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS  
OF  
DR. JOHNSON, G. STEEVENS, AND OTHERS,  
REVISED  
BY ISAAC REED.

THIRD BOSTON,  
FROM THE FIFTH LONDON EDITION.

VOL. VIII.

Time, which is continually washing away the dissoluble Fabricks of other Poets, passes  
without Injury by the Admant of Shakspeare. *Dr. Johnson's Preface.*

BOSTON :

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VOLUME VIII.

OF

SHAKSPEARE'S PLAYS.

Containing

KING LEAR,

ROMEO AND JULIET,



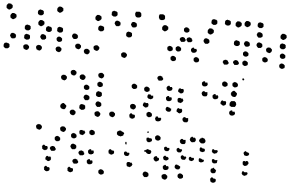
HAMLET,

OTHELLO.

COPIED FROM THE TEXT OF DR. REED.

WITH NOTES BY JOHNSON, STEVENS, AND OTHERS.

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REVISED  
**KING LEAR.**  
REVISED

1\* VOL. VIII.

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天  
地  
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和

KING LEAR.

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*ACT IV. Scene VII.*

*Cordelia.* Was this face to be opposed against the jarring winds.

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## OBSERVATIONS.

THE tragedy of *Lear* is deservedly celebrated among the dramas of Shakspeare. There is perhaps no play which keeps the attention so strongly fixed; which so much agitates our passions, and interests our curiosity. The artful involutions of distinct interests, the striking oppositions of contrary characters, the sudden changes of fortune, and the quick succession of events, fill the mind with a perpetual tumult of indignation, pity, and hope. There is no scene which does not contribute to the aggravation of the distress or conduct of the action, and scarce a line which does not conduce to the progress of the scene. So powerful is the current of the poet's imagination, that the mind, which once ventures within it, is hurried irresistibly along.

On the seeming improbability of Lear's conduct it may be observed, that he is represented according to histories at that time vulgarly received as true. And, perhaps, if we turn our thoughts upon the barbarity and ignorance of the age to which this story is referred, it will appear not so unlikely as while we estimate Lear's manners by our own. Such preference of one daughter to another, or resignation of dominion on such conditions, would be yet credible, if told of a petty prince of Guinea or Madagascar. Shakspeare, indeed, by the mention of his earls and dukes, has given us the idea of times more civilized, and of life regulated by softer manners; and the truth is, that though he so nicely discriminates, and so minutely describes the characters of men, he commonly neglects and confounds the characters of ages, by mingling customs ancient and modern, English and foreign.

My learned friend, Mr. Warton, who has in *The Adventurer* very minutely criticised this play, remarks, that the instances of cruelty are too savage and shocking, and that the intervention of Edmund destroys the simplicity of the story. These objections may, I think, be answered by repeating, that the cruelty of the daughters is an historical fact, to which the poet has added little, having only drawn it into a series by dialogue and action. But I am not able to apologize with equal plausi-

bility for the extrusion of Gloster's eyes, which seems an act too horrid to be endured in dramatic exhibition, and such as must always compel the mind to relieve its distress by incredulity. Yet let it be remembered that our author well knew what would please the audience for which he wrote.

The injury done by Edmund to the simplicity of the action is abundantly recompensed by the addition of variety, by the art with which he is made to co-operate with the chief design, and the opportunity which he gives the poet of combining perfidy with perfidy, and connecting the wicked son with the wicked daughters, to impress this important moral, that villainy is never at a stop, that crimes lead to crimes, and at last terminate in ruin.

But though this moral be incidentally enforced, Shakspeare has suffered the virtue of Cordelia to perish in a just cause, contrary to the natural ideas of justice, to the hope of the reader, and, what is yet more strange, to the faith of chronicles. Yet this conduct is justified by *The Spectator*, who blames Tate for giving Cordelia success and happiness in his alteration, and declares, that, in his opinion, *the tragedy has lost half its beauty*. Dennis has remarked, whether justly or not, that, to secure the favourable reception of *Case*, *the town was poisoned with much false and abominable criticism*, and that endeavours had been used to discredit and decry poetical justice. A play in which the wicked prosper, and the virtuous miscarry, may doubtless be good, because it is a just representation of the common events of human life; but since all reasonable beings naturally love justice, I cannot easily be persuaded, that the observation of justice makes a play worse; or, that if other excellences are equal, the audience will not always rise better pleased from the final triumph of persecuted virtue.

In the present case the public has decided.\* Cordelia, from the time of Tate, has always retired with victory and felicity. And, if my sensations could add any thing to the general suffrage, I might relate, I was many years ago so shocked by Cordelia's death, that I know not whether I ever endured to read again the last scenes of the play, till I undertook to revise them as an editor.

There is another controversy among the critics concerning this play. It is disputed whether the predominant image in

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\* Dr. Johnson should rather have said that the managers of the theatres royal have decided, and the public has been obliged to acquiesce in their decision. The altered play has the upper gallery on its side; the original drama was patronized by Addison:

“*Vitrix causa Diis placuit, sed victa Catoni.*”

STEEVENS.

Lear's disordered mind be the loss of his kingdom or the cruelty of his daughters. Mr. Murphy, a very judicious critic, has evinced by induction of particular passages, that the cruelty of his daughters is the primary source of his distress, and that the loss of royalty affects him only as a secondary and subordinate evil. He observes with great justness, that Lear would move our compassion but little, did we not rather consider the injured father than the degraded king.

The story of this play, except the episode of Edmund, which is derived, I think, from Sidney, is taken originally from Geoffrey of Monmouth, whom Holinshed generally copied; but perhaps immediately from an old historical ballad. My reason for believing that the play was posterior to the ballad, rather than the ballad to the play, is, that the ballad has nothing of Shakspeare's nocturnal tempest, which is too striking to have been omitted, and that it follows the chronicle; it has the rudiments of the play, but none of its amplifications: it first hinted Lear's madness, but did not array it in circumstances. The writer of the ballad added something to the history, which is a proof that he would have added more, if more had occurred to his mind, and more must have occurred if he had seen Shakspeare.

JOHNSON.

The story of King Leir and his three daughters was originally told by Geoffrey of Monmouth, from whom Holinshed transcribed it; and in his Chronicle Shakspeare had certainly read it, as it occurs not far from that of *Cymbeline*; though the old play on the same subject probably first suggested to him the idea of making it the ground-work of a tragedy.

Geoffrey of Monmouth says, that Leir, who was the eldest son of Bladud, "nobly governed his country for sixty years." According to that historian, he died about 800 years before the birth of Christ.

This tragedy, I believe, was written in 1605. See *An Attempt to ascertain the Order of Shakspeare's Plays*.

The episode of Gloster and his sons is undoubtedly formed on the story of the blind king of Paphlagonia in Sidney's *Arcadia*.

MALONE.

The reader will also find the story of King Lear, in the second book and 10th canto of Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, and in the 15th chapter of the third book of Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602.

STEEVENS

**PERSONS REPRESENTED.**

**LEAR**, *king of Britain.*

*King of FRANCE.*

*Duke of BURGUNDY.*

*Duke of CORNWALL.*

*Duke of ALBANY.*

*Earl of GLOSTER.*

*Earl of KENT.*

**EDGAR**, *son to Gloster.*

**EDMUND**, *bastard son to Gloster.*

**CURAN**, *a courtier.*

*Old Man, tenant to Gloster.*

*Physician.*

*Fool.*

**OSWALD**, *steward to Goneril.*

*An Officer, employed by Edmund.*

*Gentleman, attendant on Cordelia.*

*A Herald.*

*Servants to Cornwall.*

**GONERIL,**  
**REGAN,**  
**CORDELIA,** } *daughters to Lear.*

*Knights attending on the King, Officers, Messengers,  
Soldiers, and Attendants.*

**SCENE**—*Britain.*

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# KING LEAR.

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## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room of State in King LEAR's Palace. Enter KENT, GLOSTER, and EDMUND.*

*Kent.*  
**I** THOUGHT, the king had more affected the duke of Albany, than Cornwall.

*Glo.* It did always seem so to us : but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most ; for equalities are so weighed, that curiosity in neither<sup>1</sup> can make choice of either's moiety.

*Kent.* Is not this your son, my lord ?

*Glo.* His breeding, sir, has been at my charge : I have so often blushed to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to it.

*Kent.* I cannot conceive you.

*Glo.* Sir, this young fellow's mother could : whereupon she grew round-wombed ; and had, indeed, sir, a son for her cradle, ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault ?

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

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

*Edm.* No, my lord.

*Glo.* My lord of Kent : remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

*Edm.* My services to your lordship.

---

[1] *Curiosity* is scrupulousness, or captiousness. So, in the *Taming of the Shrew*,

“For *curious* I cannot be with you.

STEEVENS.

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

*Edm.* Sir, I shall study deserving.

*Glo.* He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again:—The king is coming. [*Trumpets sound within.*]

*Enter LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, and Attendants.*

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

*Glo.* I shall, my liege. [*Exeunt GLO. and EDMUND.*]

*Lear.* Mean-time we shall express our darker purpose.<sup>3</sup>

Give me the map there.—Know, that we have divided,  
In three, our kingdom: and 'tis our fast intent  
To shake all cares and business from our age;  
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we  
Unburden'd crawl toward death.—Our son of Cornwall,  
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,  
We have this hour a constant will to publish  
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife  
May be prevented now. The princes, France and Bur-  
gundy,

Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,  
Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,  
And here are to be answer'd.—Tell me, my daughters,  
(Since now we will divest us, both of rule,  
Interest of territory, cares of state,)  
Which of you, shall we say, doth love us most?  
That we our largest bounty may extend  
Where merit doth most challenge it.—Goneril,  
Our eldest-born, speak first.

*Gon.* Sir, I

Do love you more than words can wield the matter,  
Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;  
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;  
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour:  
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found.  
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;  
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.<sup>4</sup>

[3] Darker—for more secret; not for indirect, oblique. **WARBURTON.**  
This word may admit a further explication. "We shall express our darker purpose": that is, we have already made known in some measure our design of parting the kingdom; we will now discover what has not been told before, the reasons by which we shall regulate the partition. This interpolation will justify or palliate the exordial dialogue. **JOHNSON.**

[4] Beyond all assignable quantity. I love you beyond limits, and cannot say, it is so much; for how much soever I should name, it would yet be more. **JOHNSON.**

*Cor.* What shall Cordelia do? Love, and be silent.

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

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

*Cor.* Then poor Cordelia!  
 And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love's  
 More richer than my tongue.

*Lear.* To thee, and thine, hereditary ever,  
 Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom;  
 No less in space, validity,<sup>7</sup> and pleasure,  
 Than that confirm'd on Goneril.—Now, our joy,  
 Although the last, not least; to whose young love  
 The vines of France, and milk of Burgundy,  
 Strive to be interest'd; what can you say, to draw  
 A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

*Cor.* Nothing, my lord.

*Lear.* Nothing?

*Cor.* Nothing.

*Lear.* Nothing can come of nothing: speak again.

*Cor.* Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave  
 My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty  
 According to my bond; nor more, nor less.

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

*Cor.* Good my lord,  
 You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me: I  
 Return those duties back as are right fit,  
 Obey you, love you, and most honour you.

[5] My sister has equally expressed my sentiments, only she comes short of me in this, that I profess myself an enemy to all joys but you.—*That I profess, means, in that I profess.* M. MASON.

[6] Perhaps *square* means compass, comprehension. JOHNSON.

[7] Validity—for worth, value; not for integrity or good title. WARD

Why have my sisters husbands, if they say,  
They love you, all? Haply, when I shall wed,  
That lord, whose hand must take my plight, shall carry  
Half my love with him, half my care, and duty :  
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,  
To love my father all.

*Lear.* But goes this with thy heart ?

*Cor.* Ay, good my lord.

*Lear.* So young, and so untender ?

*Cor.* So young, my lord, and true.

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

*Kent.* Good my liege,—

*Lear.* Peace, Kent !

Come not between the dragon and his wrath :  
I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest  
On her kind nursery.—Hence, and avoid my sight !—

[To CORDELIA.]

So be my grave my peace, as here I give  
Her father's heart from her!—Call France;—Who stirs?  
Call Burgundy.—Cornwall, and Albany,  
With my two daughters' dowers digest this third :  
Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.  
I do invest you jointly with my power,  
Pre-eminence, and all the large effects  
That troop with majesty.—Ourself, by monthly course,  
With reservation of an hundred knights,  
By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode  
Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain  
The name, and all the additions to a king ;  
The sway,  
Revenue, execution, of the rest,<sup>9</sup>

[8] From this—i. e. From this time. STEEVENS.

[9] The execution of the rest is, I suppose, all the other business. JOHNS.



Beloved sons, be yours : which to confirm,  
This coronet part between you. [*Giving the crown.*]

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

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

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

When majesty stoops to folly. Reverse thy doom ;  
And, in thy best consideration, check  
This hideous rashness : answer my life my judgment,  
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least ;  
Nor are those empty-hearted, whose low sound  
Reverbs no hollowness.<sup>1</sup>

*Lear.* Kent, on thy life, no more.

*Kent.* My life I never held but as a pawn  
To wage against thine enemies ;<sup>2</sup> nor fear to lose it,  
Thy safety being the motive.

*Lear.* Out of my sight !

*Kent.* See better, Lear ; and let me still remain  
The true blank of thine eye.<sup>3</sup>

*Lear.* Now, by Apollo,—

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

*Lear.* O, vassal ! miscreant !

[*Laying his hand on his sword.*]

*Alb. Corn.* Dear sir, forbear.

*Kent.* Do ;

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

*Lear.* Hear me, recreant !  
On thine allegiance hear me !—

[1] Reverbs—this I presume to be a word of the poet's own making ; meaning the same as reverberates. STEEVENS.

[2] i. e. I never regarded my life as my own, but merely as a thing of which I had the possession, not the property ; and which was entrusted to me as a pawn or pledge to be employed in waging war against your enemies. STEEVENS.

[3] The blank—is the *white* or exact mark at which the arrow is  
"See better," says Kent, "and keep me always in your view." JOHNSON

Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,  
 (Which we durst never yet,) and, with strain'd pride,<sup>4</sup>  
 To come betwixt our sentence and our power ;  
 (Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,)  
 Our potency make good, take thy reward.<sup>5</sup>  
 Five days we do allot thee, for provision  
 To shield thee from diseases of the world ;  
 And, on the sixth, to turn thy hated back  
 Upon our kingdom : if, on the tenth day following,  
 Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,  
 The moment is thy death : Away ! by Jupiter,<sup>6</sup>  
 This shall not be revok'd.

*Kent.* Fare thee well, king : since thus thou wilt appear,  
 Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here :—  
 The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,

[*To CORDELIA.*

That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said !—  
 And your large speeches may your deeds approve,

[*To REGAN and GONERIL.*

That good effects may spring from words of love.—  
 Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu ;  
 He'll shape his old course in a country new.<sup>7</sup> [*Exit.*

*Re-enter GLOSTER ; with FRANCE, BURGUNDY, and Attendants.*

*Glo.* Here's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.

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

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

*Lear.* Right noble Burgundy,  
 When she was dear to us, we did hold her so ;  
 But now her price is fall'n : Sir, there she stands ;  
 If aught within that little, seeming substance,<sup>8</sup>

[4] The old copy reads *starved pride* ; that is, pride exorbitant ; pride passing due bounds. JOHNSON.

[5] As a proof that I am not a mere threatener, that I have power as well as will to punish, take the due reward of thy demerits ; hear thy sentence. The words, *Our potency made good*, are in the absolute case. MALONE.

[6] Shakspeare makes Lear too much of a mythologist : he had Hecate and Apollo before. JOHNSON.

[7] He will follow his old maxims ; he will continue to act upon the same principles. JOHNSON.

[8] Seeming means specious. STEEVENS.

Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,  
And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,  
She's there, and she is yours.

*Bur.* I know no answer.

*Lear.* Sir,  
Will you, with those infirmities she owes,<sup>9</sup>  
Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,  
Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,  
Take her, or leave her ?

*Bur.* Pardon me, royal sir ;  
Election makes not up on such conditions.<sup>1</sup>

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

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

*Cor.* I yet beseech your majesty,  
(If for I want that glib and oily art,  
To speak and purpose not ; since what I well intend,  
I'll do't before I speak,) that you make known  
It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,  
No unchaste action, or dishonour'd step,  
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour :  
But even for want of that, for which I am richer ;  
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue  
That I am glad I have not, though not to have it,  
Hath lost me in your liking.

*Lear.* Better thou

[9] Owes—i. e. possessed of. STEEVENS.

[1] Election comes not to a decision ; in the same sense as when we say,  
" I have made up my mind on that subject." MALONE.

Hadst not been born, than not to have pleas'd me better.

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

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

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

*Bur.* I am sorry then, you have so lost a father,  
That you must lose a husband.

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

*Fra.* Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;  
Most choice, forsaken; and most lov'd, despis'd!  
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon:  
Be it lawful, I take up what's cast away.  
Gods, gods! 'tis strange, that from their cold'st neglect  
My love should kindle to inflam'd respect.—  
Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,  
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France:  
Not all the dukes of wat'rish Burgundy  
Shall buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me.—  
Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind:  
Thou lovest here, a better where to find.<sup>2</sup>

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

[*Flourish.* *Exc.* LEAR, BURGUNDY, CORNWALL,  
ALBANY, GLOSTER, and Attendants.

*France.* Bid farewell to your sisters.

*Cor.* The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes  
Cordelia leaves you: I know you what you are;  
And, like a sister, am most loath to call  
Your faults, as they are nam'd. Use well our father:  
To your professed bosoms I commit him:

[2] *Here* and *where* have the power of nouns. Thou lovest this residence to find a better residence in another place. JOHNSON.

But yet, alas! stood I within his grace,  
I would prefer him to a better place.  
So farewell to you both.

*Gon.* Prescribe not us our duties.

*Reg.* Let your study

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

*Cor.* Time shall unfold what plaited cunning hides ;  
Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.  
Well may you prosper !

*Fran.* Come, my fair Cordelia. [*Exe. FRA. and COR.*]

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

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

*Gon.* You see how full of changes his ages is ; the ob-  
servation we have made of it hath not been little ; he  
always loved our sister most ; and with what poor judg-  
ment he hath now cast her off, appears too grossly.

*Reg.* 'Tis the infirmity of his age : yet he hath ever  
but slenderly known himself.

*Gon.* The best and soundest of his time hath been but  
rash ; then must we look to receivē from his age, not  
alone the imperfections of long-engrafted condition,<sup>4</sup> but,  
therewithal, the unruly waywardness that infirm and  
choleric years bring with them.

*Reg.* Such unconstant starts are we like to have from  
him, as this of Kent's banishment.

*Gon.* There is further compliment of leave-taking be-  
tween France and him. Pray you, let us hit together :<sup>5</sup>  
If our father carry authority with such dispositions as he  
bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

*Reg.* We shall further think of it.

*Gon.* We must do something, and i'the heat.<sup>6</sup> [*Exe.*]

[3] Plaited cunning—i. e. complicated, involved cunning. JOHNSON.

[4] Of *qualities* of mind, confirmed by long habit. So, in *Othello*, "a wo-  
man of so gentle a *condition*." MALONE.

[5] Hit—i. e. agree. STEEVENS.

[6] I'the heat—i. e. We must *strike while the iron's hot*. STEEVENS.

## SCENE II.

*A Hall in the Earl of Gloster's Castle.* Enter EDMUND, with a letter.

*Edm.* Thou, nature, art my goddess ; to thy law  
My services are bound : Wherefore should I  
Stand in the plague of custom ; and permit  
The curiosity of nations<sup>7</sup> to deprive me,<sup>8</sup>  
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines  
Lag of a brother ?<sup>9</sup> Why bastard ? wherefore base ?  
When my dimensions are as well compact,  
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,  
As honest madam's issue ? Why brand they us  
With base ? with baseness ? bastardy ? base, base ?  
Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take  
More composition and fierce quality,  
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,  
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,  
Got 'tween asleep and wake ?—Well then,  
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land :  
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund,  
As to the legitimate : Fine word,—legitimate !  
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,  
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base  
Shall top the legitimate. I grow ; I prosper :—  
Now, gods, stand up for bastards !

*Enter GLOSTER.*

*Glo.* Kent banish'd thus ! and France in choler parted !  
And the king gone to-night ! subscrib'd his power !<sup>2</sup>  
Confin'd to exhibition !<sup>2</sup> All this done  
Upon the gad !<sup>3</sup>—Edmund ! how now ? what news ?

[7] Curiosity, in the time of Shakspeare, was a word that signified an over nice scrupulousness in manners, dress, &c. STEEVENS.

By the *curiosity* of nations, Edmund means the *nicety*, the *strictness* of civil institutions. So, when Hamlet is about to prove that the dust of Alexander might be employed to stop a bung-hole, Horatio says, "that were to consider the matter too *curiously*." M. MASON.

[8] To *deprive* was, in our author's time, synonymous to *disinherit*. The old dictionary renders *exhæredo* by this word. STEEVENS.

[9] Edmund inveighs against the tyranny of custom in two instances, with respect to younger brothers, and to bastards. In the former he must not be understood to mean himself, but the argument becomes general by implying more than is said, "Wherefore should I or any man." HANMER.

[1] To subscribe, in Shakspeare, is to *yield*, or *surrender*. So, afterwards, "You owe me no *subscription*." MALONE.

[2] Exhibition, is allowance. The term is yet used in the universities.

JOHNSON.

[3] Done upon the gad, is done suddenly, or, as before, while the iron is hot. A *gad* is an iron bar. RITSON.

*Edm.* So please your lordship, none.

*Glo.* Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter? [Putting up the letter.]

*Edm.* I know no news, my lord.

*Glo.* What paper were you reading?

*Edm.* Nothing, my lord.

*Glo.* No? What needed then that terrible despatch of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let's see: Come, if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.

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

*Glo.* Give me the letter, sir.

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

*Glo.* Let's see, let's see.

*Edm.* I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue.<sup>4</sup>

*Glo.* [Reads.] *This policy, and reverence of age, makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us, till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother, Edgar.—Humph—Conspiracy!—Sleep till I waked him,—you should enjoy half his revenue,—My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in?—When came this to you? Who brought it?*

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

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

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

*Glo.* It is his.

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

*Glo.* Hath he never heretofore sounded you in this business?

[4] *Essay and taste* are both terms from royal tables. See note on act v sc. iii. STEEV. [5] *Idle and fond*—Weck and foolish. JOHNS.

*Edm.* Never, my lord : But I have often heard him maintain it to be fit that sons at perfect age, and fathers declining, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

*Glo.* O villain, villain!—His very opinion in the letter!—Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish!—Go, sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him:—Abominable villain!—Where is he?

*Edm.* I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother, till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you shall run a certain course; where, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honour, and to no other pretence of danger.<sup>9</sup>

*Glo.* Think you so?

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

*Glo.* He cannot be such a monster.

*Edm.* Nor is not, sure.

*Glo.* To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him.—Heaven and earth!—Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him,<sup>1</sup> I pray you: frame the business after your own wisdom, I would unstate myself, to be in a due resolution.<sup>2</sup>

*Edm.* I will seek him, sir, presently; convey the business<sup>3</sup> as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

*Glo.* These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us; though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects: Love cools, friendship falls off,<sup>4</sup> bro-

[9] Pretence—is design and purpose. So afterwards in this play, "Pretence and purpose of unkindness." JOHNSON.

[1] I once thought it should be read—you into him; but, perhaps, it is a familiar phrase, like "do me this." JOHNSON.  
So in *Twelfth Night*, "challenge me the duke's youth to fight with him." STEEVENS.

[2] I would give all I possess to be certain of the truth. This is the meaning of the words *to be in a due resolution*. So, *Othello*,  
"—To be once in doubt  
Is, once to be resolved." M. MASON.

[3] To convey, is to *carry through*; in this place, it is to *manage artfully*; we say of a juggler, that he has a *clean conveyance*. JOHNSON.

[4] That is, though natural philosophy can give account of eclipses, yet we feel their consequences. JOHNSON.



thers divide : In cities, mutinies ; in countries, discord ; in palaces, treasons ; and the bond cracked between son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction ; there's son against father : the king falls from bias of nature ; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time : Machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves !—Find out this villain, Edmund ; it shall lose thee nothing ; do it carefully :—and the noble and true hearted Kent banished ! his offence, honesty !—Strange ! strange ! [Exit.]

*Edm.* This is the excellent foppery of the world !  
that, when we are sick in fortune, (often the surfeit of

[5] In Shakspeare's best plays, besides the vices that arise from the subject, there is generally some peculiar prevailing folly, principally ridiculed, that runs through the whole piece. Thus, in *The Tempest*, the lying disposition of travellers, and, in *As you like it*, the fantastic humour of courtiers, is exposed and satirized with infinite pleasantry. In like manner, in this play of *Lear*, the dotages of judicial astrology are severely ridiculed. I fancy, was the date of its first performance well considered, it would be found that something or other happened at that time which gave a more than ordinary run to this deceit, as these words seem to intimate : *I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.* However this be, an impious cheat, which had so little foundation in nature or reason, so detestable an original, and such fatal consequences on the manners of the people, who were at that time strangely besotted with it, certainly deserved the severest lash of satire. It was a fundamental in this noble science, that whatever seeds of good dispositions the infant unborn might be endowed with, either from nature, or traductively from its parents, yet if, at the time of its birth, the delivery was by any casualty so accelerated or retarded, as to fall in with the predominancy of a malignant constellation, that momentary influence would entirely change its nature, and bias it to all the contrary ill qualities : so wretched and monstrous an opinion did it set out with. But the Italians, to whom we owe this, as well as most other unnatural crimes and follies of these latter ages, fomented its original impiety to the most detestable height of extravagance. Petrus Aponensis, an Italian physician of the 13th century, assures us that those prayers which are made to God when the moon is in conjunction with Jupiter in the Dragon's tail, are infallibly heard. The great Milton, with a just indignation of this impiety, hath, in his *Paradise Regained*, satirized it in a very beautiful manner, by putting these reveries into the mouth of the devil. Nor could the licentious Rabelais himself forbear to ridicule this impious dotage, which he does with exquisite address and humour, where, in the fable which he so agreeably tells from *Æsop*, of the man who applied to Jupiter for the loss of his hatcher, he makes those who, on the poor man's good success, have projected to trick Jupiter by the same petition, a kind of astrologic atheists, who ascribed this good fortune, that they imagined they were now all going to partake of, to the influence of some rare conjunction and configuration of the stars. " *Hen, hen, disent ils—Et donques, telle est au temps present la revolution des Cieulx, la constellation des Astres, &c aspect des planetes, que quiconque coignee perdra soudain deviendra ainsi riche ?*" Non. *ProL. du. iv. Livre*—But to return to Shakspeare. So blasphemous a delusion, therefore, it became the honesty of our poet to expose. But it was a tender point, and required managing. For this impious juggle had in his time a kind of religious reverence paid to it. It was therefore to be done obliquely : and the circumstances of the scene furnished him with as good an opportunity as he could wish. The persons in the drama are all Pagans, so that, as in compliance to custom, his good characters were not to speak ill of judicial astrology, they could, on account of their religion give no reputation to it. But in order to expose

our own behaviour,) we make guilty of our disasters, the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity; fools, by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers, by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on: An admirable evasion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the dragon's tail; and my nativity was under *ursa major*; so that it follows, I am rough and lecherous.—Tut, I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing. Edgar—

*Enter EDGAR.*

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

*Edg.* How now, brother Edmund? What serious contemplation are you in?

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

*Edg.* Do your busy yourself with that?

*Edm.* I promise you, the effects he writes of, succeed unhappily; as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

*Edg.* How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

*Edm.* Come, come; when saw you my father last?

*Edg.* Why, the night gone by.

it the more, he, with great judgment, makes these Pagans fatalists; as appears by these words of Lear,

“By all the operations of the orbs,  
From whom we do exist and cease to be.”

For the doctrine of fate is the true foundation of judicial astrology. Having thus discredited it by the very commendations given to it, he was in no danger of having his direct satire against it mistaken, by its being put (as he was obliged, both in paying regard to custom, and in following nature) into the mouth of the villain and atheist, especially when he has added such force of reason to his ridicule, in the words referred to in the beginning of the note. **WARBURTON.**

[6] This is, I think, intended to ridicule the very awkward conclusion of our old comedies, where the persons of the scene make their entry inartificially, and just when the poet wants them on the stage. **WARNER.**

*Edm.* Spake you with him?

*Edg.* Ay, two hours together.

*Edm.* Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him, by word, or countenance?

*Edg.* None at all.

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

*Edg.* Some villain hath done me wrong.

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

*Edg.* Armed, brother?

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

*Edg.* Shall I hear from you anon?

*Edm.* I do serve you in this business.— [*Exit* EDG.  
A credulous father, and a brother noble,  
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,  
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty  
My practices ride easy!—I see the business.—  
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:  
All with me's meet, that I can fashion fit. [*Exit.*

### SCENE III.

*A Room in the Duke of ALBANY's Palace. Enter GONERIL and Steward.*

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

*Stew.* Ay, madam.

*Gon.* By day and night! he wrongs me; every hour. He flashes into one gross crime or other, That set us all at odds: I'll not endure it: His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us On every trifle:—When he returns from hunting, I will not speak with him; say, I am sick:— If you come slack of former services,

You shall do well ; the fault of it I'll answer.

*Stew.* He's coming, madam ; I hear him.

[*Horns within.*]

*Gon.* Put on what weary negligence you please,  
You and your fellows ; I'd have it come to question :  
If he dislike it, let him to my sister,  
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,  
Not to be over-rul'd. Idle old man,  
That still would manage those authorities,  
That he hath given away !—Now, by my life,  
Old fools are babes again ; and must be us'd  
With checks, as flatteries, 7—when they are seen abus'd.  
Remember what I have said.

*Stew.* Very well, madam.

*Gon.* And let his knights have colder looks among you ;  
What grows of it, no matter ; advise your fellows so :  
I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,  
That I may speak :—I'll write straight to my sister,  
To hold my very course :—Prepare for dinner.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV.

*A Hall in the same. Enter KENT, disguised.*

*Kent.* If but as well I other accents borrow,  
That can my speech diffuse, 8 my good intent  
May carry through itself to that full issue  
For which I raz'd my likeness.—Now, banish'd Kent,  
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,  
(So may it come !) thy master, whom thou lov'st,  
Shall find thee full of labours.

[*Horns within. Enter LEAR, Knights, and Attendants.*]

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

*Kent.* A man, sir.

*Lear.* What dost thou profess ? What wouldest thou  
with us ?

*Kent.* I do profess to be no less than I seem ; to serve  
him truly, that will put me in trust ; to love him that is  
honest ; to converse with him that is wise, and says lit-

[7] Old fools—must be used with checks, as well as flatteries, when they  
[i. e. flatteries] are seen to be abused. TYRWHITT.

[8] To diffuse speech—signifies to disorder it, and so to disguise it. STEE:

tle ;<sup>9</sup> to fear judgment ; to fight, when I cannot choose ; and to eat no fish.<sup>10</sup>

*Lear.* What art thou ?

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

*Lear.* If thou be as poor for a subject, as he is for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldest thou ?

*Kent.* Service.

*Lear.* Who wouldest thou serve ?

*Kent.* You.

*Lear.* Dost thou know me, fellow ?

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

*Lear.* What's that ?

*Kent.* Authority.

*Lear.* What services canst thou do ?

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

*Lear.* How old art thou ?

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

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

*Enter Steward.*

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

*Stew.* So please you,—

[*Exit.*

*Lear.* What says the fellow there ? Call the clotpoll back.—Where's my fool, ho ?—I think, the world's asleep.—How now ? where's that mongrel ?

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

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

[9] To *converse* signifies immediately and properly to *keep company*, not to *discourse* or *talk*. His meaning is, that he chooses for his companions men of reserve and caution ; men who are not tattlers nor tale-bearers. JOHNS.

[1] In queen Elizabeth's time the Papists were esteemed, and with good reason, enemies to the government. Hence the proverbial phrase of "He's an honest man, and eats no fish ;" to signify he's a friend to the government and a Protestant. The eating fish, on a religious account, being then esteemed such a badge of popery, that when it was enjoined for a season by act of parliament, for the encouragement of the fish-towns, it was thought necessary to declare the reason : hence it was called Cecil's fast. WARR.

*Knight.* Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not. [www.libtool.com.cn](http://www.libtool.com.cn)

*Lear.* He would not !

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

*Lear.* Ha ! sayest thou so ?

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

*Lear.* Thou but rememberest me of mine own conception ; I have perceived a most faint neglect of late ; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity ;<sup>2</sup> than as a very pretence<sup>3</sup> and purpose of unkindness : I will look further into't.—But where's my fool ? I have not seen him this two days.

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

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

*Re-enter Steward.*

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

*Stew.* My lady's father.

*Lear.* My lady's father ! my lord's knave : you whoreson dog ! you slave ! you cur !

*Stew.* I am none of this, my lord ; I beseech you, pardon me.

*Lear.* Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal ?

[*Striking him.*]

*Stew.* I'll not be struck, my lord.

*Kent.* Nor tripped neither ; you base foot-ball player.

[*Tripping up his heels.*]

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

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

[*Pushes the Steward out.*]

[2] By this phrase Lear means, I believe, a *punctilious jealousy*, resulting from a scrupulous watchfulness of his own dignity. • STEEVENS.

[3] *Pretence* in Shakspeare generally signifies *design*. STEEVENS.

*Lear.* Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee : there's earnest of thy service. *[Giving KENT money.]*

*Enter Fool.*

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

*[Giving KENT his cap.]*

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

*Fool.* Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

*Kent.* Why, fool ?

*Fool.* Why ? For taking one's part that is out of favour : Nay, an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou'lt catch cold shortly : There, take my coxcomb :<sup>4</sup> Why, this fellow has banished two of his daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will ; if thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb.—How now, nuncle :<sup>5</sup> 'Would I had two coxcombs, and two daughters !

*Lear.* Why, my boy ?

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

*Lear.* Take heed, sirrah ; the whip.

*Fool.* Truth's a dog that must to kennel ; he must be whipped out, when Lady, the brach,<sup>6</sup> may stand by the fire and stink.

*Lear.* A pestilent gall to me !

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

*Lear.* Do.

*Fool.* Mark it, nuncle :—

Have more than thou showest,  
Speak less than thou knowest,  
Lend less than thou owest,<sup>7</sup>  
Ride more than thou goest,  
Learn more than thou trowest,<sup>8</sup>  
Set less than thou throwest ;

[4] Coxcomb—meaning his cap, called so, because on the top of the fool or jester's cap was sewed a piece of red cloth, resembling the comb of a cock. The word, afterwards, was used to denote a vain, conceited, meddling fellow. WARBURTON.

[5] It is remarkable at this day, that the lower people in Shropshire call the judge of assize "my nuncle the judge." VAILLANT.

[6] *Brach*, a bitch of the hunting kind. Lady is still a common name for a hound. So Hotspur ;

"I had rather hear Lady my brach howl in Irish." STEEV.

[7] Do not lend all that thou hast. To *owe* in old English, is *to possess*. If *owe* be taken for *to be in debt*, the more prudent precept would be,  
Lend more than thou owest. JOHNSON.

[8] To *trow*—is an old word, which signifies to believe. The precept is admirable. WARBURTON.

Leave thy drink and thy whore,  
And keep in a door,  
And thou shalt have more  
Than two tens to a score.

*Lear.* This is nothing, fool.

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

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

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

*Lear.* A bitter fool !

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

*Lear.* No, lad ; teach me.

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

*Lear.* Dost thou call me fool, boy ?

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

*Kent.* This is not altogether fool, my lord.

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

*Lear.* What two crowns shall they be ?

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

[9] A satire on the gross abuses of monopolies at that time ; and the corruption and avarice of the courtiers, who commonly went shares with the patronage. WARBURTON.



*Fools had ne'er less grace in a year ;* [Singing.  
*For wise men are grown foppish ;*  
*And know not how their wits to wear,*  
*Their manners are so apish.*

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

*Fool.* I have used it, nuncle, ever since thou madest thy daughters thy mother : for when thou gavest them the rod, and put'st down thine own breeches,

*Then they for sudden joy did weep,* [Singing.  
*And I for sorrow sung,*  
*That such a king should play bo-peep,*  
*And go the fools among.*

*Pr'ythee, nuncle, keep a school-master that can teach thy fool to lie ; I would fain learn to lie.*

*Lear.* If you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipped.

*Fool.* I marvel, what kin thou and thy daughters are :  
 \* They'll have me whipped for speaking true, thou'lt have me whipped for lying ; and, sometimes, I am whipped for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind of thing, than a fool ; and yet I would not be thee, nuncle ; thou hast pared thy wit o'both sides, and left nothing i'the middle : Here comes one o'the parings.

*Enter GONERIL.*

*Lear.* How now, daughter ? what makes that frontlet on ?<sup>2</sup> Methinks you are too much of late i'the frown.

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

He that keeps nor crust nor crumb,

Weary of all, shall want some.—

That's a shealed peascod.<sup>3</sup> [*Pointing to LEAR.*

*Gon.* Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd fool,

\* [1] There was never a time when fools were less in favour ; and the reason is, that they were never so little wanted, for wise men now supply their place. JOHNSON.

[2] A frontlet was a forehead-cloth used formerly by ladies at night to render that part smooth. Lear, I suppose, means to say, that Goneril's brow was as completely covered by a frown, as it would be by a frontlet. MAL.

[3] Now a mere husk, which contains nothing. The outside of a king remains, but all the intrinsic parts of royalty are gone ; he has nothing to give. JOHNSON.

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

*Fool.* For you trow, nuncle,

The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,  
 That it had its head bit off by its young.

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

*Lear.* Are you our daughter ?

*Gon.* Come, sir, I would, you would make use of that  
 good wisdom whereof I know you are fraught ; and put  
 away these dispositions, which of late transform you  
 from what you rightly are.

*Fool.* May not an ass know when the cart draws the  
 horse ?—Whoop, Jug ! I love thee.<sup>5</sup>

*Lear.* Does any here know me ?—Why this is not  
 Lear : does Lear walk thus ? speak thus ? Where are  
 his eyes ? Either his notion weakens, or his discernings  
 are lethargied.—Sleeping or waking ?—Ha ! sure 'tis  
 not so :—Who is it that can tell me who I am ?—Lear's  
 shadow ? I would learn that ; for by the marks of  
 sovereignty, knowledge, and reason, I should be false  
 persuaded I had daughters.—

*Fool.* Which they will make an obedient father.

*Lear.* Your name, fair gentlewoman ?

*Gon.* Come, sir ;

This admiration is much o'the favour  
 Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you  
 To understand my purposes aright :  
 As you are old and reverend, you should be wise :  
 Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires ;  
 Men so disorder'd, so debauch'd, and bold,

[5] There are in the fool's speeches several passages which seem to be  
 proverbial allusions, perhaps not now to be understood. JOHNSON.

In a very old dramatic piece entitled, *The longer thou livest, the more fool  
 thou art*, we find the following stage-direction : " Entreth Moros, counter-  
 feiting a vaine gesture and a foolish countenance, synging the foote of many  
 songs as fools are wont." MALONE.

That this our court, infected with their manners,  
Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust  
Make it more like a tavern, or a brothel,  
Than a grac'd palace.<sup>6</sup> The shame itself doth speak  
For instant remedy: Be then desir'd  
By her, that else will take the thing she begs,  
A little to disquantity your train;  
And the remainder, that shall still depend,<sup>7</sup>  
To be such men as may besort your age,  
And know themselves and you.

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

*Gon.* You strike my people; and your disorder'd rabble  
Make servants of their betters.

*Enter ALBANY.*

*Lear.* Woe, that too late repents,—O, sir, are you come?  
Is it your will? [*To ALB.*] Speak, sir.—Prepare my  
horses.

Ingratitude! thou marble-hearted fiend,  
More hideous, when thou show'st thee in a child,  
Than the sea-monster!<sup>8</sup>

*Alb.* Pray, sir, be patient.

*Lear.* Detested kite! thou liest: [*To GONERIL.*  
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,  
That all particulars of duty know;  
And in the most exact regard support  
The worships of their name.—O most small fault,  
How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!  
Which, like an engine,<sup>9</sup> wrench'd my frame of nature  
From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all love,  
And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!  
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in, [*Striking his head.*  
And thy dear judgment out!—Go, go, my people.

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

*Lear.* It may be so, my lord.—Hear, nature, hear!  
Dear goddess, hear! Suspend thy purpose, if

[6] A palace graced by the presence of a sovereign. WARBURTON.

[7] Depend—for continue in service. WARBURTON.

[8] Mr. Upton observes, that the sea-monster is the Hippopotamus, the hieroglyphical symbol of impiety and ingratitude. Sandys, in his *Travels*, says—"that he killeth his sire, and ravisheth his own dam." STEEV.

[9] Mr. Edwards conjectures that by an *engine* is meant the *rack*. He is right. To *engine* is, in Chaucer, to *strain* upon the rack. STEEVENS

Thou didst intend to make this creature fruitful !  
 Into her womb convey sterility ;  
 Dry up in her the organs of increase ;  
 And from her derogate body<sup>1</sup> never spring  
 A babe to honour her ! If she must teem,  
 Create her child of spleen ; that it may live  
 And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her !  
 Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth ;  
 With cadent tears<sup>2</sup> fret channels in her cheeks ;  
 Turn all her mother's pains, and benefits,  
 To laughter and contempt ; that she may feel  
 How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is  
 To have a thankless child !—Away, away ! *[Exit.*

*Alb.* Now, gods, that we adore, whereof comes this ?

*Gon.* Never afflict yourself to know the cause ;  
 But let his disposition have that scope  
 That dotage gives it.

*Re-enter LEAR.*

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

*Alb.* What's the matter, sir ?

*Lear.* I'll tell thee ;—Life and death ! I am asham'd  
 That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus :

*[To GONERIL.*

That these hot tears which break from me perforce,  
 Should make thee worth them.—Blasts and fogs upon  
 thee !

The untented<sup>3</sup> woundings of a father's curse  
 Pierce every sense about thee !—Old fond eyes,  
 Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck you out ;  
 And cast you, with the waters that you lose,  
 To temper clay.—Ha ! is it come to this ?  
 Let it be so ;—Yet have I left a daughter,  
 Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable ;  
 When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails  
 She'll flay thy wolfish visage. Thou shalt find,  
 That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think  
 I have cast off for ever ; thou shalt, I warrant thee.

*[Exit LEAR, KENT, and Attendants.]*

*Gon.* Do you mark that, my lord ?

*Alb.* I cannot be so partial, Goneril,

[1] Derogate—for degraded ; blasted. JOHNSON.  
 [2] Cadent tears—i. e. falling tears. STEEVENS.  
 [3] Untented wounds—means wounds in their worst state, not having a  
 tent in them to digest them, and may possibly signify here such as will not  
 admit of having a tent put into them for that purpose. STEEVENS.

To the great love I bear you,—

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

[*To the Fool.*

*Fool.* Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry, and take the fool with thee.

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

[*Exit.*

*Gon.* This man hath had good counsel :—A hundred knights !

'Tis politic, and safe, to let him keep  
At point,<sup>4</sup> a hundred knights. Yes, that on every  
dream,

Each buzz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,  
He may enguard his dotage with their powers,  
And hold our lives in mercy.—Oswald, I say !—

*Alb.* Well, you may fear too far.

*Gon.* Safer than trust :

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

*Enter Steward.*

What, have you writ that letter to my sister ?

*Stew.* Ay, madam.

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

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

*Gon.* Nay, then—

*Alb.* Well, well ; the event.

[*Exeunt.*

[4] At point—I believe, means completely armed, and consequently ready at appointment or command on the slightest notice. STEVENS.

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*Court before the same. Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.*

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

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

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

*Lear.* Ay, boy.

*Fool.* Then, I pry'thee, be merry ; thy wit shall not go slip-shod.

*Lear.* Ha, ha, ha !

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

*Lear.* Why, what canst thou tell, my boy ?

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

*Lear.* No.

*Fool.* Why, to keep his eyes on either side his nose ; that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

*Lear.* I did her wrong :<sup>6</sup>—

*Fool.* Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell ?

*Lear.* No.

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

*Lear.* Why ?

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

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

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

*Lear.* Because they are not eight ?

*Fool.* Yes, indeed : Thou wouldest make a good fool.

*Lear.* To take it again perforce !<sup>7</sup>—Monster ingratitude !

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

[6] He is musing on Cordelia. JOHNSON.

[7] He is meditating on his daughter's having in so violent a manner deprived him of those privileges which before she had agreed to grant him.

*Lear.* How's that ?

*Fool.* Thou shouldst not have been old, before thou hadst been wise.

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

*Enter Gentleman.*

How now ! are the horses ready ?

*Gent.* Ready, my lord.

*Lear.* Come, boy.

*Fool.* She that is maid now, and laughs at my departure,  
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Court within the Castle of the Earl of GLOSTER.*  
*Enter EDMUND and CURAN, meeting.*

*Edm.* SAVE thee, Curan.

*Cur.* And you, sir. I have been with your father ; and given him notice, that the duke of Cornwall, and Regan his duchess, will be here with him to-night.

*Edm.* How comes that ?

*Cur.* Nay, I know not : You have heard of the news abroad ; I mean, the whispered ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments.<sup>6</sup>

*Edm.* Not I ; 'Pray you, what are they ?

*Cur.* Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the dukes of Cornwall and Albany ?

*Edm.* Not a word.

*Cur.* You may then, in time. Fare you well, sir.

[*Exit.*]

*Edm.* The duke be here to-night ? The better ! Best ! This weaves itself perforce into my business ! My father hath set guard to take my brother ; And I have one thing, of a queazy question,<sup>7</sup> Which I must act :—Briefness, and fortune, work !— Brother, a word ;—descend :—Brother, I say ;

*Enter EDGAR.*

My father watches :—O sir, fly this place ;

[6] *Ear-kissing arguments* means that they are yet in reality only *whisper'd ones*. STEEVENS.

[7] *Queazy*—means delicate, what requires to be handled nicely. STEEV.

Intelligence is given where you are hid ;  
 You have now the good advantage of the night :—  
 Have you not spoken 'gainst the duke of Cornwall ?  
 He's coming hither ; now, i'the night, i'the haste,  
 And Regan with him ; Have you nothing said  
 Upon his party 'gainst the duke of Albany ?  
 Advise yourself.

*Edg.* I am sure on't, not a word.

*Edm.* I hear my father coming.—Pardon me :—  
 In cunning, I must draw my sword upon you :—  
 Draw : Seem to defend yourself : Now quit you well.  
 Yield :—come before my father ;—Light, ho, here !—  
 Fly, brother ;—Torches ! torches !—So, farewell.—  
 [Exit EDGAR.]

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

*Enter GLOSTER, and Servants with torches.*

*Glo.* Now, Edmund, where's the villain ?

*Edm.* Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,  
 Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon  
 To stand his auspicious mistress.<sup>8</sup>

*Glo.* But where is he ?

*Edm.* Look, sir, I bleed.

*Glo.* Where is the villain, Edmund ?

*Edm.* Fled this way, sir. When by no means he could—

*Glo.* Pursue him, ho !—Go after. [Exit Serv.]—By  
 no means,—what

*Edm.* Persuade me to the murder of your lordship ;  
 But that I told him, the revenging gods  
 'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend ;  
 Spoke, with how manifold and strong a bond  
 The child was bound to the father ;—Sir, in fine,  
 To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,  
 With his prepared sword, he charges home  
 My unprovided body, lanc'd mine arm :  
 But when he saw my best alarm'd spirits,  
 Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to the encounter,  
 Or whether gasted by the noise I made,<sup>9</sup>

[8] This was a proper circumstance to urge to Gloster ; who appears, by what passed between him and his bastard son in a foregoing scene, to be very superstitious with regard to this matter. WARBURTON.

[9] Gasted—frighted. JOHNSON.



Full suddenly he fled.

*Glo.* Let him fly far;  
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;  
And found—Despatch.—The noble duke my master,  
My worthy arch<sup>1</sup> and patron, comes to-night;  
By his authority I will proclaim it,  
That he, who finds him, shall deserve our thanks,  
Bringing the murderous coward to the stake;  
He, that conceals him, death.

*Edm.* When I dissuaded him from his intent,  
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech<sup>2</sup>  
I threaten'd to discover him: He replied,  
*Thou unpossessing bastard! dost thou think,  
If I would stand against thee, would the reposal<sup>3</sup>  
Of any trust, virtue, or worth, in thee  
Make thy words faith'd? No: what I should deny  
(As this I would; ay, though thou didst produce  
My very character,) I'd turn it all  
To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice:  
And thou must make a dullard of the world,  
If they not thought the profits of my death  
Were very pregnant and potential spurs  
To make thee seek it.*

*Glo.* Strong and fasten'd villain!  
Would he deny his letter?—I never got him.

[*Trumpets within.*]

Hark, the duke's trumpets! I know not why he comes:—  
All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not 'scape;  
The duke must grant me that: besides, his picture  
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom  
May have due note of him; and of my land,  
Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means  
To make thee capable.

*Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, and Attendants.*

*Corn.* How now, my noble friend? since I came hither,  
(Which I can call but now,) I have heard strange news.

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

*Glo.* O madam, my old heart is crack'd, is crack'd!

*Reg.* What did my father's godson seek your life?

[1] *Arch*—i. e. *chief*; a word now used only in composition, as *arch-angel*, *arch-duke*. STEEVENS.

[2] *Pight*—is pitched, fixed, settled. *Curst*—is severe, harsh, vehemently angry. JOHNSON.

[3] i. e. Would any opinion that men have repos'd in thy trust, virtue, &c. WARBURTON.

He whom my father nam'd ? your Edgar ?

*Glo.* O, lady, lady, shame would have it hid !

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

*Glo.* I know not, madam :  
It is too bad, too bad.—

*Edm.* Yes, madam, he was.

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

*Corn.* Nor I, assure thee, Regan.—

Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father  
A child-like office.

*Edm.* 'Twas my duty, sir.

*Glo.* He did bewray his practice ;<sup>4</sup> and receiv'd  
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

*Corn.* Is he pursued ?

*Glo.* Ay, my good lord, he is.

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

*Edm.* I shall serve you, sir,  
Truly, however else.

*Glo.* For him I thank your grace.

*Corn.* You know not why we came to visit you.—

*Reg.* Thus out of season ; threading dark-ey'd night.  
Occasions, noble Gloster, of some poize,<sup>5</sup>  
Wherein we must have use of your advice :—  
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,  
Of differences, which I best thought it fit  
To answer from our home ;<sup>6</sup> the several messengers  
From hence attend despatch. Our good old friend,  
Lay comforts to your bosom ; and bestow  
Your needful counsel to our business,

[4] Bewray—that is, discover, betray. STEEV.

[5] Some *weight*, or moment. MALONE.

[6] Not at home, but at some other place. JOHNSON.

Which craves the instant use.

*Glo.* I serve you, madam :  
Your graces are right welcome.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE. II.

*Before GLOSTER's Castle. Enter KENT and Steward severally.*

*Stew.* Good dawning to thee, friend : Art of the house ?

*Kent.* Ay.

*Stew.* Where may we set our horses ?

*Kent.* I'the mire.

*Stew.* Pr'ythee, if thou love me, tell me.

*Kent.* I love thee not.

*Stew.* Why, then I care not for thee.

*Kent.* If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfeld,<sup>6</sup> I would make thee care for me.

*Stew.* Why dost thou use me thus ? I know thee not.

*Kent.* Fellow, I know thee.

*Stew.* What dost thou know me for ?

*Kent.* A knave ; a rascal, an eater of broken meats ; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy worsted-stocking knave ;<sup>7</sup> a lily-liver'd, action-taking knave ; a whorson, glass-gazing, super-serviceable, finical rogue ; one-trunk-inheriting slave ; one that wouldest be a bawd, in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch : one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deniest the least syllable of thy addition.<sup>8</sup>

*Stew.* Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one, that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee ?

*Kent.* What a brazen-faced varlet art thou to deny thou knowest me ? Is it two days ago, since I tripped up

[6] The allusion which seems to be contained in this line I do not understand. In the violent eruption of reproaches which burst from Kent in this dialogue, there are some epithets which the commentators have left unexplained, and which I am not very able to make clear. Lily-liver'd—is cowardly ; white-blooded and white-liver'd are still in vulgar use. JOHN'S.

[7] Three suited knave,—might mean, in an age of ostentatious finery like that of Shakspeare, one who had no greater change of cloaths than three suits would furnish him with. A worsted-stocking knave—is another reproach of the same kind. The stockings in England, in the reign of queen Elizabeth, as I learn from Stubbs's *Anatomie of Abuses*, printed in 1595, were remarkably expensive, and scarce any other kind than silk were worn, even, as this author says, by those who had not above forty shillings a year wages. STEEVENS.

[8] *Thais, titles.*—Kent is not only boisterous in his manners, but abusive in his language. His excessive ribaldry proceeds from an over sollicitude to prevent being discovered : like St. Peter's swearing from a similar motive.

thy heels, and beat thee before the king? Draw, you rogue: for, though it be night, the moon shines; I'll make a sop o'the moonshine of you. Draw, you whorson cullionly barber-monger, draw. [*Drawing his sword.*]

*Stew.* Away; I have nothing to do with thee.

*Kent.* Draw, you rascal: you come with letters against the king; and take vanity the puppet's part,<sup>o</sup> against the royalty of her father: Draw, you rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks:—draw, you rascal; come your ways.

*Stew.* Help, ho! murder! help!

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

*Stew.* Help, ho! murder! murder!

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

*Edm.* How now? What's the matter? Part.

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

*Glo.* Weapons! arms! What's the matter here?

*Corn.* Keep peace, upon your lives;

He dies, that strikes again: What is the matter?

*Reg.* The messengers from our sister and the king.

*Corn.* What is your difference? speak.

*Stew.* I am scarce in breath, my lord.

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

*Corn.* Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?

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

*Corn.* Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

*Stew.* This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spar'd, At suit of his grey-beard,—

*Kent.* Thou whorson zed! thou unnecessary letter!<sup>1</sup>

—My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain<sup>2</sup> into mortar, and daub the wall of a jakes with him.—Spare my grey beard, you wagtail?

[0] Alluding to the mysteries or allegorical shows, in which vanity, iniquity, and other vices, were personified. JOHNSON.

[1] Zed is here probably used as a term of contempt, because it is the last letter in the English alphabet, and as its place may be supplied by S, and the Roman alphabet has it not. STEEVENS.

[2] Unbolted mortar is mortar made of unsifted lime, and therefore to break the lumps it is necessary to tread it by means of wooden shoes. This unbolted villain is therefore this coarse rascal. TOLLET.

*Corn.* Peace, sirrah! **tool.com.cn**  
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

*Kent.* Yes, sir; but anger has a privilege.

*Corn.* Why art thou angry?

*Kent.* That such a slave as this should wear a sword,  
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,  
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords atwain  
Which are too intrinse t' unloose:<sup>3</sup> smooth every passion  
That in the natures of their lords rebels;  
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;  
Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks  
With every gale and vary of their masters,<sup>4</sup>  
As knowing nought, like dogs, but following.—  
A plague upon your epileptic visage!<sup>5</sup>  
Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?  
Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,  
I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.<sup>6</sup>

*Corn.* What, art thou mad, old fellow?

*Glo.* How fell you out?

Say that.

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

*Corn.* Why dost thou call him knave? What's his  
offence?

*Kent.* His countenance likes me not.

*Corn.* No more, perchance, does mine, or his, or hers.

*Kent.* Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain;  
I have seen better faces in my time,  
Than stands on any shoulder that I see  
Before me at this instant.

*Corn.* This is some fellow,  
Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect  
A saucy roughness; and constrains the garb,  
Quite from his nature: He cannot flatter, he!—

[3] By these *holy cords* the poet means the natural union between parents and children. The metaphor is taken from the *cords of the sanctuary*; and the fomenters of family differences are compared to those sacrilegious rats. The expression is fine and noble. WARBURTON.

[4] The *halcyon* is the bird otherwise called the king-fisher. The vulgar opinion was, that this bird, if hung up, would vary with the wind, and by that means show from what point it blew. STEEVENS.

[5] The frightened countenance of a man ready to fall in a fit. JOHNS.

[6] *Camelot* was the place where the romances say king Arthur kept his court in the west; so this alludes to some proverbial speech in those romances. WARBURTON.

In Somersetshire, near Camelot, are many large moors, where are bred great quantities of geese, so that many other places are from hence supplied with quills and feathers. HANMER.

An honest mind and plain,—he must speak truth :  
 An they will take it, so ; if not, he's plain.  
 These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness  
 Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends,  
 Than twenty silly ducking observants,  
 That stretch their duties nicely.

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

*Corn.* What mean'st by this ?

*Kent.* To go out of my dialect, which you discom-  
 mend so much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer : he that  
 beguiled you, in a plain accent, was a plain knave ;  
 which, for my part, I will not be, though I should win  
 your displeasure to intreat me to it.<sup>7</sup>

*Corn.* What was the offence you gave him ?

*Stew.* Never any :

It pleas'd the king his master, very late,  
 To strike at me, upon his misconstruction ;  
 When he, conjunct, and flattering his displeasure,  
 Tripp'd me behind ; being down, insulted, rail'd,  
 And put upon him such a deal of man,  
 That worthy'd him, got praises of the king  
 For him attempting who was self-subdu'd ;  
 And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,  
 Drew on me here.

*Kent.* None of these rogues, and cowards,  
 But Ajax is their fool.<sup>8</sup>

*Corn.* Fetch forth the stocks, ho !

You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend braggart,  
 We'll teach you—

*Kent.* Sir, I am too old to learn :

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

*Corn.* Fetch forth the stocks :

As I've life and honour, there shall he sit till noon.

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

*Kent.* Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,

[7] Though I should win you, displeas'd as you now are, to like me so well as to intreat me to be a knave. JOHNSON.

[8] Ajax is a fool to them, there are none of these knaves and cowards, that if you believe themselves, are not so brave, that Ajax is a fool compared to them. M. MASON.

You should not use me so.

*Reg.* Sir, being his knave, I will. [*Stocks brought out.*]

*Corn.* This is a fellow of the self-same colour  
Our sister speaks of :—Come, bring away the stocks.

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

*Corn.* I'll answer that.

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

[*KENT is put in the stocks.*]

Come, my good lord ; away. [*Exeunt REG. and CORN.*]

*Glo.* I am sorry for thee, friend ; 'tis the duke's pleasure,  
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,  
Will not be rubb'd, nor stopp'd :<sup>9</sup> I'll intreat for thee.

*Kent.* Pray do not, sir : I have watch'd, and travell'd  
hard ;

Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.

A good man's fortune may grow out at heels :

Give you good morrow !

*Glo.* The duke's to blame in this ; 'twill be ill taken.

[*Exit.*]

*Kent.* Good king, that must approve the common  
saw !<sup>1</sup>

Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st  
To the warm sun !

Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,

That by thy comfortable beams I may

Peruse this letter !—Nothing almost sees miracles,

But misery ;—I know, 'tis from Cordelia ;

Who hath most fortunately been inform'd

Of my obscured course ; and shall find time

From this enormous state,—seeking to give

[9] Metaphor from bowling. WARBURTON.

[1] That art now to exemplify the common proverb. *That out of, &c.* This changed better for worse. Hanmer observes, that it is a proverbial saying, applied to those who are turned out of house and home into the open weather. It was perhaps used of men dismissed from an hospital, or house of charity, such as was erected formerly in many places for travellers. These houses had names properly enough alluded to by *heaven's benediction.*

Losses their remedies :—All weary and o'er-watch'd,  
 Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold  
 This shameful lodging.  
 Fortune, good night ; smile once more ; turn thy wheel !  
 [He sleeps.]

## SCENE III.

*A Part of the Heath. Enter EDGAR.*

*Edg.* I heard myself proclaim'd ;  
 And, by the happy hollow of a tree,  
 Escap'd the hunt. No port is free ; no place,  
 That guard, and most unusual vigilance,  
 Does not attend my taking. While I may scape,  
 I will preserve myself : and am bethought  
 To take the basest and most poorest shape,  
 That ever penury, in contempt of man,  
 Brought near to beast : my face I'll grime with filth ;  
 Blanket my loins ; elf all my hair in knots ;<sup>2</sup>  
 And with presented nakedness out-face  
 The winds, and persecutions of the sky.  
 The country gives me proof and precedent  
 Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,  
 Strike in their numb'd and mortify'd bare arms  
 Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary ;  
 And with this horrible object, from low farms,  
 Poor pelting villages,<sup>3</sup> sheep-cotes and mills,  
 Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,  
 Enforce their charity.—Poor Turligood ! poor Tom !<sup>4</sup>  
 That's something yet ;—Edgar I nothing am !<sup>5</sup> [Exit.]

[2] Hair thus knotted was vulgarly supposed to be the work of elves and fairies in the night. So in *Romeo and Juliet* :

“ —plait the manes of horses in the night,

“ And cakes the *elflocks* in foul sluttish hairs,

“ Which once untangled, much misfortune bodes.” STEEVENS.

[3] *Pelting* is, I believe, only an accidental depravation of *petty*. Shakspeare uses it, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, of *small brooks*. JOHNSON. Again, in *Troilus and Cressida*, Hector says to Achilles :

“ We have had *pelting* wars since you refus'd

“ The Grecian cause.” STEEVENS.

[4] We should read *Turlupin*. In the 14th century there was a new species of gipsies, called *Turlupins*, a fraternity of naked beggars, which ran up and down Europe. However the church of Rome hath dignified them with the name of *heretics*, and actually burned some of them at Paris. But what sort of religionists they were, appears from Genebrard's account of them. “ *Turlupin Cynicorum sectam suscitantes, de nuditate pudendorum & publico coitu.*” Plainly, nothing but a band of *Tom-o'-Bedlams*. WARBURTON.

[5] As Edgar I am out-lawed, dead in law : I have no longer any political existence. JOHNSON.



## SCENE IV.

Before GLOSTER'S Castle. Enter LEAR, Fool, and Gentlemen.

*Lear.* 'Tis strange, that they should sodepart from home,  
And not send back my messenger.

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

*Kent.* Hail to thee, noble master !

*Lear.* How !

Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime ?

*Kent.* No, my lord.

*Fool.* Ha, ha ; look ! he wears cruel garters !<sup>6</sup> Hors-  
es are tied by the heads ; dogs, and bears, by the  
neck ; monkeys by the loins, and men by the legs :  
when a man is over-lusty at legs, then he wears wooden  
nether-stocks.<sup>7</sup>

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

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

*Lear.* No.

*Kent.* Yes.

*Lear.* No, I say.

*Kent.* I say, yea.

*Lear.* No, no ; they would not.

*Kent.* Yes, they have.

*Lear.* By Jupiter, I swear no.

*Kent.* By Juno, I swear, ay.

*Lear.* They durst not do't :  
They could not, would not do't ; 'tis worse than murder,  
To do upon respect such violent outrage ;<sup>8</sup>  
Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way  
Thou might'st deserve, or they impose, this usage,  
Coming from 'us.

*Kent.* My lord, when at their home  
I did commend your highness' letters to them,  
Ere I was risen from the place, that show'd  
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,

[6] I believe a quibble was here intended. *Cruel*—signifies worsted, of which stockings, garters, night-caps, &c. are made. STEEVENS.

[7] *Nether-stocks*—is the old word for stockings. Breeches were at that time called "men's *overstocks*."—*over-lusty*, in this place, has a double signification ; *lustiness* anciently meaning *sauciness*. STEEVENS.

[8] To violate the public and venerable character of a messenger from the king. JOHNSON.

Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth  
 From Goneril his mistress, salutations ;  
 Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,<sup>8</sup>  
 Which presently they read : on whose contents,  
 They summon'd up their meiny,<sup>9</sup> straight took horse ;  
 Commanded me to follow, and attend  
 The leisure of their answer ; gave me cold looks :  
 And meeting here the other messenger,  
 Whose welcome, I perceiv'd, had poison'd mine,  
 (Being the very fellow that of late  
 Display'd so saucily against your highness,)  
 Having more man than wit about me, drew ;  
 He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries :  
 Your son and daughter found this trespass worth  
 The shame which here it suffers.

*Fool.* Winter's not gone yet, if the wild geese fly that way.<sup>1</sup>

Fathers, that wear rags,  
 Do make their children blind ;  
 But fathers, that wear bags,  
 Shall see their children kind.  
 Fortune, that arrant whore,  
 Ne'er turns the key to the poor.—

But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours for thy daughters, as thou canst tell in a year.<sup>2</sup>

*Lear.* O, how this mother<sup>3</sup> swells up toward my heart!  
*Hysterica passio!* down, thou climbing sorrow,  
 Thy element's below !—Where is this daughter ?

*Kent.* With the earl, sir, here within.

*Lear.* Follow me not ;

Stay here.

[*Exit.*

*Gent.* Made you no more offence than what you speak of?

*Kent.* None.

How chance the king comes with so small a train ?

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

[8] *Spite of intermission* is without pause, without suffering time to intervene. So in *Macbeth* :

" Gentle heaven

" Cut short all intermission."

STEEVENS.

[9] *Meiny*—i. e. people. POPE.—Though the word *meiny* be now obsolete, the word *menial*, which is derived from it is still in use. MASON.

[1] If this be their behaviour, the king's troubles are not yet at an end. JOHNSON.

[2] Quibble intended between *dolours* and *dollars*. HANMER.

[3] The disease called the *Mother*, or *Hysterica Passio*, which in our author's time was not thought to be peculiar to women only. PERCY!

*Kent.* Why, fool ?

*Fool.* We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no labouring in the winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes, but blind men ; and there's not a nose among twenty, but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold, when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it ; but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again : I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.<sup>8</sup>

That, sir, which serves and seeks for gain,  
And follows but for form,  
Will pack, when it begins to rain,  
And leave thee in the storm.

But I will tarry ; the fool will stay,  
And let the wise man fly ;  
The knave turns fool, that runs away ;<sup>9</sup>  
The fool no knave, perdy.

*Kent.* Where learn'd you this, fool ?

*Fool.* Not i'the stocks, fool.

*Re-enter LEAR, with GLOSTER.*

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

They have travell'd hard to night ? Mere fetches ;  
The images of revolt and flying off !  
Fetch me a better answer.

*Glo* My dear lord,  
You know the fiery quality of the duke ;  
How unremoveable and fix'd he is  
In his own course.

*Lear.* Vengeance ! plague ! death ! confusion !—  
Fiery ? what quality ? Why, Gloster, Gloster,

[8] One cannot too much commend the caution which our moral poet uses, on all occasions, to prevent his sentiment from being perversely taken. So here, having given an ironical precept in commendation of perfidy and base desertion of the unfortunate, for fear it should be understood seriously, though delivered by his buffoon or jester, he has the precaution to add this beautiful corrective, full of fine sense :—"I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it." **WARBURTON.**

[9] The sense will be mended if we read,  
But I will tarry ; the fool will stay,  
And let the wise man fly ;  
The fool turns knave, that runs away ;  
The knave no fool, —

That I stay with the king is proof that I am a fool, the wise men are deserting him. There is knavery in this desertion, but there is no folly. **JOHNS.**

I'd speak with the duke of Cornwall, and his wife.

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

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

*Glo.* Ay, my good lord.

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

Would with his daughter speak, commands her service :  
Are they inform'd of this?—My breath and blood !—  
Fiery? The fiery duke?—Tell the hot duke, that—  
No, but not yet :—may be, he is not well :  
Infirmity doth still neglect all office,  
Whereto our health is bound ; we are not ourselves,  
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind  
To suffer with the body : I'll forbear ;  
And am fallen out with my more headier will,  
To take the indispos'd and sickly fit  
For the sound man.—Death on my state ! wherefore

[*Looking on KENT.*]

Should he sit here? This act persuades me,  
That this remotion of the duke and her  
Is practice only.\* Give me my servant forth :  
Go, tell the duke and his wife, I'd speak with them,  
Now, presently : bid them come forth and hear me,  
Or at their chamber-door I'll beat the drum,  
Till it cry—*Sleep to death.*

*Glo.* I'd have all well betwixt you. [*Exit.*]

*Lear.* O me, my heart, my rising heart !—but, down.

*Fool.* Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels,  
when she put them i'the paste alive ; she rapp'd 'em  
o'the coxcombs with a stick, and cry'd, *Down, wantons,*  
*down :* 'Twas her brother, that, in pure kindness to  
his horse, butter'd his hay.

*Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, and Servants.*

*Lear.* Good-morrow to you both.

*Corn.* Hail to your grace ! [*KENT is set at liberty.*]

*Reg.* I am glad to see your highness.

*Lear.* Regan, I think you are ; I know what reason  
I have to think so : if thou should'st not be glad,  
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,  
Sepulch'ring an aduress.—O, are you free? [*To KENT.*]  
Some other time for that.—Beloved Regan,  
Thy sister's naught : O Regan, she hath tied

[1] *Practice* is in Shakspeare, and other old writers, used commonly in an ill sense for unlawful artifice. JOHNSON.

Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here :<sup>2</sup>—

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

*Reg.* I pray you, sir, take patience ; I have hope,  
You less know how to value her desert,  
Than she to scant her duty.<sup>3</sup>

*Lear.* Say, how is that ?

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

*Lear.* My curses on her !

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

*Lear.* Ask her forgiveness ?

Do you but mark how this becomes the house :<sup>4</sup>  
*Dear daughter, I confess that I am old ;*  
*Age is unnecessary :<sup>5</sup> on my knees I beg,* [Kneeling.  
*That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.*

*Reg.* Good sir, no more : these are unsightly tricks :  
Return you to my sister.

*Lear.* Never, Regan :  
She hath abated me of half my train ;  
Look'd black upon me ;<sup>6</sup> struck me with her tongue,  
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart :—  
All the stor'd vengeance of heaven fall  
On her ingrateful top ! Strike her young bones,  
You taking airs, with lameness !

*Corn.* Fye, fye, fye !

*Lear.* You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames

[2] Alluding to the fable of Prometheus. WARBURTON.

[3] Scant—may mean to adapt, to fit, to proportion ; which sense seems still to be retained in the mechanical term *scantling*. JOHNSON.

[4] Becomes the house—signifies the order of families, duties of relation. WARB.—So in Milton on Divorce, b. ii. "How hurtful, how destructive it is to the house, the church, the commonwealth !" TOLLET.

[5] Old age has few wants. JOHNS.

[6] To look black—may easily be explained to look cloudy or gloomy. See Milton : "So frown'd the mighty combatants, that hell

"Grew darker at their frown".—JOHNSON.

Into her scornful eyes ! Infect her beauty,  
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the pow'rful sun,  
To fall and blast her pride !

*Reg.* O the blest gods !

So will you wish on me, when the rash mood's on.

*Lear.* No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse ;  
Thy tender-hefted nature<sup>7</sup> shall not give  
Thee o'er to harshness ; her eyes are fierce, but thine  
Do comfort, and not burn. 'Tis not in thee  
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,  
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,<sup>8</sup>  
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt  
Against my coming in. Thou better know'st  
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,  
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude ;  
Thy half o'the kingdom hast thou not forgot,  
Wherein I thee endow'd.

*Reg.* Good sir, to the purpose. [*Trumpets within.*]

*Lear.* Who put my man i' the stocks ?

*Corn.* What trumpet's that ?

*Enter Steward.*

*Reg.* I know't, my sister's : this approves her letter,  
That she would soon be here.—Is your lady come ?

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

*Corn.* What means your grace ?

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

*Enter GONERIL.*

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway  
Allow obedience,<sup>9</sup> if yourselves are old,  
Make it your cause ; send down, and take my part !—  
Art not asham'd to look upon this beard ?— [*To GON.*]  
O Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand ?

*Gon.* Why not by the hand, sir ? How have I offended ?  
All's not offence, that indiscretion finds,  
And dotage terms so.

*Lear.* O, sides, you are too tough !

[7] Hefted—seems to mean the same as heaved. Tender-hefted—i. e. whose bosom is agitated by tender passions. The formation of such a participle, I believe, cannot be grammatically accounted for. STEEVENS.

[8] To contract my allowances or proportions settled. JOHNSON.

[9] To allow— signifies not only to permit, but to approve. So the scripture expression, "The Lord alloweth the righteous," Ps. xi. 6. STEEV.

Will you yet hold?—How came my man i'the stocks?

*Corn.* I set him there, sir: but his own disorders?  
Deserv'd much less advancement.<sup>1</sup>

*Lear.* You! did you?

*Reg.* I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.<sup>2</sup>  
If, till the expiration of your month,  
You will return and sojourn with my sister,  
Dismissing half your train, come then to me;  
I am now from home, and out of that provision  
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

*Lear.* Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd?  
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose  
To wage against the enmity o'the air;  
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl,—  
Necessity's sharp pinch!—Return with her?  
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took  
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought  
To kneel his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg  
To keep base life afoot.—Return with her?  
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter<sup>3</sup>  
To this detested groom. [*Looking on the Steward.*]

*Gon.* At your choice, sir.

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

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

[1] Kent's *disorders* had entitled him to a post of *less honour* than the stocks. STEEVENS.

[2] Since you are weak, be content to think yourself weak. JOHNSON.

[3] Sumpter—is a horse that carries necessaries on a journey, though sometimes used for the case to carry them in. STEEVENS.

But she knows what she does.

*Lear.* Is this well spoken now?

*Reg.* I dare avouch it, sir. What, fifty followers?  
Is it not well? What should you need of more?

Yea, or so many? sith that both charge and danger  
Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one house,  
Should many people, under two commands,  
Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.

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

*Reg.* Why not, my lord? If then they chanc'd to slack  
you,

We could control them: If you will come to me,  
(For now I spy a danger,) I entreat you  
To bring but five and twenty; to no more  
Will I give place, or notice.

*Lear.* I gave you all—

*Reg.* And in good time you gave it.

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

*Reg.* And speak it again, my lord; no more with me.

*Lea.* Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd,  
When others are more wicked; not being the worst,  
Stands in some rank of praise:—I'll go with thee;  
Thy fifty doth yet double five and twenty, [*To Gon.*  
And thou art twice her love.

*Gon.* Hear me, my lord;

What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,  
To follow in a house, where twice so many  
Have a command to tend you?

*Reg.* What need one?

*Lear.* O, reason not the need: our basest beggars  
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:  
Allow not nature more than nature needs,  
Man's life is cheap as beast's. Thou art a lady;  
If only to go warm were gorgeous,  
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,  
Which scarcely keeps thee warm.—But, for true need,—  
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!  
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,  
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!  
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts  
Against their father, fool me not so much  
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger!



O, let not women's weapons, water-drops,  
 Stain my man's cheeks!—No, you unnatural hags,  
 I will have such revenges on you both,  
 That all the world shall—I will do such things,—  
 What they are, yet I know not ; but they shall be  
 The terrors of the earth. You think, I'll weep ;  
 No, I'll not weep :—

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

[*Exeunt* LEAR, GLOSTER, KENT, and Fool.]

Corn. Let us withdraw, 'twill be a storm.

[*Storm heard at a distance.*]

Reg. This house  
 Is little ; the old man and his people cannot  
 Be well bestow'd.

Gon. 'Tis his own blame ; he hath put  
 Himself from rest, and must needs taste his folly.

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

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

*Re-enter* GLOSTER.

Corn. Follow'd the old man forth :—he is return'd.

Glo. The king is in high rage.

Corn. Whither is he going ?

Glo. He calls to horse ; but will I know not whither.

Corn. 'Tis best to give him way ; he leads himself.

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

Glo. Alack, the night comes on, and the bleak winds  
 Do sorely ruffle ; for many miles about  
 There's scarce a bush.

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

Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord ; 'tis a wild night ;  
 My Regan counsels well : come out o'the storm.

[*Exeunt.*]

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ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Heath. A storm is heard, with thunder and lightning. Enter KENT, and a Gentleman, meeting.*

*Kent.* Who's here, beside foul weather ?

*Gent.* One minded like the weather, most unquietly.

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

*Gent.* Contending with the fretful element :

Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,  
Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,  
That things might change, or cease: tears his white hair;  
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,  
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of :  
Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn  
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.  
This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,<sup>4</sup>  
The lion and the belly-pinched wolf  
Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,  
And bids what will take all.

*Kent.* But who is with him ?

*Gent.* None but the fool ; who labours to out-jest  
His heart-struck injuries.

*Kent.* Sir, I do know you ;

And dare, upon the warrant of my art,<sup>5</sup>  
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,  
Although as yet the face of it be cover'd  
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall ;  
Who have (as who have not, that their great stars  
Thron'd and set high ?) servants, who seem no less ;  
Which are to France the spies and speculations  
Intelligent of our state ; what hath been seen,  
Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes ;<sup>6</sup>  
Or the hard rein which both of them have borne  
Against the old kind king ; or something deeper,  
Whereof, perchance, these are but furnishings ;<sup>7</sup>—  
But, true it is, from France there comes a power  
Into this scatter'd kingdom ; who already,

[4] *Cub drawn* has been explained to signify *drawn by nature to its young* ; whereas it means *whose dugs are drawn dry by its young*. For no animals leave their dens by night but for prey. So that the meaning is, "that even hunger, and the support of its young, would not force the bear to leave her den in such a night." WARBURTON.

[5] On the strength of that art or skill, which teaches us "to find the mind's construction in the face." MALONE.

[6] *Snuffs* are dislikes, and *packings* underhand contrivances. STEEVENS.

[7] *Furnishings* are what we now call colours, external pretences. JOHN.

Wise in our negligence, have secret feet  
 In some of our best ports, and are at point  
 To show their open banner.—Now to you :  
 If on my credit you dare build so far  
 To make your speed to Dover, you shall find  
 Some that will thank you, making just report  
 Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow  
 The king hath cause to plain.  
 I am a gentleman of blood and breeding ;  
 And, from some knowledge and assurance, offer  
 This office to you.

*Gent.* I will talk further with you.

*Kent.* No, do not.

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

*Gent.* Give me your hand : Have you no more to say ?

*Kent.* Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet ;  
 That, when we have found the king, (in which your pain  
 That way ; I'll this ;) he that first lights on him,  
 Holla the other. [*Exeunt severally.*

## SCENE II.

*Another Part of the Heath. Storm continues. Enter LEAR and Fool.*

*Lear.* Blow, wind, and crack your cheeks ! rage ! blow !  
 You cataracts, and hurricanoes, spout  
 Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks !  
 You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,<sup>8</sup>  
 Vaunt couriers to oak-cleaving thunder-bolts,  
 Singe my white head ! And thou, all-shaking thunder,  
 Strike flat the thick rotupdity o'the world !  
 Crack nature's moulds, all germins spill at once,  
 That make ingrateful man !

*Fool.* O nuncle, court holy-water<sup>9</sup> in a dry house is  
 better than this rain-water out o'door. Good nuncle,

[8] Doing execution with rapidity equal to thought. JOHNSON.

[9] Ray, among his proverbial phrases, mentions *court holy-water* to mean fair words. The french have the same phrase *Eau benite de cour* ; fair empty words—*Cham baud's Dict.* STEEVENS.

in, and ask thy daughters blessing ; here's a night pit-ies neither wise men nor fools.

*Lear.* Rumble thy bellyfull ! spit, fire ! spout, rain !  
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters ;  
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness,  
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,  
You owe me no subscription ;<sup>1</sup> why then let fall  
Your horrible pleasure ; here I stand, your slave,  
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man :—  
But yet I call you servile ministers,  
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd  
Your high-engender'd battles, 'gainst a head  
So old and white as this. O ! O ! 'tis foul !

*Fool.* He that has a house to put his head in, has a good head-piece.

*The cod-piece that will house,  
Before the head has any,  
The head and he shall louse ;—  
So beggars marry many.<sup>2</sup>  
The man that makes his toe  
What he his heart would make,  
Shall of a corn cry woe,  
And turn his sleep to wake.*

—for there was never yet fair woman, but she made mouths in a glass.

*Enter KENT.*

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

*Kent.* Who's there ?

*Fool.* Marry, here's grace, and a cod-piece ; that's a wise man, and a fool.

*Kent.* Alas, sir, are you here ? things that love night,  
Love not such nights as these ; the wrathful skies  
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,<sup>3</sup>  
And make them keep their caves : Since I was man,  
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,  
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never  
Remember to have heard : man's nature cannot carry  
The affliction, nor the fear.

*Lear.* Let the great gods,

[1] Subscription—for obedience. **WARBURTON.**

[2] A beggar marries a wife and lice. **JOHNSON.**

[3] Gallow—a west country word, signifies to scare or frighten. **WARB.** So the Somersetshire proverb, "The dunder do *gally* the beans." Beans are vulgarly supposed to shoot up faster after thunder-storms. **STEEVENS.**

That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,  
 Find out their enemies how **Tremble**, thou wretch,  
 That hast within thee undivulged crimes,  
 Unwhipp'd of justice : Hide thee, thou bloody hand ;  
 Thou perjur'd, and thou simular man of virtue  
 That art incestuous : Caitiff, to pieces shake,  
 That under covert and convenient seeming<sup>4</sup>  
 Hast practic'd on man's life !—Close pent-up guilts,  
 Rive your concealing continents,<sup>5</sup> and cry  
 These dreadful summoners grace.—I am a man,  
 More sinn'd against, than sinning.

*Kent.* Alack, bare-headed !

Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel ;  
 Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest ;  
 Repose you there : while I to this hard house  
 (More hard than is the stone whereof 'tis rais'd ;  
 Which even but now, demanding after you,  
 Denied me to come in,) return, and force  
 Their scant'd courtesy.

*Lear.* My wits begin to turn.—

Come on, my boy : How dost, my boy ? Art cold ?  
 I am cold myself.—Where is this straw, my fellow ?  
 The art of our necessities is strange,  
 That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel,  
 Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart  
 That's sorry yet for thee.

*Fool.* *He that has a little tiny wit,—*

*With heigh, ho, the wind and the rain,—*  
*Must make content with his fortunes fit ;*  
*For the rain it raineth every day.*

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

[*Exc. LEAR and KENT.*]

*Fool.* This is a brave night to cool a courtezán.—I'll speak a prophecy ere I go :

When priests are more in word than matter ;  
 When brewers mar their malt with water ;

[4] *Convenient* needs not be understood in any other than its usual and proper sense ; *accommodate* to the present purpose ; *suitable* to a design. *Convenient seeming* is *appearance*, such as may promote his purpose to destroy.

JOHNSON.

[5] *Continent*—stands for that which contains or incloses. JOHNSON.

[6] *Summoners* are here the officers that summon offenders before a proper tribunal. STEEVENS.

When nobles are their tailors' tutors ;<sup>7</sup>  
 No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors :<sup>8</sup>  
 When every case in law is right ;  
 No squire in debt, nor no poor knight ;  
 When slanders do not live in tongues ;  
 Nor cutpurses come not to throngs ;  
 When usurers tell their gold i'the field ;  
 And bawds and whores do churches build ;—  
 Then shall the realm of Albion  
 Come to great confusion.  
 Then comes the time, who lives to see't,  
 That going shall be us'd with feet.

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

### SCENE III.

*A Room in GLOSTER's Castle. Enter GLOSTER and EDMUND.*

*Glo.* Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing : When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house ; charged me, on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

*Edm.* Most savage, and unnatural !

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

*Edm.* This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke  
 Instantly know ; and of that letter too :—  
 This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me  
 That which my father loses ; no less than all ;  
 The younger rises, when the old doth fall. [Exit.]

[7] Invent fashions for them. **WARBURTON.**

[8] The disease to which wenches' suitors are particularly exposed, was called in Shakspeare's time, the *breuning* or *burning*. **JOHNSON.**  
 So, in *Italah* iii. 24. "—and *burning* instead of beauty." **STEEVENS.**

## SCENE IV.

*A Part of the Heath, with a Hovel. Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.*

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

*Lear.* Let me alone.

*Kent.* Good my lord, enter here.

*Lear.* Wilt break my heart?

*Kent.* I'd rather break mine own: Good my lord, enter.

*Lear.* Thou think'st 'tis much, that this contentious  
storm

Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to thee;  
But where the greater malady is fix'd,  
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear;  
But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea,  
Thou'dst meet the bear i'the mouth. When the mind's  
free,

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

*Kent.* Good my lord, enter here.

*Lear.* Pr'ythee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease;  
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder  
On things would hurt me more.—But I'll go in:  
In, boy; go first. [*To the Fool.*] You houseless poverty,—  
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.

[*Fool goes in.*]

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

And show the heavens more just.

*Edg.* [*Within.*] Fathom and half, fathom and half!

Poor Tom! [*The Fool runs out from the Hevel.*]

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

*Kent.* Give me thy hand.—Who's there?

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

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

*Enter EDGAR, disguised as a madman.*

*Edg.* Away! the foul fiend follows me!—

Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.—

Humph! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

*Lear.* Hast thou given all to thy two daughters?  
And art thou come to this?

*Edg.* Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame,<sup>2</sup> through ford and whirlpool, over bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow,<sup>3</sup> and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor:—Bless thy five wits! Tom's a-cold.—O, do de, do de, do de.—Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking!<sup>3</sup> Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes: There could I have him now,—and there,—and there,—and there again, and there. [*Storm continues.*]

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

Couldst thou save nothing? Didst thou give them all?

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

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

*Kent.* He hath no daughters, sir.

*Lea.* Death, traitor! nothing could have subdu'd nature

[1] Alluding to the *ignis fatuus*, supposed to be lights kindled by mischievous beings to lead travellers into destruction. JOHNSON.

[2] He recounts the temptations by which he was prompted to suicide; the opportunities of destroying himself, which often occurred to him in his melancholy moods. JOHNSON.—Shakspeare found this charge against the fiend, with many others of the same nature, in Harriet's Declaration, and has used the very words of it. The book was printed in 1603. STEVENS.

[3] To *Take*—is to blast, or strike with malignant influence.

“—strike her young bones,  
“Ye taking airs, with lameness!” JOHNSON.



To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters.—  
Is it the fashion, that discarded fathers  
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh ?  
Judicious punishment ! 'twas this flesh begot  
Those pelican daughters.<sup>1</sup>

*Edg.* Pillicock sat on Pillicock's-hill ;—  
Halloo, Halloo, loo, loo !

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

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

*Lear.* What hast thou been ?

*Edg.* A serving-man, proud in heart and mind ; that curled my hair ; wore gloves in my cap,<sup>2</sup> served the lust of my mistress's heart, and did the act of darkness with her ; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven : one, that slept in the contriving of lust, and waked to do it : Wine loved I deeply ; dice dearly ; and in woman, out-paramoured the Turk : False of heart, light of ear,<sup>3</sup> bloody of hand ; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness,<sup>4</sup> dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes, nor the rustling of silks, betray thy poor heart to women : Keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend.—Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind : Says suum, mun, ha no nonny,<sup>5</sup> dolphin, my boy, my boy, sessa ; let him trot by.

[*Storm still continues.*]

*Lear.* Why, thou were better in thy grave, than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this ? Consider him well : Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the

[1] The young pelican is fabled to suck the mother's blood. JOHNSON.

[2] It was the custom to wear gloves in the hat on three distinct occasions, viz. as the favour of a mistress, the memorial of a friend, and as a mark to be challenged by an enemy. STEEVENS.

[3] Credulous of evil, ready to receive malicious reports. JOHNSON.

[4] The Jesuits pretended to cast the seven deadly sins out of Mainz in the shape of those animals that represented them ; and before each was cast out, Mainz by gestures acted that particular sin ; curling his hair to show *pride*, vomiting for *gluttony*, gaping and snoring for *loth*, &c.—Harsnet's book, p. 279. To this probably our author alludes. STEEVENS.

[5] *Way no nonny*—is the burthen of a song in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, said to be written by Shakspeare in conjunction with Fletcher. STEEV.

sheep no wool, the cat no perfume :—Ha ! here's three of us are sophisticated ! ~~He~~ Thou art the thing itself : unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art.—Off, off, you lendings :—Come ; unbutton here.— [Tearing off his clothes.]

*Fool.* Pr'ythee, nuncle, be contented ; this is a naughty night to swim in.—Now a little fire in a wild field were like an old lecher's heart ; a small spark, all the rest of his body cold.—Look, here comes a walking fire.

*Edg.* This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet :<sup>6</sup> he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock ; he gives the web and the pin,<sup>7</sup> squints the eye, and makes the harelip ; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

*Saint Withold footed thrice the wold ;  
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold ;  
Bid her alight,  
And her troth plight,  
And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee !<sup>8</sup>*

*Kent.* How fares your grace ?

*Enter GLOSTER, with a torch.*

*Lear.* What's he ?

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

[6] "Frateretto, Fliberdigibet, Hoberdidance, Tocobatto, were four devils of the round or morrice.... These four had forty assistants under them, as themselves doe confesse." *Harsnet*, p. 49. PERCY.

[7] Web and pin—diseases of the eye. JOHNSON.

[8] We should read thus :

*Saint Withold footed thrice the wold,  
He met the night-mare, and her name told,  
Bid her alight, and her troth plight,  
And aroint thee, witch, aroint thee right.*

Saint Withold traversing the wold or downs, met the nightmare ; who having told her name, he obliged her to alight from those persons whom she rides, and plight her troth to do no more mischief. This is taken from a story of him in his legend. Hence he was invoked as the patron saint against that distemper. And these verses were no other than a popular charm, or night spell against the Epiantes. The last line is the formal exorcism or apostrophe of the speaker of the charm to the witch, aroint thee right, i. e. depart forthwith. *Bedlams*, gipsies, and such like vagabonds, used to sell these kind of spells or charms to the people. They were of various kinds for various disorders. We have another of them in the Monsieur Thomas of Fletcher, which he expressly calls a *night spell*, and is in these words :—

"Saint George, Saint George, our lady's knight,

"He walks by day, so he does by night ;

"And when he had her found,

"He her beat and her bound ;

"Until to him her troth she plight,

"She would not stir from him that night." WARBURTON.

Her *nine fold* seems to be put (for the sake of rhyme) instead of *nine foals*. I cannot find this adventure in the common legends of St. Vitalis, who, I suppose, is here called St. Withold. TYRWHITT.

*Glo.* What are you there ? your names ?

*Edg.* Poor Tom ; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt, and the water ;<sup>3</sup> that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets ; swallows the old rat, and the ditch-dog ; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool ; who is whipped from tything to tything,<sup>4</sup> and stocked, punished, and imprisoned ; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear,—

*But mice, and rats, and such small deer,<sup>5</sup>  
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.*

Beware my follower :—Peace, Smolkin ; peace, thou fiend !

*Glo.* What, hath your grace no better company ?

*Edg.* The prince of darkness is a gentleman ;  
Motho he's call'd, and Mahu.<sup>6</sup>

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

*Edg.* Poor Tom's a-cold.

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

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

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

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

*Edg.* How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

*Lear.* Let me ask you one word in private.

*Kent.* Impertune him once more to go, my lord,

[3] i. e. the *water-newt*. This was the phraseology of Shakespeare's time. "He was a wise man and a merry," was the common language. So Falstaff says to justice Shallow, "he is your serving-man, and your husband," i. e. husband-man. MALONE.

[4] A tything—is a division of a place, a district ; the same in the country, as a ward in the city. In the Saxon times every hundred was divided into tythings. STEEVENS.

[5] Deer—in old language, is a general word for wild animals. STEEVENS.

[6] So, in Harnet's *Declaration*, *Mahu* was the the chief devil that had possession of Sarah Williams. STEEVENS.

His wits begin to unsettle.<sup>7</sup>

*Glo.* Canst thou blame him ?

His daughters seek his death :—Ah, that good Kent !—

He said it would be thus :—Poor banish'd man !—

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

I am almost mad myself : I had a son,

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

But lately, very late ; I lov'd him, friend,—

No father his son dearer : true to tell thee,

[*Storm continues.*]

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

I do beseech your grace,—

*Lear.* O, cry you mercy,

Noble philosopher, your company.

*Edg.* Tom's a-cold.

*Glo.* In, fellow, there, to the hovel : keep thee warm.

*Lear.* Come, let's in all.

*Kent.* This way, my lord.

*Lear.* With him ;

I will keep still with my philosopher.

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

*Glo.* Take him you on.

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

*Lear.* Come, good Athenian.

*Glo.* No words, no words :

Hush.

*Edg.* *Child Rowland to the dark tower came,*<sup>6</sup>

*His word was still,—Fie, foh, and fum,*

*I smell the blood of a British man.* [Exit.

[7] On this occasion, I cannot prevail on myself to omit the following excellent remark of Mr. Horace Walpole [now Lord Orford] inserted in the postscript to his *Mysterious Mother*. He observes, that when "*Belvidera* talks of

"*Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of Amber,—*

she is not mad, but light-headed. When madness has taken possession of a person, such character ceases to be fit for the stage, or at least should appear there but for a short time ; it being the business of the theatre to exhibit passions, not distempers. The finest picture ever drawn of a head discomposed by misfortune, is that of *King Lear*. His thoughts dwell on the ingratitude of his daughters, and every sentence that falls from his wildness excites reflection and pity. Had frenzy entirely seized him, our compassion would abate : we should conclude that he no longer felt unhappiness. Shakspeare wrote as a philosopher, Otway as a poet." STEEVENS.

[8] *Child* is a common term in our metrical romances and ballads ; and is generally, if not always, applied to the hero or principal personage, who is sometimes a *knights*, and sometimes a *thief*. *Syr Tryamour* is repeatedly so called both before and after his knighthood. I think, however, that this line is part of a translation of some Spanish, or perhaps, French ballad. But the two following lines evidently belong to a different subject : I find them in the second Part of *Jack and the Giants*, which, is not as old as Shakspeare's

## SCENE V.

*A Room in GLOSTER's Castle. Enter CORNWALL and EDMUND.*

*Corn.* I will have my revenge, ere I depart his house,

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

*Corn.* I now perceive, it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death ; but a provoking merit,<sup>7</sup> set a-work by a reproveable badness in himself.

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

*Corn.* Go with me to the duchess.

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

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

*Edm.* [*Aside.*] If I find him comforting the king,<sup>8</sup> it will stuff his suspicion more fully.—I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

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

## SCENE VI.

*A Chamber in a Farm-House adjoining the Castle. Enter GLOSTER, LEAR, KENT, Fool, and EDGAR.*

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

time, may have been compiled from something that was so : They are uttered by a giant :

" *Few, few, sum.*

" *I smell the blood of an Englishman ;*

" *Be he alive, or be he dead,*

" *I'll grind his bones to make me bread."*

*English* is here judiciously changed to *British*, because the characters are *Britons*, and the scene is laid long before the *English* had any thing to do with this country. Our author is not so attentive to propriety on every occasion. RITSON.

[7] *Provoking*—stimulating ; a merit he felt in himself, which irritated him against a father that had none. MASON.

[8] *Comforting*—is here used in the juridical sense for supporting, helping, according to its derivation ; *salvia confortat nerves*—Schol. Sal. JOHNSON.

*Kent.* All the power of his wits has given way to his impatience :—The gods reward your kindness !

[*Exit GLO.*]

*Edg.* Frateretto calls me ; and tells me, Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.<sup>9</sup>

*Fool.* Pr'ythee, nuncle, tell me, whether a madman be a gentleman, or a yeoman ?

*Lear.* A king, a king !

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

*Lear.* To have a thousand with red burning spits Come hissing in upon them :—

*Edg.* The foul fiend bites my back.

*Fool.* He's mad, that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health,<sup>2</sup> a boy's love, or a whore's oath.

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

*Edg.* Look, where he stands and glares !— Wantest thou eyes at trial, madam ?<sup>2</sup>

*Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me :<sup>3</sup>*

*Fool.* Her boat hath a leak,

*And she must not speak*

*Why she dares not come over to thee.*

*Edg.* The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. *Hofdance* cries in Tom's belly for

[9] Perhaps he is here addressing the *Fool*. *Fools* were anciently called *Innocents*. STEEVENS.

[1] Shakspeare is here speaking not of things maliciously treacherous, but of things uncertain and not durable. A horse is above all other animals subject to diseases. JOHNSON.

[2] I am not confident that I understand the meaning of this desultory speech. When *Edgar* says, "Look where he stands and glares!" he seems to be speaking in the character of a madman, who thinks he sees the fiend. "Wantest thou eyes at trial, madam?" is a question which appears to be addressed to the visionary *Genetil*. STEEVENS.—It may be observed that *Edgar*, being supposed to be found by chance, and therefore to have no knowledge of the rest, connects not his ideas with those of *Lear*, but pursues his own train of delirious or fantastic thought. To these words, "*At trial madam?*" I think therefore that the name of *Lear* should be put. The process of the dialogue will support this conjecture. JOHNSON.

[3] A *bourn* in the north signifies a *rivulet* or *brook*. Hence the names of many of our villages terminate in *burn*, as *Milburn*, *Sherburn*, &c. To this I may add, that *bourn*, a boundary, is from the French *borne*. *Bourne*, or as it ought to be spelt, *burn*, a rivulet, is from the German *burn*, or *born*, a well. STEEVENS.

two white herring.<sup>9</sup> Croak not, black angel ; I have no food for thee.

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

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

*Edg.* Let us deal justly.

*Sleepest, or wakest thou, jolly shepherd ?  
Thy sheep be in the corn ;  
And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,  
Thy sheep shall take no harm.*

Pur ! the cat is grey.

*Lear.* Arraign her first ; 'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

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

*Lear.* She cannot deny it.

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

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

*Edg.* Bless thy five wits !

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

*Edg.* My tears begin to take his part so much, They'll mar my counterfeiting. [*Aside.*

*Lear.* The little dogs and all,

Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

*Edg.* Tom will throw his head at them :—Avaunt, you curs !

Be thy mouth or black or white,<sup>1</sup>  
Tooth that poisons if it bite ;  
Mastiff, grey-hound, mongrel grim,  
Hound, or spaniel, brach, or lym ;<sup>2</sup>

[9] Sarah Williams confessed (see Harsnet's book, p. 195.) that when she was troubled with a croaking in her stomach, from emptiness, the priests persuaded her that it was the fiend within her. STEEVENS.

[1] To have the roof of the mouth black is in some-kind of dogs a proof that their breed is genuine. STEEVENS.

[2] *Brach* or *lym*, &c.—Names of particular sorts of dogs. POPE.  
*A jimmer, or leamer*, a dog of the chase, was so called from the *leash* in which he was held till he was let slip. So in the *bank* of

Or bobtail tike,<sup>3</sup> or trundle tail ;  
Tom will make them weep and wail :  
For, with throwing thus my head,  
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

Do de, de de. Sessa.<sup>4</sup> Come, march to wakes and fairs,  
and market-towns ;—Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.<sup>5</sup>

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

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

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

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

*Re-enter GLOSTER.*

*Glo.* Come hither, friend: Where is the king my master?

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

*Glo.* Good friend, I pr'ythee take him in thy arms ;  
I have o'er-heard a plot of death upon him :  
There is a litter ready ; lay him in't,  
And drive towards Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet  
Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master :  
If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life,  
With thine, and all that offer to defend him,  
Stand in assured loss : Take up, take up ;  
And follow me, that will to some provision  
Give thee quick conduct.

*Kent.* Opprest nature sleeps :—

This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken senses,  
Which, if convenience will not allow,  
Stand in hard cure.—Come, help to bear thy master ;

Tenures, 1679, the words "canes domini regis lesos," are translated "Leash hounds, such as draw after a hurt deer in a leash, or liam." STEEVENS.

[3] *Tijk* is the Runick word for a little, or worthless dog. STEEVENS.

[4] Here is *sessa* again, which I take to be the French word *cessure*, pronounced *cessure*, which was, I suppose, like some others, in common use among us. It is an interjection enforcing cessation of any action, like, *be quiet, hands done.* JOHNSON.—It is not impossible that this may be a part of some old song, and originally stood thus :

Gissy, come march to wakes  
And fairs, and market towns.—

There is another line in the character of Edgar which I am very confident I have seen in an old ballad, viz.

Thro' the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind. STEEVENS.

[5] Men that begged under pretence of lunacy used formerly to carry a horn, and blow it through the streets. JOHNSON.



Thou must not stay behind.

[To the Fool.

*Glo.* Come, come, away.

[*Exeunt* KENT, GLOSTER, and the Fool, bearing off the King.

*Edg.* When we our betters see bearing our woes,  
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.  
Who alone suffers, suffers most i'the mind ;  
Leaving free things,<sup>6</sup> and happy shows, behind :  
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erstep,  
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.  
How light and portable my pain seems now,  
When that, which makes me bend, makes the king bow ;  
He childed, as I father'd !—Tom, away ;  
Mark the high noises ; and thyself bewray,<sup>7</sup>  
When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles thee,  
In thy just proof, repeals, and reconciles thee.  
What will hap more to-night, safe 'scape the king !  
Lurk, lurk.

[*Exit.*

#### SCENE VII.

*A Room in GLOSTER's Castle. Enter* CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND, and Servants.

*Corn.* Post speedily to my lord your husband ; show him this letter :—The army of France is landed :—Seek out the villain Gloster. [*Exe. some of Servants.*

*Reg.* Hang him instantly.

*Gon.* Pluck out his eyes.

*Corn.* Leave him to my displeasure.—Edmund, keep you our sister company ; the revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the duke, where you are going, to a most festinate preparation ; we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift, and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister ;—farewell, my lord of Gloster.<sup>8</sup>

*Enter Steward.*

How now ? Where's the king ?

*Stew.* My lord of Gloster hath convey'd him hence ;

[6] Free things—states clear from distress. JOHNSON.

[7] Attend to the great events that are approaching, and make thyself known when that false opinion now prevailing against thee shall, in consequence of just proof of thy integrity, revoke its erroneous sentence, and recal thee to honour and reconciliation. JOHNSON.

[8] Meaning Edmund, newly invested with his father's titles. The steward, speaking immediately after, mentions the old earl by the same title.

Some five or six and thirty of his knights,  
Hot questrists<sup>9</sup> after him, met him at gate ;  
Who, with some other of the lord's dependants,  
Are gone with him towards Dover ; where they boast  
To have well-armed friends.

*Corn.* Get horses for your mistress.

*Gon.* Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

[*Exeunt GONERIL and EDMUND.*]

*Corn.* Edmund, farewell.—Go, seek the traitor Gloster,  
Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us :

[*Exeunt other Servants.*]

Though well we may not pass upon his life  
Without the form of justice ; yet our power  
Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men  
May blame, but not control. Who's there? The traitor ?

*Re-enter Servants, with GLOSTER.*

*Reg.* Ingrateful fox ! 'tis he.

*Corn.* Bind fast his corky arms.<sup>1</sup>

*Glo.* What mean your graces ?—Good my friends,  
consider

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

*Corn.* Bind him, I say. [*Servants bind him.*]

*Reg.* Hard, hard :—O filthy traitor !

*Glo.* Unmerciful lady as you are, I am none.

*Corn.* To this chair bind him.—Villain, thou shalt find—

[*REGAN plucks his beard.*]

*Glo.* By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done  
To pluck me by the beard.

*Reg.* So white, and such a traitor !

*Glo.* Naughty lady,

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

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

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

*Corn.* And what confederacy have you with the traitors  
Late footed in the kingdom ?

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

*Glo.* I have a letter guessingly set down,  
Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,  
And not from one oppos'd.

[9] A *questrist* is one who goes in search or quest of another. STEEV.

[1] Dry, withere d. husky arms. JOHNSON.

*Corn.* Cunning.

*Reg.* And false.

*Corn.* Where hast thou sent the king?

*Glo.* To Dover.

*Reg.* Wherefore

To Dover? Wast thou not charg'd at thy peril—

*Corn.* Wherefore to Dover? Let him first answer that.

*Glo.* I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.<sup>2</sup>

*Reg.* Wherefore to Dover?

*Glo.* Because I would not see thy cruel nails

Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister

In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.

The sea, with such a storm as his bare head

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

And quench'd the stelled fires: yet, poor old heart,

He hop'd the heavens to rain.

If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,<sup>3</sup>

Thou shouldst have said, *Good porter, turn the key:*

All cruels else subscrib'd:<sup>4</sup>—But I shall see

The winged vengeance overtake such children.

*Corn.* See it shalt thou never:—Fellows, hold the chair:

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

[*GLOSTER is held down in his chair, while CORNWALL plucks out one of his eyes, and sets his foot on it.*

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

Give me some help:—O cruel! O ye gods!

*Reg.* One side will mock another; the other too.

*Corn.* If you see vengeance,—

*Serv.* Hold your hand, my lord:

I have serv'd you ever since I was a child;

But better service have I never done you,

Than now to bid you hold.

*Reg.* How now, you dog?

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

*Corn.* My villain! [*Draws, and runs at him.*

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

[*Draws. They fight. CORNWALL is wounded.*

*Reg.* [*To another Servant.*] Give me thy sword.—A  
peasant stand up thus!

[*Snatches a sword, comes behind, and stabs him.*

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

[2] The course—the running of the dogs upon me. JOHNSON.

[3] Thus the folio. Both the quartos read, *dears time*. *Deare*—is a north country word, signifying lonely, solitary, far from neighbours. STEPHENS.

[4] Subscrib'd, yielded, submitted to the necessity of the occasion. JOHNSON.

*Corn.* Lest it see more, prevent it :—Out, vile jelly !  
Where is thy lustre now ? [*Tears out GLOSTER's other  
eye, and throws it on the ground.*]

*Glo.* All dark and comfortless.—Where's my son  
Edmund ?

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

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

*Glo.* O my follies !  
Then Edgar was abus'd.—

Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him !

*Reg.* Go, thrust him out at gates, and let him smell  
His way to Dover.—How is't, my lord ? How look you ?

*Corn.* I have receiv'd a hurt :—Follow me, lady.—  
Turn out that eyeless villain ;—throw this slave  
Upon the dunghill.—Regan, I bleed apace :  
Untimely comes this hurt : Give me your arm.

[*Exit CORNWALL, led by REGAN ;—Servants  
unbind GLOSTER, and lead him out.*]

1 *Serv.* I'll never care what wickedness I do,  
If this man comes to good.

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

1 *Serv.* Let's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam  
To lead him where he would ; his roguish madness  
Allows itself to any thing.

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

## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.—*The HEATH. Enter EDGAR.*

*Edgar.* Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,  
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,<sup>s</sup>  
The lowest, and most dejected thing of fortune,  
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear :

[s] I cannot help thinking that this passage should be written thus :  
Yet better thus *unknown* to be contemn'd,  
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd to be *worse*. TYRWHITT.

The lamentable change is from the best ;  
 The worst returns to laughter. Welcome then,  
 Thou unsubstantial air, that I embrace !  
 The wretch, that thou hast blown unto the worst,  
 Owes nothing to thy blasts.—But who comes here ?—

*Enter GLOSTER, led by an old Man.*

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

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

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

*Old Man.* Alack, sir, you cannot see your way.

*Glo.* I have no way, and therefore want no eyes ;  
 I stumbled when I saw : Full oft 'tis seen,  
 Our mean<sup>e</sup> secures us ; and our mere defects  
 Prove our commodities.—Ah, dear son Edgar,  
 The food of thy abused father's wrath !  
 Might I but live to see thee in my touch,  
 I'd say, I had eyes again !

*Old Man.* How now ? Who's there ?

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

I am worse than e'er I was.

*Old Man.* 'Tis poor mad Tom.

*Edg.* [*Aside.*] And worse I may be yet : the worst is not,  
 So long as we can say, *This is the worst.*

*Old Man.* Fellow, where goest ?

*Glo.* Is it a beggar-man ?

*Old Man.* Madman and beggar too.

*Glo.* He has some reason, else he could not beg.  
 I'the last night's storm I such a fellow saw ;  
 Which made me think a man a worm : My son  
 Came then into my mind ; and yet my mind  
 Was then scarce friends with him : I have heard more  
 since :

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

*Edg.* How should this be ?—

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96] *Mean* is here a substantive, and signifies a middle state. STEEVENS

Bad is the trade must play the fool to sorrow,  
Ang'ring itself and others. [*Aside.*]—Bless thee, master!

*Glo.* Is that the naked fellow?

*Old Man.* Ay, my lord.

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

*Old Man.* Alack, sir, he's mad.

*Glo.* 'Tis the time's plague, when madmen lead the  
blind.

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

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

*Glo.* Sirrah, naked fellow.

*Edg.* Poor Tom's a-cold.—I cannot daub it further.<sup>7</sup>  
[*Aside.*]

*Glo.* Come hither, fellow.

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

*Glo.* Know'st thou the way to Dover?

*Edg.* Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path.  
Poor Tom hath been scared out of his good wits: Bless  
the good man from the foul fiend! Five fiends have  
been in poor Tom at once; of lust, as *Obidicut*; *Hob-*  
*bididance*, prince of dumbness; *Mahu*, of stealing;  
*Modo*, of murder; and *Flibbertigibbit*, of mopping and  
mowing; who since possess chamber-maids and wait-  
ing-women.<sup>8</sup> So bless thee, master!

[7] Daub—disguise.      **WARBURTON.**

[8] Shakspeare has made Edgar, in his feigned distraction, frequently allude to a vile imposture of some English jesuits, at that time much the subject of conversation; the history of it having been just then composed with great art and vigour of style and composition by Dr. S. Harsenet, afterwards archbishop of York, by order of the privy council, in a work intitled, "A Declaration of egregious Popish Impostures to withdraw her Majesty's Subjects from their Allegiance, &c. practised by Edmunds, alias Weston, a Jesuit, and divers Romish priests his wicked Associates"; printed 1603. The imposture was in substance this. While the Spaniards were preparing their armada against England, the jesuits were here busy at work to promote it by making converts: one method they employed was to dispose pretended demoniacks, by which artifice they made several hundred converts among the common people. The principal scene of this farce was laid in the family of one Mr. Edmund Peckham, a Roman catholic, where Marwood, a servant of Anthony Babington (who was afterwards executed for treason), Trayfordan attendant upon Mr. Peckham, and Sarah and Priswood Williams, and Anne Smith, three chambermaids, in that family, came into the priest's hands for cure. But the discipline of the patients was so long and severe, and the priests so elate and careless with their success, that the plot was discoverd,

*Glo.* Here, take this purse, thou whom the heaven's  
 plagues www.libtool.com.cn  
 Have humbled to all strokes : that I am wretched,  
 Makes thee the happier :—Heavens, deal so still !  
 Let the superfluous, and lust-dieted man,  
 That slaves your ordinance,<sup>9</sup> that will not see  
 Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly :  
 So distribution should undo excess,  
 And each man have enough.—Dost thou know Dover ?

*Edg.* Ay, master.

*Glo.* There is a cliff, whose high and bending head  
 Looks fearfully in the confined deep :  
 Bring me but to the very brim of it,  
 And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear,  
 With something rich about me : from that place  
 I shall no leading need.

*Edg.* Give me thy arm ;  
 Poor Tom shall lead thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II.

*Before the Duke of ALBANY's Palace. Enter GONERIL and  
 EDMUND ; Steward meeting them.*

*Gon.* Welcome, my lord : I marvel, our mild husband<sup>1</sup>  
 Not met us on the way :—Now, where's your master ?

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

*Gon.* Then shall you go no further. [*To EDMUND.*]  
 It is the cowish-terror of his spirit,

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ed on the confession of the parties concerned, and the contrivers of it deservedly punished. The five devils here mentioned, are the names of five of those who were made to act in this farce upon the chamber-maids and waiting-women; and they were generally so ridiculously nick-named, that Harriet has one chapter "on the strange names of their devils; lest," said he, "meeting them otherwise by chance, you mistake them for the names of tapsters or jugglers." WARBURTON.

[9] To slave an ordinance—is to treat it as a slave, to make it subject to us, instead of acting in obedience to it. STEEVENS.

[1] It must be remembered that Albany, the husband of Goneril disliked in the end of the first act, the scheme of oppression and ingratitude. JOHNS.

That dares not undertake : he'll not feel wrongs,  
Which tie him to an answer : Our wishes, on the way,  
May prove effects.<sup>2</sup> Back, Edmund, to my brother ;  
Hasten his musters, and conduct his powers :  
I must change arms at home, and give the distaff  
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant  
Shall pass between us : ere long you are like to hear,  
If you dare venture in your own behalf,  
A mistress's command. Wear this ; spare speech ;  
[Giving a favour.]

Decline your head :<sup>3</sup> this kiss, if it durst speak,  
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air ;—  
Conceive, and fare thee well.

*Edm.* Yours in the ranks of death.

*Gon.* My most dear Gloster ! [Exit EDMUND.  
O, the difference of man, and man ! To thee  
A woman's services are due ; my fool  
Usurps my bed.

*Stew.* Madam, here comes my lord. [Exit Steward.]

*Enter ALBANY.*

*Gon.* I have been worth the whistle.

*Alb.* O Goneril !

You are not worth the dust which the rude wind  
Blows in your face.—I fear your disposition :  
That nature, which contemns its origin,  
Cannot be border'd certain in itself ;  
She that herself will sliver and disbranch  
From her maternal sap, perforce must wither,  
And come to deadly use.<sup>4</sup>

*Gon.* No more ; the text is foolish.

*Alb.* Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile :  
Filths savour but themselves. What have you done ?  
Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd ?  
A father, and a gracious aged man,  
Whose reverence the head-lugg'd bear would lick,  
Most barbarous, most degenerate ! have you madd'd.  
Could my good brother suffer you to do it ?  
A man, a prince, by him so benefited ?

[2] The wishes, which we expressed to each other on our way hither, may be completed, and prove effectual to the destruction of my husband. MAL.

[3] She bids him decline his head, that she might give him a kiss (the steward being present) and that it might appear only to him as a whisper. STEE.

[4] Alluding to the use that witches and enchanters are said to make of withered branches in their charms. A fine insinuation in the speaker, that she was ready for the most unnatural mischief, and a preparative of the poet to her plotting with the bastard against her husband's life. WARBURTON.



If that the heavens do not their visible spirits  
Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,  
'Twill come,

Humanity must perforce prey on itself,  
Like monsters of the deep.<sup>5</sup>

*Gon.* Milk-liver'd man !

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

*Alb.* See thyself, devil !

Proper deformity seems not in the fiend  
So horrid, as in woman.<sup>6</sup>

*Gon.* O vain fool !

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

*Gon.* Marry, your manhood now !—

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Alb.* What news ?

*Mes.* O, my good lord, the duke of Cornwall's dead ;  
Slain by his servant, going to put out  
The other eye of Gloster.

*Alb.* Gloster's eyes !

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

*Alb.* This shows you are above,  
You justicers, that these our nether crimes  
So speedily can venge !—But, O poor Gloster !

[5] Fishes are the only animals that are known to prey upon their own species. JOHNSON.

[6] Diabolic qualities appear not so horrid in the devil to whom they belong, as in woman who unnaturally assumes them. WARBURTON.

Lost he his other eye !

*Mes.* Both, both, my lord.—

This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer ;  
'Tis from your sister.

*Gon.* [*Aside.*] One way I like this well ;<sup>7</sup>  
But being widow, and my Gloster with her,  
May all the building in my fancy pluck  
Upon my hateful life :—Another way,  
The news is not so tart.—I'll read, and answer. [*Exit.*]

*Alb.* Where was his son, when they did take his eyes ?

*Mes.* Come with my lady hither.

*Alb.* He is not here.

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

*Alb.* Knows he the wickedness ?

*Mes.* Ay, my good lord ; 'twas he inform'd against him ;  
And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment  
Might have the freer course.

*Alb.* Gloster, I live

To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the king,  
And to revenge thine eyes.—Come hither, friend ;  
Tell me what more thou knowest. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III.

*The French Camp near Dover. Enter KENT, and a Gentleman.*<sup>8</sup>

*Kent.* Why the king of France is so suddenly gone  
back know you the reason ?

*Gent.* Something he left imperfect in the state,  
Which since his coming forth is thought of ; which  
Imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger,  
That his personal return was most requir'd,  
And necessary.

*Kent.* Who hath he left behind him general ?

*Gent.* The mareschal of France, Monsieur le Fer.

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

*Gent.* Ay, sir ; she took them, read them in my pres-  
ence ;

And now and then an ample tear trill'd down  
Her delicate cheek : it seem'd, she was a queen

[7] Goneril's plan was to poison her sister—to marry Edmund—to murder Albany—and to get possession of the whole kingdom. As the death of Cornwall facilitated the last part of her scheme, she was pleased at it ; but disliked it, as it put it in the power of her sister to marry Edmund. MASON.

[8] The gentleman whom he sent in the foregoing act with letters to Cordelia. JOHNSON.

Over her passion ; who, most rebel-like,  
Sought to be king o'er her.

*Kent.* O, then it mov'd her.

*Gent.* Not to a rage : patience and sorrow strove  
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen  
Sunshine and rain at once : her smiles and tears  
Were like a better day : Those happy smiles,  
That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know  
What guests were in her eyes ; which parted thence,  
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd.—In brief, sorrow  
Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all  
Could so become it.

*Kent.* Made she no verbal question ?

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

Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart ;  
Cried, *Sisters ! sisters !—Shame of ladies ! sisters !*  
*Kent ! father ! sisters ! What ? i' the storm ? i' the night ?*  
*Let pity not be believed !*<sup>9</sup>—There she shook  
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,  
And clamour moisten'd : then away she started  
To deal with grief alone.

*Kent.* It is the stars,

The stars above us, govern our conditions ;  
Else one self mate and mate<sup>2</sup> could not beget  
Such different issues. You spoke not with her since ?

*Gent.* No.

*Kent.* Was this before the king return'd ?

*Gent.* No, since.

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

*Gent.* What, good sir ?

*Kent.* A sovereign shame so elbows him : his own  
unkindness,  
That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her  
To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights  
To his dog-hearted daughters,—these things sting  
His mind so venomously, that burning shame<sup>2</sup>  
Detains him from Cordelia.

[9] Let not such a thing as pity be supposed to exist ! STEEVENS.

[1] The same husband and the same wife. JOHNSON.

[2] The metaphor is here preserved with great knowledge of nature. The venom of poisonous animals being a high caustic salt, that has all the effect fire upon the part. WARBURTON.

*Gent.* Alack, poor gentleman !

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

*Gent.* 'Tis so ; they are afoot.

*Kent.* Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear,  
And leave you to attend him : some dear cause  
Will in concealment wrap me up a while ;  
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve  
Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go  
Along with me. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV.

*The same. A Tent. Enter CORDELIA, Physician, and Soldiers.*

*Cor.* Alack, 'tis he ; why, he was met even now  
As mad as the vex'd sea : singing aloud ;  
Crown'd with rank fumiter,<sup>3</sup> and furrow-weeds,  
With harlocks,<sup>4</sup> hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,  
Darnel,<sup>5</sup> and all the idle weeds that grow  
In our sustaining corn.—A century send forth ;  
Search every acre in the high-grown field,  
And bring him to our eye. [*Exit an Officer.*]  
—What can man's wisdom do,

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

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

*Cor.* All bless'd secrets,  
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,  
Spring with my tears ! be aidant, and remediate,  
In the good man's distress !—Seek, seek for him ;  
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life  
That wants the means to lead it.<sup>6</sup>

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mes.* Madam, news ;  
The British powers are marching hitherward.

*Cor.* 'Tis known before ; our preparation stands  
In expectation of them.—O dear father,

[3] *Fumitory.* By the old herbalists, written fumittery. HARRIS.

[4] *Harlocks* must be a typographical error for charlock, the common name of *sinapis arvensis*, wild mustard. HARRIS.

[5] *Darnel*, according to Gerard, is the most hurtful of weeds among corn. STEEVENS.

[6] The reason which should guide it. JOHNSON.

It is thy business that I go about ;  
 Therefore great France cool.com.cn  
 My mourning, and important tears, hath pitied.<sup>7</sup>  
 No blown ambition doth our arms incite,<sup>8</sup>  
 But love, dear love, and our ag'd father's right :  
 Soon may I hear, and see him ! [Exeunt.]

## SCENE V.

*A Room in GLOSTER's Castle. Enter REGAN and Steward.*

*Reg.* But are my brother's powers set forth ?

*Stew.* Ay, madam.

*Reg.* Himself

In person there ?

*Stew.* Madam, with much ado :

Your sister is the better soldier.

*Reg.* Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home ?

*Stew.* No, madam.

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

*Stew.* I know not, lady.

*Reg.* Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.

It was great ignorance, Gloster's eyes being out,  
 To let him live ; where he arrives, he moves  
 All hearts against us : Edmund, I think, is gone,  
 In pity of his misery, to despatch  
 His nighted life ;<sup>9</sup> moreover, to descry  
 The strength o'the enemy.

*Stew.* I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.

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

*Stew.* I may not, madam ;

My lady charg'd my duty in this business.

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

*Stew.* Madam, I had rather—

*Reg.* I know, your lady does not love her husband ;  
 I am sure of that : and, at her late being here,  
 She gave strange œilliads,<sup>10</sup> and most speaking looks  
 To noble Edmund : I know, you are of her bosom.

[7] Important, as in other places in this author, for *importunats*. JOHNS.

[8] No inflated, no swelling pride. JOHNSON.

[9] His life made dark as night by the extinction of his eyes. STEEVENS.

[10] *Ocellade*, Fr. A cast, or significant glance of the eye. STEEVENS.

*Stew.* I, madam ?

*Reg.* I speak in understanding : you are, I know it :  
Therefore, I do advise you, take this note :<sup>2</sup>  
My lord is dead ; Edmund and I have talk'd ;  
And more convenient is he for my hand,  
Than for your lady's :— You may gather more.<sup>3</sup>  
If you do find him, pray you, give him this ;  
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,  
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.  
So, fare you well.

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

*Stew.* 'Would I could meet him, madam ! I would show  
What party I do follow.

*Reg.* Fare thee well.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE VI.

*The Country near Dover.* Enter GLOSTER, and EDGAR, dressed  
like a Peasant.

*Glo.* When shall we come to the top of that same hill ?

*Edg.* You do climb up it now : look, how we labour.

*Glo.* Methinks, the ground is even.

*Edg.* Horrible steep :

Hark, do you hear the sea ?

*Glo.* No, truly.

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

*Glo.* So it may be, indeed :

Methinks, thy voice is alter'd ;<sup>4</sup> and thou speak'st  
In better phrase, and matter, than thou didst.

*Edg.* You are much deceiv'd ; in nothing am I chang'd,  
But in my garments.

*Glo.* Methinks, you are better spoken.

*Edg.* Come on, sir ; here's the place :—stand still.—  
How fearful

And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low !  
The crows, and choughs, that wing the midway air,  
Show scarce so gross as beetles : Half way down  
Hangs one that gathers samphire ; dreadful trade !  
Methinks, he seems no bigger than his head :  
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,

[2] *Notes* means in this place not a letter, but a remark. JOHNSON.

[3] You may infer more than I have directly told you. JOHNSON.

[4] Edgar alters his voice in order to pass afterwards for a malignant spirit. JOHNSON.

Appear like mice ; and yon' tall anchoring bark,  
 Diminish'd to her cock ;<sup>6</sup> her cock, a buoy  
 Almost too small for sight : The murmuring surge,  
 That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,  
 Cannot be heard so high :—I'll look no more ;  
 Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight  
 Topple down headlong.<sup>6</sup>

*Glo.* Set me where you stand.

*Edg.* Give me your hand : You are now within a foot  
 Of the extreme verge : for all beneath the moon  
 Would I not leap upright.

*Glo.* Let go my hand.

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

*Edg.* Now fare you well, good sir. [*Seems to go.*]

*Glo.* With all my heart.

*Edg.* Why do I trifle thus with his despair,  
 Is done to cure it.

*Glo.* O, you mighty gods !

This world do I renounce ; and, in your sights,  
 Shake patiently my great affliction off :

If I could bear it longer, and not fall

To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,

My snuff, and loathed part of nature, should

Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him !—

Now, fellow, fare thee well. [*He leaps, and falls along.*]

*Edg.* Gone, sir ? farewell.—

And yet I know not how conceit may rob

The treasury of life, when life itself

Yields to the theft.<sup>7</sup> Had he been where he thought,

By this, had thought been past.—Alive, or dead ?

Ho, you sir ! friend !—Hear you, sir ?—speak !

[5] Her cock—her cock-boat. JOHNSON.

[6] This description has been much admired since the time of Addison, who has remarked, with a poor attempt at pleasantry, that "he who can read it without being giddy, has a very good head, or a very bad one." The description is certainly not mean, but I am far from thinking it wrought to the utmost excellence of poetry. He that looks from a precipice, finds himself assailed by one great and dreadful image of irresistible destruction. But this overwhelming idea is dissipated and enfeebled from the instant that the mind can restore itself to the observation of particulars, and diffuse its attention to distinct objects. The enumeration of the clouds and crows, the samphire man, and the fishers, counteracts the great effect of the prospect, as it peoples the desert of immediate vacuity, and stops the mind in the rapidity of its descent through emptiness and horror. JOHNSON.

[7] When life is willing to be destroyed. JOHNSON.

Thus might he pass, indeed :<sup>8</sup>—Yet he revives :  
What are you, air?

*Glo.* Away, and let me die.

*Ed.* Hadst thou been aught but gossamer,<sup>9</sup> feathers, air,  
So many fathom down precipitating,  
Thou hadst shiver'd like an egg : but thou dost breathe ;  
Hast heavy substance ; bleed'st not ; speak'st ; art sound.  
Ten masts at each make not the altitude,  
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell ;  
Thy life's a miracle : Speak yet again.

*Glo.* But have I fallen, or no ?

*Edg.* From the dread summit of this chalky bourn :<sup>1</sup>  
Look up a-height ;—the shrill-gorg'd lark so far  
Cannot be seen or heard : do but look up.

*Glo.* Alack, I have no eyes.—

Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit,  
To end itself by death ? 'Twas yet some comfort,  
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,  
And frustrate his proud will.

*Edg.* Give me your arm :

Up :—So ;—How is't ? Feel you your legs ? You stand.

*Glo.* Too well, too well.

*Edg.* This is above all strangeness.

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

*Glo.* A poor unfortunate beggar.

*Edg.* As I stood here below, methought, his eyes  
Were two full moons ; he had a thousand noses,  
Horns whelk'd,<sup>2</sup> and wav'd like the enridged sea ;  
It was some fiend : Therefore, thou happy father,  
Think that the clearest gods,<sup>3</sup> who make them honours  
Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd thee.

*Glo.* I do remember now : henceforth I'll bear  
Affliction, till it do cry out itself,  
*Enough, enough, and, die.* That thing you speak of,  
I took it for a man ; often 'twould say,  
*The fiend, the fiend :* he led me to that place.

*Edg.* Bear free and patient thoughts.<sup>4</sup>—But who  
comes here ?

[8] Thus he might die in reality. We still use the word *passing bell*. JOH.

[9] The substance called *gossamer* is formed of the collected webs of flying spiders, and during calm weather in autumn sometimes falls in amazing quantities. See *Romeo and Juliet*, p. 40. HOLT WHITE.

[1] This chalky boundary. STEEVENS.

[2] Varied with protuberances. STEEVENS.

[3] The purest ; the most free from evil. JOHNSON.—So in *Timon* of Athens : "Roots, you clear gods." MALONE.

[4] To be melancholy is to have the mind chained down to one painful



*Enter LEAR, fantastically dressed up with flowers.*

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

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

*Edg.* O thou side-piercing sight !

*Lear.* Nature's above art in that respect.—There's  
your press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a  
crow-keeper :<sup>5</sup> Draw me a clothier's yard.—Look, look,  
a mouse ! Peace, peace ;—this piece of toasted cheese  
will do't.—There's my gauntlet ; I'll prove it on a gi-  
ant.—Bring up the brown bills.—O, well flown, bird !<sup>6</sup>  
i'the clout, i'the clout : hewgh !—Give the word.<sup>7</sup>

*Edg.* Sweet marjoram.

*Lear.* Pass.

*Glo.* I know that voice.

*Lear.* Ha ! Goneril !—with a white beard !—They  
flatter'd me like a dog ;<sup>8</sup> and told me, I had white hairs  
in my beard, ere the black ones were there. To say *ay*,  
and *no*, to every thing I said !—Ay and no too was no  
good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once,  
and the wind to make me chatter ;<sup>9</sup> when the thunder  
would not peace at my bidding ; there I found them,  
there I smelt them out. Go to, they are not men o'  
their words : they told me, I was every thing ; 'tis a  
lie ; I am not ague-proof.

*Glo.* The trick of that voice I do well remember :<sup>1</sup>  
Is't not the king ?

*Lear.* Ay, every inch a king :

idea ; there is therefore great propriety in exhorting Gloucester to *free thoughts*,  
to an emancipation of his soul from grief and despair. JOHNSON.

[5] In several counties to this day, they call a stuffed figure, representing a  
man, and armed with a bow and arrow, set up to fright the crows from the  
fruit and corn, a *crow-keeper* as well as a *scare-crow*. THEOBALD.

This *crow-keeper* was so common in the author's time that it is one of the  
few peculiarities mentioned by Ortelius in his account of our island. JOH.

[6] Lear is here raving of archery, and shooting at bats, as is plain by the  
words *i'the clout*, that is, the white mark they set up and aim at : hence  
the phrase, to *hit the white*. WARBURTON.

[7] Lear supposes himself in a garrison, and before he lets Edgar pass, re-  
quires the watch-word. JOHNSON.

[8] They played the spaniel to me. JOHNSON.

[9] This seems to be an allusion to king Canute's behaviour when his courtiers  
flattered him as lord of the sea. STEEVENS.

[1] Trick, says Mr. Hammer, is a word frequently used for the air, or that  
peculiarity in a face, voice, or gesture, which distinguishes it from others.  
STEEVENS.

When I do stare, see, how the subject quakes.—  
I pardon that man's life: What was thy cause?

*Adultery.*—

Thou shalt not die: Die for adultery! No:  
The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly  
Does lecher in my sight.

Let copulation thrive, for Gloster's bastard son  
Was kinder to his father, than my daughters  
Got 'tween the lawful sheets.

To't, luxury, pell-mell, for I lack soldiers.—

Behold yon' simpering dame,

Whose face between her forks presageth snow;

That minces virtue, and does shake the head

To hear of pleasure's name;

The fitchew,<sup>2</sup> nor the soiled horse,<sup>3</sup> goes to't

With a more riotous appetite.

Down from the waist they are centaurs,

Though women all above:

But to the girdle do the gods inherit,

Beneath is all the fiends'; there's hell, there's darkness,

there is the sulphurous pit, burning, scalding, stench,

consumption;—Fye, fye, fye! pah; pah! Give me an

ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagi-

nation: there's money for thee.

*Glo.* O, let me kiss that hand!

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

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

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

*Glo.* Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.

*Edg.* I would not take this from report:—it is,  
And my heart breaks at it.

*Lear.* Read.

*Glo.* What, with the case of eyes?

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

[2] The fitchew—a polecat. POPE.

[3] Soiled horse—is a term for a horse that has been fed with hay and corn in the stable during the winter, and is turned out in the spring to take the first flush of grass, or has it cut and carried in to him. This at once cleanses the animal, and fills him with blood. STEEVENS.

*Glo.* I see it feelingly.

*Lear.* What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes, with no eyes. Look with thine ears: see how yon' justice rails upon yon' simple thief. Hark, in thine ear: Change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief?—Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

*Glo.* Ay, sir.

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

Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand:  
Why dost thou lash that whore? strip thine own back;  
Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind,  
For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the  
cozener.

Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;  
Robes, and furr'd gowns, hide all. Plate sin with gold,  
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks:  
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw doth pierce it.  
None does offend, none, I say, none; I'll able 'em:<sup>4</sup>  
Take that of me, my friend, who have the power  
To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes;  
And, like a scurvy politician, seem  
To see the things thou dost not.—Now, now, now, now:  
Pull off my boots:—harder, harder; so.

*Edg.* O, matter and impertinency mix'd!  
Reason in madness!

*Lear.* If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.  
I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloster:  
Thou must be patient; we came crying hither.  
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,  
We wawl, and cry:—I will preach to thee; mark me.

*Glo.* Alack, alack the day!

*Lear.* When we are born, we cry, that we are come  
To this great stage of fools;—This a good block?<sup>5</sup>—  
It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe  
A troop of horse with felt: I'll put it in proof;  
And when I have stolen upon these sons-in-law,  
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill.

[4] An old phrase signifying to qualify, or uphold them. WARBURTON.

[5] Perhaps we should read,  
*'Tis a good block.*

RITSON.

*Enter a Gentleman, with Attendants.*

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

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

*Gent.* You shall have any thing.

*Lear.* No seconds? All myself?  
Why, this would make a man, a man of salt,<sup>6</sup>  
To use his eyes for garden water-pots,  
Ay, and for laying autumn's dust.

*Gent.* Good sir,—

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

*Gent.* You are a royal one, and we obey you.

*Lear.* Then there's life in it. Nay, an you get it,  
you shall get it by running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.

*[Exit, running; Attendants follow.]*

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

*Edg.* Hail, gentle sir.

*Gent.* Sir, speed you: What's your will?

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

*Gent.* Most sure, and vulgar: every one hears that,  
Which can distinguish sound.

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

*Gent.* Near, and on speedy foot; the main descry  
Stands on the hourly thought.<sup>7</sup>

*Edg.* I thank you, sir: that's all.

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

*Edg.* I thank you, sir. *[Exit Gent.]*

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

*Edg.* Well pray you, father.

*Glo.* Now, good sir, what are you?

[6] A man of salt is a man of tears. STEEVENS.

[7] The main body is expected to be descried every hour. The expression is harsh. JOHNSON.

*Edg.* A most poor man, made tame by fortune's blows ;  
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,  
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,  
I'll lead you to some bidding.

*Glo.* Hearty thanks :  
The bounty and the benison of heaven  
To boot, and boot !

*Enter Steward.*

*Stew.* A proclaim'd prize ! Most happy !  
That eyeless head of thine was first frain'd flesh  
To raise my fortunes.—Thou old unhappy traitor,  
Briefly thyself remember :<sup>8</sup>—The sword is out  
That must destroy thee.

*Glo.* Now let thy friendly hand  
Put strength enough to it. [EDGAR *opposes*.

*Stew.* Wherefore, bold peasant,  
Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor ? Hence ;  
Lest that the infection of his fortune take  
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

*Edg.* Chill not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion.

*Stew.* Let go, slave, or thou diest.

*Edg.* Good gentleman, go your gait,<sup>9</sup> and let poor  
volk pass. And ch'ud ha' been zwagger'd out of my  
life, 'twould not ha' been zo long as 'tis by a vortnight.  
Nay, come not near the old man ; keep out, che  
vor'ye,<sup>1</sup> or ise try whether your costard<sup>2</sup> or my bat be  
the harder : Chi'll be plain with you.

*Stew.* Out, dunghill !

*Edg.* Ch'ill pick your teeth, zir : Come ; no matter  
vor your foins.<sup>3</sup>

[*They fight ; and EDGAR knocks him down.*

*Ste.* Slave, thou hast slain me :—Villain, take my purse ;  
If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body ;  
And give the letters, which thou find'st about me,  
To Edmund earl of Gloster ; seek him out  
Upon the British party :—O, untimely death ! [*Dies.*

*Edg.* I know thee well : A serviceable villain ;

[8] Quickly recollect the past offences of thy life, and recommend thyself to heaven. WARBURTON.

[9] *Gang your gait* is a common expression in the North. In the last rebellion, when the Scotch soldiers had finished their exercise, instead of our term of dismissal, their phrase was *gang your gait*. STEEVENS.

[1] *Che vor ye*—*I warn you*. Edgar counterfeits the western dialect. JOHNSON.

[2] *Costard* is head. STEEVENS.

[3] To *foin* is to make what we call a *thrust* in fencing. STEEVENS.

As duteous to the vices of thy mistress,  
As badness would desire.

*Glo.* What, is he dead ?

*Edg.* Sit you down, father ; rest you.—  
Let's see his pockets : these letters, that he speaks of,  
May be my friends.—He's dead ; I am only sorry  
He had no other death's-man.—Let us see :—  
Leave, gentle wax ; and, manners, blame us not :  
To know our enemies' minds, we'd rip their hearts ;  
Their papers, is more lawful.<sup>4</sup>

[*Reads.*] *Let our reciprocal vows be remembered.  
You have many opportunities to cut him off : if your  
will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered.  
There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror :  
Then am I the prisoner, and his bed my gaol ; from the  
loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the  
place for your labour.*

*Your wife, (so I would say,) and your affectionate  
servant,*

GONERIL.

O undistinguish'd space of woman's will !<sup>5</sup>—  
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life ;  
And the exchange, my brother !—Here, in the sands,  
Thee I'll rake up,<sup>6</sup> the post unsanctified  
Of murd'rous lechers : and, in the mature time,  
With this ungracious paper strike the sight  
Of the death-practis'd duke :<sup>7</sup> For him 'tis well,  
That of thy death and business I can tell.

[*Exit EDGAR, dragging out the body.*

*Glo.* The king is mad : how stiff is my vile sense,  
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling  
Of my huge sorrows ! Better I were distract :  
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs ;  
And woes, by wrong imaginations, lose  
The knowledge of themselves.

*Re-enter EDGAR.*

*Edg.* Give me your hand :  
Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum.  
Come, father, I'll bestow you with a friend. [*Exeunt.*

[4] Our enemies are put upon the rack, and torn in pieces to extort confession of their secrets ; to tear open their letters is more lawful. WARB.

[5] O undistinguished licentiousness of a woman's inclination. STEEV.

[6] I'll cover thee. In Staffordshire, to rake the fire, is to cover it with fuel for the night. JOHNSON.

[7] The duke of Albany, whose death is machinated by practice or treason. JOHNSON.

## SCENE VII.

*A Tent in the French Camp. LEAR on a bed, asleep; Physician, Gentleman, and others, attending: Enter CORDELIA and KENT.*

*Cor.* O thou good Kent, how shall I live, and work,  
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,  
And every measure fail me.

*Kent.* To be acknowledg'd, madam, is o'erpaid.  
All my reports go with the modest truth;  
Nor more, nor clipp'd, but so.

*Cor.* Be better suited:<sup>8</sup>  
These weeds are memories of those worsèr hours;  
I prythee, put them off.

*Kent.* Pardon me, dear madam;  
Yet to be known, shortens my made intent:  
My boon I make it, that you know me not,  
Till time and I think meet.

*Cor.* Then be it so, my good lord.—How does the  
king? [To the Physician.]

*Phys.* Madam, sleeps still.

*Cor.* O you kind gods,  
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!  
The untun'd and jarring senses, O, wind up  
Of this child-changed father!<sup>9</sup>

*Phys.* So please your majesty,  
That we may wake the king? he hath slept long.

*Cor.* Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed  
I'the sway of your own will. Is he array'd?

*Gent.* Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep,  
We put fresh garments on him.

*Phys.* Be by, good madam, when we do awake him;  
I doubt not of his temperance.

*Cor.* Very well.

*Phys.* Please you, draw near.—Louder the music there.

*Cor.* O my dear father! Restoration, hang  
Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss  
Repair those violent harms, that my two sisters  
Have in thy reverence made!

*Kent.* Kind and dear princess!

*Cor.* Had you not been their father, these white flakes  
Had challeng'd pity of them. Was this a face  
To be expos'd against the warring winds?

[8] Be better dressed, put on a better suit of clothes.

STEEVENS.

[9] Changed by his children. MALONE.

To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder ?  
 In the most terrible and nimble stroke  
 Of quick, cross lightning ? to watch (poor perdu !)  
 With this thin helm <sup>1</sup> Mine enemy's dog,  
 Though he had bit me, should have stood that night  
 Against my fire ; And wast thou fain, poor father,  
 To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,  
 In short and musty straw ? Alack, alack !  
 'Tis wonder, that thy life and wits at once  
 Had not concluded all.—He wakes ; speak to him.

*Phys.* Madam, do you ; 'tis fittest.

*Cor.* How does my royal lord ? How fares your majesty ?

*Lear.* You do me wrong, to take me out o' the grave.—  
 Thou art a soul in bliss ; but I am bound  
 Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears  
 Do scald like molten lead.

*Cor.* Sir, do you know me ?

*Lear.* You are a spirit, I know ; When did you die ?

*Cor.* Still, still, far wide !

*Phys.* He's scarce awake ; let him alone awhile.

*Lear.* Where have I been ? Where am I ?—Fair  
 day-light ?—

I am mightily abus'd.—I should even die with pity,  
 To see another thus.—I know not what to say.—  
 I will not swear, these are my hands :—let's see ;  
 I feel this pin prick.—'Would I were assur'd  
 Of my condition.

*Cor.* O, look upon me, sir,  
 And hold your hands in benediction o'er me :—  
 No, sir, you must not kneel.

*Lear.* Pray, do not mock me :  
 I am a very foolish fond old man,  
 Fourscore and upward ; and, to deal plainly,  
 I fear, I am not in my perfect mind.  
 Methinks, I should know you, and know this man ;  
 Yet I am doubtful : for I am mainly ignorant  
 What place this is ; and all the skill I have  
 Remembers not these garments ; nor I know not  
 Where I did lodge last night : Do not laugh at me ;  
 For, as I am a man, I think this lady  
 To be my child Cordelia.

[1] The allusion is to the forlorn-hope in an army, which are put upon desperate adventures, and called in French *enfants perdus* ; she therefore calls her father, poor perdu. WARBURTON.

[2] I am strangely imposed on by my appearances ; I am in a strange mist of uncertainty. JOHNSON.



*Cor.* And so I am, I am.

*Lear.* Be your tears wet? Yes, 'faith. I pray, weep not: If you have poison for me, I will drink it: I know, you do not love me; for your sisters Have, as I do remember, done me wrong: You have some cause, they have not.

*Cor.* No cause, no cause.

*Lear.* Am I in France?

*Kent.* In your own kingdom, sir.

*Lear.* Do not abuse me.

*Phys.* Be comforted, good madam: the great rage, You see, is cur'd in him: and yet it is danger To make him even o'er the time he has lost.<sup>3</sup> Desire him to go in; trouble him no more, Till further settling.

*Cor.* Will't please your highness walk?

*Lear.* You must bear with me:

Pray now, forget and forgive: I am old, and foolish.

[*Exeunt* LEAR, CORDELIA, *Physician, and Attendants.*]

*Gent.* Holds it true, sir,

That the duke of Cornwall was so slain?

*Kent.* Most certain, sir.

*Gent.* Who is conductor of his people?

*Kent.* As it is said,

The bastard son of Gloster.

*Gent.* They say, Edgar,

His banish'd son, is with the earl of Kent

In Germany.

*Kent.* Report is changeable.

'Tis time to look about; the powers o'the kingdom Approach apace.

*Gent.* The arbitrement is like to be a bloody.

Fare you well, sir.

[*Exit.*]

*Kent.* My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,  
Or well, or ill, as this day's battle's fought.

[*Exit.*]

[3] To reconcile it to his apprehension. WARBURTON.

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ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Camp of the British Forces, near Dover. Enter, with drums and colours, EDMUND, REGAN, Officers, Soldiers, and others.*

*Edm.* Know of the duke, if his last purpose hold ;  
Or, whether since he is advis'd by aught  
To change the course : He's full of alteration,  
And self-reproving :—bring his constant pleasure.<sup>4</sup>

*[To an Officer, who goes out.*

*Reg.* Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

*Edm.* 'Tis to be doubted, madam.

*Reg.* Now, sweet lord,  
You know the goodness I intend upon you :  
Tell me,—but truly,—but then speak the truth,  
Do you not love my sister ?

*Edm.* In honour'd love.

*Reg.* But have you never found my brother's way  
To the forefended place ?

*Edm.* That thought abuses you.

*Reg.* I am doubtful that you have been conjunct  
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.

*Edm.* No, by mine honour, madam.

*Reg.* I never shall endure her : Dear my lord,  
Be not familiar with her.

*Edm.* Fear me not :—  
She, and the duke her husband,——

*Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, and Soldiers.*

*Gon.* I had rather lose the battle, than that sister  
Should loosen him and me. *[Aside.*

*Alb.* Our very loving sister, well be met.—  
Sir, this I hear,—The king is come to his daughter,  
With others, whom the rigour of our state  
Forc'd to cry out. Where I could not be honest,  
I never yet was valiant : for this business,  
It toucheth us as France invades our land,  
Not bolds the king ;<sup>5</sup> with others, whom, I fear,  
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.

*Edm.* Sir, you speak nobly.

[4] His settled resolution. JOHNSON.

[5] This business (says Albany,) touches us as France invades our land, not as it bolds the king, &c. i. e. emboldens him to assert his former title.  
STEVENS.

*Reg.* Why is this reason'd ?

*Gon.* Combine together 'gainst the enemy :  
For these domestic and particular broils  
Are not to question here.

*Alb.* Let us then determine

With the ancient of war on our proceedings.

*Edm.* I shall attend you presently at your tent.

*Reg.* Sister, you'll go with us ?

*Gon.* No.

*Reg.* 'Tis most convenient ; pray you, go with us.

*Gon.* O, ho, I know the riddle : [*Aside.*] I will go.

*As they are going out, enter EDGAR, disguised.*

*Edg.* If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,  
Hear me one word.

*Alb.* I'll overtake you.—Speak.

[*Exeunt* EDM. REG. GON. Officers, Soldiers,  
and Attendants.]

*Edg.* Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.  
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound  
For him that brought it : Wretched though I seem,  
I can produce a champion, that will prove  
What is avouched there : If you miscarry,  
Your business of the world hath so an end,  
And machination ceases.<sup>6</sup> Fortune love you !

*Alb.* Stay till I have read the letter.

*Edg.* I was forbid it.

When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,  
And I'll appear again.

[*Exit.*]

*Alb.* Why, fare thee well ; I will o'erlook thy paper.

*Re-enter EDMUND.*

*Edm.* The enemy's in view, draw up your powers.  
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces  
By diligent discovery ;—but your haste  
Is now urg'd on you.

*Alb.* We will greet the time.<sup>7</sup>

[*Exit.*]

*Edm.* To both these sisters have I sworn my love ;  
Each jealous of the other, as the stung  
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take ?  
Both ? one ? or neither ? Neither can be enjoy'd,  
If both remain alive : To take the widow,  
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril ;

[6] All designs against your life will have an end. STEEVENS.

[7] We will be ready to meet the occasion. JOHNSON.

And hardly shall I carry out my side,  
 Her husband being alive. Now then, we'll use  
 His countenance for the battle ; which being done,  
 Let her, who would be rid of him, devise  
 His speedy taking off. As for the mercy  
 Which he intends to Lear, and to Cordelia,—  
 The battle done, and they within our power,  
 Shall never see his pardon : for my state  
 Stands on me to defend, not to debate. [Exit.

## SCENE II.

*A Field between the two Camps. Alarum within. Enter, with drum and colours, LEAR, CORDELIA, and their Forces ; and exeunt. Enter EDGAR and GLOSTER.*

*Edg.* Here, father, take the shadow of this tree  
 For your good host ; pray that the right may thrive :  
 If ever I return to you again,  
 I'll bring you comfort.

*Glo.* Grace go with you, sir ! [Exit EDGAR.

*Alarums ; afterwards a Retreat. Re-enter EDGAR.*

*Edg.* Away, old man, give me thy hand, away ;  
 King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en :  
 Give me thy hand, come on.

*Glo.* No further, sir ; a man may rot even here.

*Edg.* What, in ill thoughts again ? Men must endure  
 Their going hence, even as their coming hither :  
 Ripeness is all. Come on.

*Glo.* And that's true too. [Excunt.

## SCENE III.

*The British Camp near Dover. Enter, in conquest, with drum and colours, EDMUND ; LEAR and CORDELIA, as prisoners ; Officers, Soldiers, &c.*

*Edm.* Some officers take them away : Good guard ;  
 Until their greater pleasures first be known  
 That are to censure them.

*Cor.* We are not the first,  
 Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst.  
 For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down ;  
 Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.—

[3] To be ready, prepared, is all. STEVENS.

Shall we not see these daughters, and these sisters ?

*Lear.* No, no, no, no ! Come, let's away to prison :  
We two alone will sing like birds i'the cage :  
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,  
And ask of thee forgiveness : So we'll live,  
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh-  
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues  
Talk of court-news ; and we'll talk with them too,—  
Who loses, and who wins ; who's in, who's out ;—  
And take upon us the mystery of things,  
As if we were God's spies :<sup>9</sup> And we'll wear out,  
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,  
That ebb and flow by the moon.

*Edm.* Take them away.

*Lear.* Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,  
The gods themselves throw incense.<sup>1</sup> Have I caught thee?  
He that parts us, shall bring a brand from heaven,  
And fire us hence, like foxes.<sup>2</sup> Wipe thine eyes ;  
The goujeers<sup>3</sup> shall devour them, flesh and fell,<sup>4</sup>  
Ere they shall make us weep : we'll see them starve first.  
Come. [*Exeunt LEAR and CORDELIA, guarded.*]

*Edm.* Come hither, captain ; hark.

Take thou this note ; [*Giving a paper.*] go, follow  
them to prison :

One step I have advanc'd thee ; if thou dost  
As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way  
To noble fortunes : Know thou this,—that men  
Are as the time is : to be tender-minded  
Does not become a sword :—Thy great employment  
Will not bear question ; either say, thou'lt do't,  
Or thrive by other means.

*Off.* I'll do't, my lord.

*Edm.* About it ; and write happy, when thou hast done.  
Mark,—I say, instantly ; and carry it so,  
As I have set it down.

*Off.* I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats ;  
If it be man's work, I will do it. [*Exit.*]

[9] As if we were angels commissioned to survey and report the lives of men, and were consequently endowed with the power of prying into the original motives of action and the mysteries of conduct. JOHNSON.

[1] The thought is extremely noble, and expressed in a sublime of imagery that Seneca fell short of on the like occasion. "Ecce spectaculum dignum ad quod respiciat, intentus operi suo deus : ecce par deo dignum, vir fortis cum mala fortuna compositus." WARBURTON.

[2] It is usual to smoke foxes out of their holes. STEEVENS.

[3] The *goujeers* is the morbus gallicus. *Gouge*, Fr. one of the common women attending a camp. HANMER.

[4] Flesh and fell—flesh and skin. JOHNSON.

*Flourish. Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, Officers, and Attendants.*

*Alb.* Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,  
And fortune led you well : you have the captives,  
Who were the opposites of this day's strife :  
We do require them of you ; so to use them,  
As we shall find their merits and our safety  
May equally determine.

*Edm.* Sir, I thought it fit  
To send the old and miserable king  
To some retention, and appointed guard ;  
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,  
To pluck the common bosom on his side,  
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes<sup>5</sup>  
Which do command them. With him I sent the queen ;  
My reason all the same ; and they are ready  
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear  
Where you shall hold your session. At this time,  
We sweat, and bleed : the friend hath lost his friend ;  
And the best quarrels, in the heat, are curs'd  
By those that feel their sharpness :—  
The question of Cordelia, and her father,  
Requires a fitter place.<sup>6</sup>

*Alb.* Sir, by your patience,  
I hold you but a subject of this war,  
Not as a brother.

*Reg.* That's as we list to grace him.  
Methinks, our pleasure might have been demand'd,  
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers ;  
Bore the commission of my place and person ;  
The which immediacy may well stand up,<sup>7</sup>  
And call itself your brother.

*Gon.* Not so hot :  
In his own grace he doth exalt himself,  
More than in your advancement.

*Reg.* In my rights,  
By me invested, he compeers the best.

*Alb.* That were the most, if he should husband you.

*Reg.* Jesters do oft prove prophets.

*Gon.* Holla, holla !

That eye, that told you so, look'd but a-squint.

[5] Turn the lance-men, whom we have hired by giving them *presumency*, against us. STEEVENS.

[6] The determination of the question, what shall be done with Cordelia and her father, should be reserved for greater privacy. STEEVENS.

[7] *Immediacy, supremacy* in opposition to *subordination*, which has *quiddam medium* between itself and power. JOHNSON.

*Reg.* Lady, I am not well ; else I should answer  
From a full-flowing stomach.—General,  
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony ;  
Dispose of them, of me ; the walls are thine :<sup>8</sup>  
Witness the world, that I create thee here :  
My lord and master.

*Gon.* Mean you to enjoy him ?

*Alb.* The let-alone lies not in your good-will.<sup>9</sup>

*Edm.* Nor in thine, lord.

*Alb.* Half-blooded fellow, yes.

*Reg.* Let the drum strike, and prove my title thine.

[To EDMUND.]

*Alb.* Stay yet ; hear reason :—Edmund, I arrest thee  
On capital treason ; and, in thy arrest,  
This gilded serpent :—[*Pointing to GON.*]—For your  
claim, fair sister ;

I bar it in the interest of my wife ;

'Tis she is sub-contracted to this lord,

And I, her husband, contradict your bans.

If you will marry, make your love to me,

My lady is bespoke.

*Gon.* An interlude !

*Alb.* Thou art arm'd, Gloster :—Let the trumpet sound :  
If none appear to prove upon thy person,  
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,  
There is my pledge ; [*Throwing down a glove.*] I'll  
prove it on thy heart,

Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less

'Than I have here proclaim'd thee.

*Reg.* Sick, O, sick !

*Gon.* If not, I'll ne'er trust poison.

[*Aside.*]

*Edm.* There's my exchange : [*Throwing down a  
glove.*] What in the world he is,

That names me traitor, villain-like he lies :

Call by thy trumpet : he that dares approach,

On him, on you, (who not ?) I will maintain

My truth and honour firmly.

*Alb.* A herald, ho !

*Edm.* A herald, ho, a herald !

*Alb.* Trust to thy single virtue ; for thy soldiers,

All levied in my name, have in my name

Took their discharge.

*Reg.* This sickness grows upon me.

[8] A metaphorical phrase taken from the camp, and signifying, to sup-  
render at discretion. WARBURTON.

[9] To obstruct their union lies not in your good pleasure : your  
wails nothing. MALONE.

The wheel is come full circle ; I am here.

*Alb.* Methought, thy very gait did prophecy  
A royal nobleness :—I must embrace thee ;  
Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I  
Did hate thee, or thy father !

*Edg.* Worthy prince,  
I know it well.

*Alb.* Where have you hid yourself ?  
How have you known the miseries of your father ?

*Edg.* By nursing them, my lord.—List a brief tale ;—  
And, when 'tis told, O, that my heart would burst !—  
The bloody proclamation to escape,  
That follow'd me so near, (O our lives' sweetness !  
That with the pain of death we'd hourly die,  
Rather than die at once !) taught me to shift  
Into a mad-man's rags ; to assume a semblance  
That very dogs disdain'd : and in this habit  
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,  
Their precious stones new lost ; became his guide,  
Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair ;  
Never (O fault !) reveal'd myself unto him,  
Until some half hour past, when I was arm'd,  
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,  
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last  
Told him my pilgrimage : But his flaw'd heart,  
(Alack, too weak the conflict to support !)  
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy, and grief,  
Burst smilingly.

*Edm.* This speech of yours hath mov'd me,  
And shall, perchance, do good : but speak you on ;  
You look as you had something more to say.

*Alb.* If there be more, more woful, hold it in ;  
For I am almost ready to dissolve,  
Hearing of this.

*Edg.* This would have seem'd a period  
To such as love not sorrow ; but another,  
To amplify too-much, would make much more,  
And top extremity.  
Whilst I was big in clamour, came there a man,  
Who having seen me in my worst estate,  
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society ; but then, finding  
Who 'twas that so endur'd, with his strong arms  
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out  
As he'd burst heaven ; threw him on my father :  
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him,  
That ever ear receiv'd, which in recounting



His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life  
Began to crack : Twice then the trumpet sounded,  
And there I left him tranc'd.

*Alb.* But who was this ?

*Edg.* Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent ; who in disguise  
Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service  
Improper for a slave.

*Enter a Gentleman hastily, with a bloody knife.*

*Gent.* Help ! help ! O help !

*Edg.* What kind of help ?

*Alb.* Speak, man.

*Edg.* What means that bloody knife ?

*Gent.* 'Tis hot, it smokes ;

It came even from the heart of—

*Alb.* Who, man ? speak.

*Gent.* Your lady, sir, your lady : and her sister  
By her is poison'd ; she confesses it.

*Edm.* I was contracted to them both ; all three  
Now marry in an instant.

*Alb.* Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead !—  
This judgment of the heavens, that makes us tremble,  
Touches us not with pity. [*Exit Gentleman.*]

*Enter KENT.*

*Edg.* Here comes Kent, sir,

*Alb.* O ! it is he.

The time will not allow the compliment  
Which very manners urges.

*Kent.* I am come  
To bid my king and master aye good night ;  
Is he not here ?

*Alb.* Great thing of us forgot !—  
Speak, Edmund, where's the king ? and where's Cordelia ?  
—See'st thou this object, Kent ?

[*The bodies of GON. and REG. are brought in.*]

*Kent.* Alack, why thus ?

*Edm.* Yet Edmund was belov'd :  
The one the other poison'd for my sake,  
And after slew herself.

*Alb.* Even so.—Cover their faces.

*Edm.* I pant for life :—Some good I mean to do,  
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,—  
Be brief in it,—to the castle ; for my writ  
Is on the life of Lear, and on Cordella :—  
Nay, send in time.

*Alb.* Run, run, O, run—

*Edg.* To who, my lord?—Who has the office? send Thy token of reprieve.

*Edm.* Well thought on; take my sword.  
Give it the captain.

*Alb.* Haste thee, for thy life. [Exit EDGAR.]

*Edm.* He hath commission from thy wife and me  
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and  
To lay the blame upon her own despair,  
That she fordid herself.

*Alb.* The gods defend her! Bear him hence awhile.  
[EDMUND is borne off.]

Enter LEAR, with CORDELIA dead in his arms; EDGAR, Officers, and others.

*Lear.* Howl, howl, howl, howl!—O, you are men of stones;

Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so  
That heaven's vault should crack:—O, she is gone for ever!—

I know when one is dead, and when one lives;  
She's dead as earth:—Lend me a looking-glass;  
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,  
Why, then she lives.

*Kent.* Is this the promis'd end?

*Edg.* Or image of that horror?

[2] To *ferdo* signifies to destroy by suicide. STEVENS.

[3] It appears to me that by the *promis'd end* Kent does not mean that conclusion which the state of their affairs seemed to promise, but the end of the world. In St. Mark's Gospel, when Christ foretels to his disciples the end of the world, and is describing to them the signs which were to precede, and mark the approach of, our final dissolution, he says, "For in those days shall be affliction such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be;" and afterwards he says, "Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death." Kent in contemplating the unexampled scene of exquisite affliction which was then before him, and the unnatural attempt of Goneril and Regan against their father's life, recollects these passages, and asks, whether that was the end of the world that had been foretold to us? To which Edgar adds, or only a representation or resemblance of that horror?

So Macbeth, when he calls upon Banquo, Malcolm, &c. to view Duncan murdered, says—

"—up, up, and see

"The great doom's image! Malcolm! Banquo!

"As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,

"To countenance this horror."

There is evidently an allusion to the same passages in scripture, in a speech of Gloucester's, which he makes in the second scene of the first Act:

"These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us;—love cools; friendship falls off; brothers divide; in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son

*Alb.* Fall, and cease !

*Lear.* This feather stirs ; she lives ! if it be so,  
It is a chance that does redeem all sorrows  
That ever I have felt.

*Kent.* O my good master ! [*Knelling.*]

*Lear.* Prythee, away.

*Edg.* 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

*Lear.* A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all !  
I might have sav'd her ; now she's gone for ever !—  
Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little. Ha !  
What is't thou say'st ?—Her voice was ever soft,  
Gentle, and low ; an excellent thing in woman :—  
I kill'd the slave that was a hanging thee.

*Off.* 'Tis true, my lords, he did.

*Lear.* Did I not, fellow ?

I have seen the day, with my good biting faulchion  
I would have made them skip : I am old now,  
And these same crosses spoil me.—Who are you ?  
Mine eyes are none o'the best :—I'll tell you straight.

*Kent.* If fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated,  
One of them we behold.

*Lear.* This is a dull sight : Are you not Kent ?

*Kent.* The same ; your servant Kent : Where is your  
servant Caius ?

*Lear.* He's a good fellow, I can tell you that ;  
He'll strike, and quickly too :—He's dead and rotten.

*Kent.* No, my good lord ; I am the very man ;—

*Lear.* I'll see that straight.

*Kent.* That, from your first of difference and decay,  
Have follow'd your sad steps.

*Lear.* You are welcome hither.

*Kent.* Nor no man else ; all's cheerless, dark, and  
deadly.—

Your eldest daughters have fore-doom'd themselves,  
And desperately are dead.

*Lear.* Ay, so I think.

*Alb.* He knows not what he says ; and vain it is  
That we present us to him.

*Edg.* Very bootless.

*against father ; the king falls from the bias of nature ; there's father against child : We have seen the best of our time.*"

If any criticks should urge it as an objection to this explanation, that the persons of the drama are pagans, and of consequence unacquainted with the scriptures, they give Shakspeare credit for more accuracy than I fear he possessed.

This note deserves the highest praise, and is inserted in the present work with the utmost degree of gratitude to its author.

M. MASON.  
STEVENSON.

*Enter an Officer.*

*Off.* Edmund is dead, my lord.

*Alb.* That's but a trifle here.—

You lords, and noble friends, know our intent.  
What comfort to this great decay may come,  
Shall be applied : For us, we will resign,  
During the life of this old majesty,  
To him our absolute power :—You, to your rights ;

[*To EDGAR and KENT.*

With boot, and such addition as your honours  
Have more than merited.—All friends shall taste  
The wages of their virtue, and all foes  
The cup of their deservings.—O, see, see !

*Lear.* And my poor fool is hang'd !<sup>4</sup> No, no, no life :  
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,  
And thou no breath at all ? O, thou wilt come no more,  
Never, never, never, never, never !—  
Pray you, undo this button.<sup>5</sup> Thank you, sir.—  
Do you see this ? Look on her,—look,—her lips,—  
Look there, look there !—

[*He dies.*

*Edg.* He faints :—My lord, my lord,—

*Kent.* Break, heart ; I pry'thee, break !

*Edg.* Look up, my lord.

*Kent.* Vex not his ghost : O, let him pass ! He hates him,  
That would upon the rack of this tough world  
Stretch him out longer.

*Edg.* O, he is gone, indeed.

*Kent.* The wonder is, he hath endur'd so long :  
He but usurp'd his life.

*Alb.* Bear them from hence.—Our present business  
Is general woe. Friends of my soul, you twain

[*To KENT and EDGAR.*

Rule in this realm, and the god's state sustain.

*Kent.* I have a journey, sir, shortly to go ;  
My master calls, and I must not say, no.

*Alb.* The weight of this sad time we must obey ;  
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.  
The oldest hath borne most : we, that are young,  
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

[*Exeunt, with a dead march.*

[4] This is an expression of tenderness for his dead Cordelia, (not his fool, as some have thought) on whose lips he is still intent, and dies away, while he is searching therefor indications of life. STEEVENS.

[5] The Rev. J. Warton judiciously observes, that the swelling and heaving of the heart is described by *this* most expressive circumstance. STEEV.

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*ACT IV. Scene I.*

*Friar.* Take thou this phial, being then in bed, and this distilling liquor drink thou off.

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# ROMEO AND JULIET.

THIS play is one of the most pleasing of our author's performances. The scenes are busy and various, the incidents numerous and important, the catastrophe irresistibly affecting, and the process of the action carried on with such probability, at least with such congruity to popular opinions, as tragedy requires.

Here is one of the few attempts of Shakspeare to exhibit the conversation of gentlemen, to represent the airy sprightliness of juvenile elegance. Mr. Dryden mentions a tradition, which might easily reach his time, of a declaration made by Shakspeare, that *he was obliged to kill Mercutio in the third act, lest he should have been killed by him.* Yet he thinks him *no such formidable person, but that he might have lived through the play, and died in his bed,* without danger to the poet. Dryden well knew, had he been in quest of truth, in a pointed sentence, that more regard is commonly had to the words than the thought, and that it is very seldom to be rigorously understood. Mercutio's wit, gaiety, and courage, will always procure him friends that wish him a longer life; but his death is not precipitated, he has lived out the time allotted him in the construction of the play; nor do I doubt the ability of Shakspeare to have continued his existence, though some of his sallies are perhaps out of the reach of Dryden; whose genius was not very fertile of merriment, nor ductile to humour, but acute, argumentative, comprehensive, and sublime.

The Nurse is one of the characters in which the author delighted; he has, with great subtilty of distinction, drawn her at once loquacious and secret, obsequious and insolent, trusty and dishonest.

His comic scenes are happily wrought, but his pathetic strains are always polluted with some unexpected depravation. His persons, however distressed, *have a conceit left them in their misery, a miserable conceit.* JOHNSON.



## PROLOGUE.

*TWO households, both alike in dignity,  
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,  
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,  
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.  
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes  
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life ;  
Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows  
Do, with their death, bury their parents' strife.  
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,  
And the continuance of their parents' rage,  
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,  
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage ;  
The which, if you with patient ears attend,  
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.*

The story on which this play is founded, is related as a true one in Gittolamo de la Corte's *History of Verona*. It was originally published by an anonymous Italian novelist in 1549 at Venice ; and again in 1553, at the same place. The first edition of Bandello's work appeared a year later than the last of these already mentioned. Pierre Boisteau copied it with alterations and additions. Belleforest adopted it in the first volume of his collection 1596 : but very probably some edition of it yet more ancient had found its way abroad ; as, in this improved state it was translated into English, by Arthur Brooke, and published in an octavo volume, 1562, but without a name. On this occasion it appears in the form of a poem entitled, *The tragicall Historie of Romeus and Juliet* : It was republished in 1587, under the same title : "*Contayning in it a rare Example of true Constanctia with the subtill Counsels and Practises of an old Fryer, and their Event.*" Captain Breval in his Travels tells us, that he saw at Verona the tomb of these unhappy lovers. STEEVENS.

## PERSONS REPRESENTED.

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ESCALUS, *prince of Verona.*

PARIS, *a young nobleman, kinsman to the prince.*

MONTAGUE, } *heads of two houses, at variance with*  
CAPULET, } *each other.*

*An old Man, uncle to Capulet.*

ROMEO, *son to Montague.*

MERCUTIO, *kinsman to the prince, and friend to*  
*Romeo.*

BENVOLIO, *nephew to Montague, and friend to Romeo.*

TYBALT, *nephew to lady Capulet.*

Friar LAURENCE, *a Franciscan.*

Friar JOHN, *of the same order.*

BALTHASAR, *servant to Romeo.*

SAMPSON, } *servants to Capulet.*  
GREGORY, }

ABRAM, *servant to Montague.*

*An Apothecary.*

*Three Musicians.*

*Chorus. Boy ; Page to Paris ; PETER ; an Officer.*

*Lady MONTAGUE, wife to Montague.*

*Lady CAPULET, wife to Capulet.*

*JULIET, daughter to Capulet.*

*Nurse to Juliet.*

*Citizens of Verona ; several Men and Women, Relations to both houses ; Maskers, Guards, Watchmen, and Attendants.*

*SCENE during the greater part of the play, in Verona : once in the fifth act at Mantua.*

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# ROMEO AND JULIET.

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## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Public Place. Enter SAMPSON and GREGORY, armed with swords and bucklers.*

*Sampson.*  
GREGORY, o' my word, we'll not carry coals.<sup>a</sup>

*Gre.* No, for then we shall be colliers.

*Sam.* I mean, an we be in choler, we'll draw.

*Gre.* Ay, while you live, draw your neck out of the collar.

*Sam.* I strike quickly, being moved.

*Gre.* But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

*Sam.* A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

*Gre.* To move, is—to stir; and to be valiant, is—to stand to it: therefore, if thou art moved, thou run'st away.

*Sam.* A dog of that house shall move me to stand: I will take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.

*Gre.* That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to the wall.

*Sam.* True; and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall:—therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall.

*Gre.* The quarrel is between our masters, and us their men.

*Sam.* 'Tis all one, I will show myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be cruel with the maids; I will cut off their heads.

*Gre.* The heads of the maids?

*Sam.* Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maiden-heads; take it in what sense thou wilt.

*Gre.* They must take it in sense, that feel it.

*Sam.* Me they shall feel, while I am able to stand: and, 'tis known, I am a pretty piece of flesh.

---

[1] Dr. Warburton very justly observes, that this was a phrase in use to signify the bearing injuries. STEEV.

*Gre.* 'Tis well, thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been Poor John.<sup>2</sup> Draw thy tool; here comes two of the house of the Montagues.

*Enter ABRAM and BALTHASAR.*

*Sam.* My naked weapon is out; quarrel, I will back thee.

*Gre.* How? turn thy back, and run?

*Sam.* Fear me not.

*Gre.* No, marry: I fear thee!

*Sam.* Let us take the law of our sides; let them begin.

*Gre.* I will frown, as I pass by; and let them take it as they list.

*Sam.* Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them;<sup>3</sup> which in a disgrace to them, if they bear it.

*Abr.* Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

*Sam.* I do bite my thumb, sir.

*Abr.* Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

*Sam.* Is the law on our side, if I say—ay?

*Gre.* No.

*Sam.* No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir; but I bite my thumb, sir.

*Gre.* Do you quarrel, sir?

*Abr.* Quarrel, sir? no, sir.

*Sam.* If you do, sir, I am for you; I serve as good a man as you.

*Abr.* No better.

*Sam.* Well, sir.

*Enter BENVOLIO, at a distance.*

*Gre.* Say—better; here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

*Sam.* Yes, better, sir.

*Abr.* You lie.

*Sam.* Draw, if you be men.—Gregory, remember thy swashing blow. [*They fight.*]

*Ben.* Part, fools; put up your swords; you know not what you do. [*Beats down their swords.*]

*Enter TYBALT.*

*Tyb.* What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?

[2] Poor John is hake, dried and salted. MALONE.

[3] Dr. Lodge, in a pamphlet called *Wits Miserie*, &c. 1596, has this passage: "Behold next I see Contempt marching forth, giving mee the *fi* with his thumbs in his mouth." In a translation from Stephens's *Apology for Herodotus*, 1607, I meet with these words: "It is said of the Italians, if they once bite their fingers' ends in a threatening manner, God knows, if they see upon their enemy face to face, it is because they cannot assail him behind his backe." STEEV.

Turn thee, Benvolio; look upon thy death.

*Ben.* I do but keep the peace; put up thy sword,  
Or manage it to part these men with me.

*Tyb.* What, drawn, and talk of peace? I hate the word,  
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee:  
Have at thee, coward. [*They fight.*]

*Enter several Partizans of both Houses, who join the fray; then enter Citizens, with clubs.*

*Cit.* Clubs, bills, and partizans! strike! beat them down!  
Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!

*Enter CAPULET, in his gown; and Lady CAPULET.*

*Cap.* What noise is this?—Give me my long sword,<sup>4</sup>  
ho!

*La. Cap.* A crutch, a crutch!—Why call you for a sword?

*Cap.* My sword, I say!—old Montague is come,  
And flourishes his blade in spite of me.

*Enter MONTAGUE and Lady MONTAGUE.*

*Mon.* Thou villain Capulet,—Hold me not, let me go.

*La. Mon.* Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

*Enter Prince, with Attendants.*

*Prince.* Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,  
Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel,—  
Will they not hear?—what ho! you men, you beasts,—  
That quench the fire of your pernicious rage  
With purple fountains issuing from your veins,  
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands  
Throw your mis-temper'd weapons to the ground,  
And hear the sentence of your moved prince.—  
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,  
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,  
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets;  
And made Verona's ancient citizens  
Cast by their grave besecming ornaments,  
To wield old partizans, in hands as old,  
Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd hate:  
If ever you disturb our streets again,  
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.  
For this time, all the rest depart away:  
You, Capulet, shall go along with me;

[4] The long sword was the sword used in war, which was sometimes wielded with both hands. JOHNSON.

And, Montague, come you this afternoon,  
To know our further pleasure in this case,  
To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.  
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

[*Exeunt Prince, and Attendants ; CAPULET, Lady CAPULET, TYBALT, Citizens, and Servants.*]

*La. Mon.* Who set this ancient quarrel new abroad?—  
Speak, nephew, were you by, when it began?

*Ben.* Here were the servants of your adversary,  
And yours, close fighting ere I did approach :  
I drew to part them ; in the instant came  
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepar'd ;  
Which, as he breath'd defiance to my ears,  
He swung about his head, and cut the winds,  
Who, nothing hurt withal, hiss'd him in scorn :  
While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,  
Came more and more, and fought on part and part,  
Till the prince came, who parted either part.

*La. Mon.* O, where is Romeo!—saw you him to-day?  
Right glad I am, he was not at this fray.

*Ben.* Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun  
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east,  
A troubled mind drove me to walk abroad ;  
Where,—underneath the grove of sycamore,  
That westward rooteth from the city's side,—  
So early walking did I see your son :  
Towards him I made ; but he was 'ware of me,  
And stole into the covert of the wood :  
I, measuring his affections by my own,—  
That most are busied when they are most alone,—  
Pursu'd my humour, not pursuing his,  
And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me.

*Mon.* Many a morning hath he there been seen,  
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,  
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs :  
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun  
Should in the furthest east begin to draw  
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,  
Away from light steals home my heavy son,  
And private in his chamber pens himself ;  
Shuts up his windows; locks fair day-light out,  
And makes himself an artificial night :  
Black and portentous must this humour prove,  
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

*Ben.* My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

*Mon.* I neither know it, nor can learn of him.

n. Have you importun'd him by any means ?

n. Both by myself, and many other friends :

e, his own affections' counsellor,  
himself—I will not say, how true—

o himself so secret and so close,

r from sounding and discovery,

the bud bit with an envious worm,

we can spread his sweet leaves to the air,

dedicate his beauty to the sun.

l we but learn from whence his sorrows grow,

ould as willingly give cure, as know.

*Enter ROMEO, at a distance.*

n. See, where he comes : So please you, step aside ;  
now his grievance, or be much denied.

n. I would, thou wert so happy by thy stay,  
ear true shrift.—Come, madam, let's away.

*[Exe. MONT. and Lady.]*

n. Good morrow, cousin.

m. Is the day so young ?

n. But new struck nine.

m. Ah me ! sad hours seem long.

that my father that went hence so fast ?

n. It was:—What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours ?

m. Not having that, which, having, makes them  
short.

n. In love ?

m. Out—

n. Of love ?

m. Out of her favour, where I am in love.

n. Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,

ld be so tyrannous and rough in proof !

m. Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,

ld, without eyes, see pathways to his will !

re shall we dine ?—O me !—What fray was here ?

ell me not, for I have heard it all.

's much to do with hate, but more with love :—

then, O brawling love ! O loving hate !

y thing, of nothing first create !

avy lightness ! serious vanity !

shapen chaos of well-seeming forms !

her of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health !

waking sleep, that is not what it is !—

love feel I, that feel no love in this,

thou not laugh ?

n. No, coz, I rather weep.

*Rom.* Good heart, at what ?

*Ben.* At thy good heart's oppression.

*Rom.* Why, such is love's transgression.<sup>5</sup>  
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast ;  
Which thou wilt propagate, to have it preat-  
With more of thine : this love, that thou hast shown,  
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.  
Love is a smoke rais'd with the fume of sighs ;  
Being purg'd,<sup>6</sup> a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes ;  
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears :  
What is it else ? a madness most discreet,  
A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.  
Farewell, my coz,

[*Going.*

*Ben.* Soft, I will go along ;

And if you leave me so, you do me wrong.

*Rom.* Tut, I am lost myself ; I am not here ;  
This is not Romeo, he's some other where.

*Ben.* Tell me in sadness,<sup>7</sup> who she is you love ?

*Rom.* What, shall I groan, and tell thee ?

*Ben.* Groan ? why, no ;

But sadly tell me, who.

*Rom.* Bid a sick man in sadness make his will :—

Ah, word ill urg'd to one that is so ill !—

In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

*Ben.* I aim'd so near, when I suppos'd you lov'd.

*Rom.* A right good marksman !—and she's fair I love.

*Ben.* A right fair mark, fair coz, is soonest hit.

*Rom.* Well, in that hit, you miss : she'll not be hit

With Cupid's arrow, she hath Dian's wit ;<sup>8</sup>

And, in strong proof of chastity well arm'd,<sup>9</sup>

From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.

She will not stay the siege of loving terms,

Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes,

Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold :

O, she is rich in beauty ; only poor,

That, when she dies, with beauty dies her store.

*Ben.* Then she hath sworn, that she will still live chaste!

[5] Such is the consequence of unskilful and mistaken kindness. JOHNS.

[6] The author may mean *being purged of smoke*, but it is perhaps a meaning never given to the word in any other place. I would rather read, *being urg'd* : being excited and enforced. To *urge* the fire is the technical term.

[7] That is, tell me *gravely*, tell me in *seriousness*. JOHNSON.

[8] As this play was written in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, I cannot help regarding these speeches of Romeo as an oblique compliment to her majesty

[9] In chastity of *proof*, as we say in *armour of proof*. JOHNS.



*Rom.* She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste ;  
 For beauty, starv'd with her severity,  
 Cuts beauty off from all posterity.  
 She is too fair, too wise ; wisely too fair,  
 To merit bliss by making me despair :  
 She hath forsworn to love ; and, in that vow,  
 Do I live dead, that live to tell it now.

*Ben.* Be rul'd by me ; forget to think of her.

*Rom.* O, teach me how I should forget to think.

*Ben.* By giving liberty unto thine eyes ;  
 Examine other beauties.

*Rom.* 'Tis the way  
 To call hers, exquisite, in question more :  
 Those happy masks, that kiss fair ladies' brows,  
 Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair ;  
 He, that is stricken blind, cannot forget  
 The precious treasure of his eyesight lost :  
 Show me a mistress that is passing fair,  
 What doth her beauty serve, but as a note  
 Where I may read, who pass'd that passing fair ?  
 Farewell ; thou canst not teach me to forget.

*Ben.* I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt. [*Exe.*]

## SCENE II.

*A Street. Enter CAPULET, PARIS, and Servant.*

*Cap.* And Montague is bound as well as I,  
 In penalty alike ; and 'tis not hard, I think,  
 For men so old as we to keep the peace.

*Par.* Of honourable reckoning are you both ;  
 And pity 'tis, you liv'd at odds so long.  
 But now, my lord, what say you to my suit ?

*Cap.* But saying o'er what I have said before :  
 My child is yet a stranger in the world,  
 She hath not seen the change of fourteen years ;  
 Let two more summers wither in their pride,  
 Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

*Par.* Younger than she are happy mothers made.

*Cap.* And too soon marr'd are those so early made.  
 The earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she,  
 She is the hopeful lady of my earth :  
 But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,  
 My will to her consent is but a part ;

[1] This is a Gallicism : *Fille de terre* is the French phrase for an heiress.  
 STEEVENS.

An she agree, within her scope of choice  
 Lies my consent and fair according voice.  
 This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,  
 Whereto I have invited many a guest;  
 Such as I love ; and you, among the store,  
 Once more, most welcome, makes my number more.  
 At my poor house, look to behold this night  
 Earth-treading stars, that make dark heaven light :  
 Such comfort, as do lusty young men feel<sup>2</sup>  
 When well-apparell'd April on the heel  
 Of limping Winter treads, even with such delight  
 Among fresh female buds shall you this night  
 Inherit at my house ; hear all, all see,  
 And like her most, whose merit most shall be :  
 Such, amongst view of many, mine, being one,  
 May stand in number, though in reckoning none.  
 Come, go with me.—Go, sirrah, trudge about  
 Through fair Verona ; find those persons out,  
 Whose names are written there ; [*Gives a paper.*]  
 and to them say,

My house and welcome on their pleasures stay.

[*Exeunt CAPULET and PARIS*]

*Serv.* Find them out, whose names are written here  
 It is written—that the shoemaker should meddle with  
 his yard, and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his  
 pencil, and the painter with his nets ; but I am sent to  
 find those persons, whose names are here writ, and can  
 never find what names the writing person hath her  
 writ. I must to the learned :—In good time.

*Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO.*

*Ben.* Tut, man ! one fire burns out another's burning  
 One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish ;  
 Turn giddy, and be holp by backward turning ;  
 One desperate grief cures with another's languish :  
 Take thou some new infection to thy eye,  
 And the rank poison of the old will die.

*Rom.* Your plantain leaf is excellent for that.<sup>3</sup>

[2] I read, Such comfort as do lusty *young men* feel.—You shall feel from the  
 sight and conversation of these ladies, such hopes of happiness and  
 pleasure, as the farmer receives from the spring, when the plenty of the year  
 begins, and the prospect of the harvest fills him with delight. JOHNSON  
*Young men* are certainly *young men*. RITSON.

[3] Tacitus tells us, that a toad, before she engages with a spider, will  
 fortify herself with some of this plant ; and that, if she comes off wounded,  
 she cures herself afterwards with it. DR. GREY.

The plantain leaf is a blood-stauncher, and was formerly applied to great  
 wounds. STEEV.

*Ben.* For what, I pray thee ?

*Rom.* For your broken shin.

*Ben.* Why, Romeo, art thou mad ?

*Rom.* Not mad, but bound more than a madman is :

Shut up in prison, kept without my food,

Whipp'd, and tormented, and—Good-e'en, good fellow.

*Serv.* Good gi' good e'en.—I pray, sir, can you read ?

*Rom.* Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

*Serv.* Perhaps you have learn'd it without book :

But I pray, can you read any thing you see ?

*Rom.* Ay, if I know the letters, and the language.

*Serv.* Ye say honestly ; Rest you merry.

*Rom.* Stay, fellow ; I can read.

[*Reads.*

*Signior Martino, and his wife, and daughters ; County Anselme, and his beauteous sisters ; The lady widow of Vitruvio ; Signior Placentio, and his lovely nieces ; Mercutio, and his brother Valentine ; Mine uncle Capulet, his wife, and daughters ; My fair niece Rosaline ; Livia ; Signior Valentio, and his cousin Tybalt ; Lucio, and the lively Helena.*

A fair assembly ; [*Gives back the note.*] Whither should they come ?

*Serv.* Up.

*Rom.* Whither ?

*Serv.* To supper ; to our house.

*Rom.* Whose house ?

*Serv.* My master's.

*Rom.* Indeed, I should have asked you that before.

*Serv.* Now I'll tell you without asking : My master is the great rich Capulet ; and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray, come and crush a cup of wine. Rest you merry. [*Exit.*

*Ben.* At this same ancient feast of Capulet's  
Supps the fair Rosaline, whom thou so lov'st ;  
With all the admired beauties of Verona :  
Go thither ; and, with unattainted eye,  
Compare her face with some that I shall show,  
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

*Rom.* When the devout religion of mine eye  
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires !  
And these,—who, often drown'd, could never die,—  
Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars !

One fairer than my love ! the all-seeing sun  
Ne'er saw her match, since first the world begun.

*Ben.* Tut ! you saw her fair, none else being by,

Herself pois'd with herself in either eye :  
 But in those crystal scales, let there be weigh'd  
 Your lady's love against some other maid  
 That I will show you, shining at this feast,  
 And she shall scant show well, that now shows best.

*Rom.* I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,  
 But to rejoice in splendour of mine own. [Exeunt.

## SCENE III.

*A Room in CAPULET'S House. Enter Lady CAPULET and Nurse.*

*La. Cap.* Nurse, where's my daughter? call her forth  
 to me.

*Nur.* Now, by my maiden-head,—at twelve years old,—  
 I bade her come.—What, lamb! what, lady bird!—  
 God forbid!—where's this girl?—what, Juliet!

*Enter JULIET.*

*Jul.* How now, who calls?

*Nurse.* Your mother.

*Jul.* Madam, I am here.

What is your will?

*L. Cap.* This is the matter:—Nurse, give leave awhile,  
 We must talk in secret.—Nurse, come back again;  
 I have remember'd me, thou shalt hear our counsel.  
 Thou know'st, my daughter's of a pretty age.

*Nurse.* 'Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

*La. Cap.* She's not fourteen.

*Nurse.* I'll lay fourteen of my teeth,  
 And yet, to my teen be it spoken,<sup>s</sup> I have but four,—  
 She's not fourteen: How long is it now  
 To Lammas-tide?

*La. Cap.* A fortnight, and odd days.

*Nurse.* Even or odd, of all days in the year,  
 Come Lammas-eve at night, shall she be fourteen.  
 Susan and she,—God rest all christian souls!—  
 Were of an age.—Well, Susan is with God;  
 She was too good for me: But, as I said,  
 On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen;  
 That shall she, marry; I remember it well.  
 'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years;  
 And she was wean'd,—I never shall forget it,—  
 Of all the days of the year, upon that day:  
 For I had then laid wormwood to my dug.

[s] To my teen—to my sorrow.

Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall,  
 My lord and you were then at Mantua :—  
 Nay, I do bear a brain :—But, as I said,  
 When it did taste the worm-wood on the nipple  
 Of my dug, and felt it bitter, pretty fool !  
 To see it tetchy, and fall out with the dug.  
 Shake, quoth the dove-house : 'twas no need, I trow,  
 To bid me trudge.

And since that time it is eleven years :  
 For then she could stand alone ; nay, by the rood,  
 She could have run and waddled all about.  
 For even the day before, she broke her brow :  
 And then my husband—God be with his soul !  
 'A was a merry man ;—took up the child :  
*Yea*, quoth he, *dost thou fall upon thy face ?*  
*Thou wilt fall backward, when thou hast more wit ;*  
*Wilt thou not, Jule ?* and, by my holy-dam,  
 The pretty wretch left crying, and said—*Ay* :  
 To see now, how a jest shall come about !  
 I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,  
 I never should forget it ; *Wilt thou not, Jule ?* quoth he :  
 And, pretty fool, it stinted,<sup>6</sup> and said—*Ay*.

*La. Cap.* Enough of this ; I pray thee, hold thy peace.

*Nurse.* Yes, madam ; yet I cannot choose but laugh,  
 To think it should leave crying, and say—*Ay* :  
 And yet, I warrant, it had upon its brow  
 A bump as big as a young cockrel's stone ;  
 A parlous knock ; and it cried bitterly.  
*Yea*, quoth my husband, *fall'st upon thy face ?*  
*Thou wilt fall backward, when thou com'st to age ;*  
*Wilt thou not, Jule ?* it stinted, and said—*Ay*.

*Jul.* And stint thou too, I pray thee, nurse, say I.

*Nur.* Peace, I have done : God mark thee to his grace :  
 Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nurs'd.  
 An I might live to see thee married once,  
 I have my wish.

*La. Cap.* Marry, that marry is the very theme  
 I came to talk of :—Tell me, daughter Juliet,  
 How stands your disposition to be married ?

*Jul.* It is an honour that I dream not of.

*Nurse.* An honour ! were not I thine only nurse,  
 I'd say, thou hadst suck'd wisdom from thy teat.

*La. Cap.* Well, think of marriage now : younger  
 than you,

[6] *Stinted*—stopped, forbore from weeping. STEEVENS.

Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,  
 Are made already mothers: by my count,  
 I was your mother much upon these years  
 That you are now a maid. Thus then, in brief;—  
 The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

*Nurse.* A man, young lady! lady, such a man,  
 As all the world—Why, he's a man of wax.<sup>7</sup>

*La. Cap.* Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

*Nurse.* Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a very flower.

*La. Cap.* What say you? can you love the gentleman?  
 This night you shall behold him at our feast:  
 Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,  
 And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;  
 Examine every married lineament,  
 And see how one another lends content;  
 And what obscur'd in this fair volume lies,  
 Find written in the margin of his eyes.  
 This precious book of love, this unbound lover,  
 To beautify him, only lacks a cover.<sup>8</sup>  
 The fish lives in the sea; and 'tis much pride,  
 For fair without the fair within to hide.  
 That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,  
 That in gold clasps locks in the golden story.<sup>9</sup>  
 So shall you share all that he doth possess,  
 By having him, making yourself no less.

*Nurse.* No less? Nay, bigger; women grow by men.

*La. Cap.* Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

*Jul.* I'll look to like, if looking liking move:

But no more deep will I endart mine eye,  
 'Than your consent give strength to make it fly.

*Enter a Servant.*

*Serv.* Madam, the guests are come, supper served up,  
 you called, my young lady asked for, the nurse cursed in  
 the pantry, and every thing in extremity. I must hence  
 to wait; I beseech you, follow straight.

*La. Cap.* We follow thee.—Juliet, the county stays.

[7] So, in *Wily Beguiled*:

"Why he's a man as one should picture him in wax." STEEVENS.

[8] This ridiculous speech is full of abstruse quibbles. The *unbound lover*, is a quibble on the *binding* of a book, and the *binding* in marriage; and the word *cover* is a quibble on the law phrase for a married woman, who is styled a *femme couverte* in law french. MASON.

[9] The *golden story* is perhaps the *golden legend*, a book in the darker ages of popery much read, and doubtless often exquisitely embellished, but of which Ganus, one of the popish doctors, proclaims the author to have been homo ferrei oris, plumbei cordis. JOHNSON.

The poet may mean nothing more than to say, that those books are most esteemed by the world, where valuable contents are embellished by as valuable binding. STEEVENS.

*Nurse.* Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.  
[www.libtool.com.cn](http://www.libtool.com.cn) [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE IV.

*A Street.* Enter ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, with five or six Maskers, Torch-bearers, and others.

*Rom.* What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?  
 Or shall we on without apology?

*Ben.* The date is out of such prolixity.<sup>1</sup>  
 We'll have no Cupid hood-wink'd with a scarf,  
 Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,  
 Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper;<sup>2</sup>  
 Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke  
 After the prompter, for our entrance:  
 But, let them measure us by what they will,  
 We'll measure them a measure, and be gone.

*Rom.* Give me a torch,<sup>3</sup>—I am not for this ambling.  
 Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

*Mcr.* Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

*Rom.* Not I, believe me: you have dancing shoes,  
 With nimble soles; I have a soul of lead,  
 So stokes me to the ground, I cannot move.

*Mer.* You are a lover; borrow Cupid's wings,  
 And soar with them above a common bound.

*Rom.* I am too sore enpierced with his shaft,  
 To soar with his light feathers; and so bound,  
 I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe:  
 Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

*Mer.* And, to sink in it, should you burden love;  
 Too great oppression for a tender thing.

*Rom.* Is love a tender thing? It is too rough,  
 Too rude, too boist'rous; and it pricks like thorn.

*Mer.* If love be rough with you, be rough with love;

[1] In Henry VIII. where the king introduces himself to the entertainment given by Wolsey, he appears like Romeo and his companions in a mask, and sends a messenger before, to make an apology for his intrusion. This was a custom observed by those who came uninvited, with a desire to conceal themselves for the sake of intrigue, or to enjoy the greater freedom of conversation. Their entry on these occasions was always prefaced by some speech in praise of the beauty of the ladies, or the generosity of the entertainer; and to the *prolixity* of such introductions I believe Romeo is made to allude.

STEEVENS.

[2] See *King Lear*, p. 89.

[3] To hold a torch was anciently no degrading office. Queen Elizabeth's gentlemen pensioners attended her to Cambridge, and held torches while a play was acted before her in the chapel of King's college, on a Sunday evening.—Before the invention of chandeliers all rooms of state were illuminated by flambeaux which attendants held upright in their hands. STEEVENS.

Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.—  
 Give me a case to put my visage in : [*Putting on a mask.*  
 A visor for a visor !— what care I,  
 What curious eye doth quote deformities ?<sup>4</sup>  
 Here are the beetle-brows shall blush for me.

*Ben.* Come, knock, and enter ; and no sooner in,  
 But every man betake him to his legs.

*Rom.* A torch for me : let wantons, light of heart,  
 Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels ;  
 For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase,—  
 I'll be a candle-holder, and look on,—  
 The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.<sup>5</sup>

*Mer.* Tut ! dun's the mouse, the constable's own word ;  
 If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire  
 Of this (save reverence) love, wherein thou stick'st  
 Up to the ears.—Come, we burn day-light, ho.

*Rom.* Nay, that's not so.

*Mer.* I mean, sir, in delay  
 We waste our-lights in vain, like lamps by day.  
 Take our good meaning ; for our judgment sits  
 Five times in that, ere once in our five wits.

*Rom.* And we mean well, in going to this mask ;  
 But 'tis no wit to go.

*Mer.* Why, may one ask ?

*Rom.* I dreamt a dream to-night.

*Mer.* And so did I.

*Rom.* Well, what was yours ?

*Mer.* That dreamers often lie.

*Rom.* In bed, asleep, while they do dream things true.

*Mer.* O, then, I see, queen Mab hath been with you.  
 She is the fairies' midwife ; and she comes  
 In shape no bigger than an agate-stone  
 On the fore-finger of an alderman,  
 Drawn with a team of little atomies  
 Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep :  
 Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs ;  
 The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers ;  
 The traces, of the smallest spider's web ;  
 The collars, of the moonshine's watry beams ;  
 Her whip, of cricket's bone ; the lash, of film :  
 Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,  
 Not half so big as a round little worm

[4] To quote is to observe. STEEVENS.

[5] An allusion to an old proverbial saying, which advises to give over, when the game is at the fairest. RITSON.



Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid :  
 Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,  
 Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,  
 Time out of mind the fairies' coach-makers.  
 And in this state she gallops night by night  
 Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love ;  
 On courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight ;  
 O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees :  
 O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,  
 Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,  
 Because their breaths with sweet-meats<sup>6</sup> tainted are.  
 Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,  
 And then dreams he of smelling out a suit ;  
 And sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,  
 Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep,  
 Then dreams he of another benefice :  
 Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,  
 And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,  
 Of breaches, ambuscadoes,<sup>7</sup> Spanish blades,<sup>7</sup>  
 Of healths five fathom deep ; and then anon  
 Drums in his ear ; at which he starts, and wakes ;  
 And, being thus frightened, swears a prayer or two,  
 And sleeps again. This is that very Mab,  
 That plats the manes of horses in the night ;  
 And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,<sup>8</sup>  
 Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.  
 This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,  
 That presses them, and learns them first to bear,  
 Making them women of good carriage.  
 This, this is she—

*Rom.* Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace ;  
 Thou talk'st of nothing.

*Mer.* True, I talk of dreams ;  
 Which are the children of an idle brain,  
 Begot of nothing but vain fantasy ;  
 Which is as thin of substance as the air ;  
 And more inconstant than the wind, who woos  
 Even now the frozen bosom of the north,  
 And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,

[6] *Kissing-comfits.* These artificial aids to perfume the breath are mentioned by Falstaff in the *Merry Wives of Windsor.* MALONE.

[7] A sword is called a toledo from the excellence of the Toledan steel. See Grotius, "Glaudius Toletanus  
 " Unda Tagi non est uno celebranda metallo ;  
 " Utilis in cives est ibi lamna sucs." JOHNSON.

[8] This was a common superstition ; and seems to have had its rise from the horrid disease called Plica Polonica. WARBURTON.

Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.

*Ben.* This wind, you talk of, blows us from ourselves ;  
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

*Rom.* I fear, too early : for my mind misgives,  
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,  
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date  
With this night's revels ; and expire the term  
Of a despised life, clos'd in my breast,  
By some vile forfeit of untimely death :  
But He, that hath the steerage of my course,  
Direct my sail !—On, lusty gentlemen.

*Ben.* Strike, drum.

[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE V.

*A Hall in CAPULET'S house. Musicians waiting. Enter Servants.*

1 *Serv.* Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take  
away ? he shift a trencher ! he scrape a trencher !

2 *Serv.* When good manners shall lie all in one or  
two men's hands, and they unwashed too, 'tis a foul thing.

1 *Serv.* Away with the joint-stools, remove the court-  
cupboard,<sup>6</sup> look to the plate :—good thou, save me a  
piece of marchpane ;<sup>7</sup> and, as thou lovest me, let the  
porter let in Susan Grindstone, and Nell.—Antony !  
and Potpan !

2 *Serv.* Ay, boy ; ready.

1 *Serv.* You are looked for, and called for, asked for,  
and sought for, in the great chamber.

2 *Serv.* We cannot be here and there too.—Cheerly,  
boys ; be brisk awhile, and the longer liver take all.

[*They retire behind.*]

*Enter CAPULET, &c. with the Guests, and the Maskers.*

1 *Cap.* Gentlemen, welcome ! ladies, that have their toes  
Unplagu'd with corns, will have a bout with you :—  
Ah ha, my mistresses ! which of you all  
Will now deny to dance ? she that makes dainty, she,  
I'll swear, hath corns ; Am I come near you now ?

[6] A *court-cupboard* was a moveable ; a *beufet*, a fixture. The former was open, and made of plain oak ; the latter had folding doors and was painted and gilded on the inside. STEEVENS.

[7] Marchpanes were composed of filberts, almonds, pistachoes, pine-kernels, and sugar of roses, with a small proportion of flour : called by some *almond-cake*, and was a constant article in the deserts of our ancestors. It was in high esteem in Shakspeare's time ; as appears from the account of Queen Elizabeth's entertainment at Cambridge. It is said that the university presented Sir William Cecil their chancellor with two pair of gloves, a *marchpane*, and two sugar-loaves. *Peck's Desiderata Curiosa*, vol. ii. p. 29. GREY.

You are welcome, gentlemen ! I have seen the day,  
That I have worn a visor ; and could tell  
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,  
Such as would please ; — 'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone :  
You are welcome, gentlemen ! Come, musicians, play.  
A hall ! a hall !<sup>8</sup> Give room, and foot it, girls.

[*Music plays, and they dance.*]

More light, ye knaves ; and turn the tables up,<sup>9</sup>  
And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot. —  
Ah, sirrah, this unlook'd-for sport comes well.  
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet,<sup>1</sup>  
For you and I are past our dancing days :  
How long is't now, since last yourself and I  
Were in a mask ?

2 *Cap.* By'r lady, thirty years.

1 *Cap.* What, man ! 'tis not so much, 'tis not so much :  
'Tis since the nuptial of Lucentio,  
Come pentecost as quickly as it will,  
Some five-and-twenty years ; and then we mask'd.

2 *Cap.* 'Tis more, 'tis more : his son is elder, sir ;  
His son is thirty.

1 *Cap.* Will you tell me that ?

His son was but a ward two years ago.

*Rom.* What lady's that, which doth enrich the hand  
Of yonder knight ?

*Serv.* I know not, sir.

*Rom.* O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright !  
Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night  
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear :  
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear !  
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,  
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.  
The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,  
And, touching hers, make happy my rude hand.  
Did my heart love till now ? forswear it, sight !  
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

[8] This exclamation occurs frequently in the old comedies, and signifies *make room*. STEEVENS.

[9] It should be observed that ancient tables were flat leaves, joined by hinges, and placed on tressels. When they were to be removed, they were therefore *turned up*. STEEVENS.

[1] *Cousin* was a common expression from one kinsman to another, out of the degree of parent and child, brother and sister. Thus in *Hamlet*, the King his uncle and stepfather addresses him with

“ But now my *cousin* Hamlet and my *son*.” —

Olivia, in the *Twelfth Night*, constantly calls her uncle Toby *cousin*. Richard III. calls his nephew York *cousin*, &c. &c. RITSON.

*Tyb.* This, by his voice, should be a Montague :—  
Fetch me my rapier, boy :—What ! dares the slave,  
Come hither, cover'd with an antick face,  
To flee and scorn at our solemnity ?  
Now, by the stock and honour of my kin,  
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

*1 Cap.* Why, how now, kinsman ? wherefore storm  
you so ?

*Tyb.* Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe ;  
A villain, that is hither come in spite,  
To scorn at our solemnity this night.

*1 Cap.* Young Romeo is't ?

*Tyb.* 'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

*1 Cap.* Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone ;  
He bears him like a portly gentleman ;  
And, to say truth, Verona brags of him,  
To be a virtuous and well-govern'd youth :  
I would not for the wealth of all this town,  
Here in my house, do him disparagement :  
Therefore be patient, take no note of him,  
It is my will ; the which if thou respect,  
Show a fair presence, and put off these frowns,  
An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.

*Tyb.* It fits, when such a villain is a guest :  
I'll not endure him.

*1 Cap.* He shall be endur'd ;  
What, Goodman boy !—I say, he shall ;—Go to ;—  
Am I the master here, or you ? go to.  
You'll not endure him !—God shall mend my soul—  
You'll make a mutiny among my guests !  
You will sit cock-a-hoop ! You'll be the man !

*Tyb.* Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

*1 Cap.* Go to, go to,  
You are a saucy boy :—Is't so, indeed ?—  
This trick may chance to scath you ;—I know what.  
You must contrary me ! marry, 'tis time—  
Well said, my hearts :—You are a princox ; go :—  
Be quiet, or—More light, more light, for shame !—  
I'll make you quiet ; What !—Cheerly, my hearts.

*Tyb.* Patience perforce with wilful choler meeting,  
Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.  
I will withdraw : but this intrusion shall,  
Now seeming sweet, convert to bitter gall. [Exit.]

*Rom.* If I profane with my unworthy hand

This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this,—  
 [To JULIET.

My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand,  
 To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

*Jul.* Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,  
 Which mannerly devotion shows in this ;  
 For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,  
 And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

*Rom.* Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too ?

*Jul.* Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

*Rom.* O then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do ;  
 They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

*Jul.* Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

*Rom.* Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.  
 Thus from my lips, by yours, my sin is purg'd.

[Kissing her.  
*Jul.* Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

*Rom.* Sin from my lips ? O trespass sweetly urg'd !  
 Give me my sin again.

*Jul.* You kiss by the book.

*Nurse.* Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

*Rom.* What is her mother ?

*Nurse.* Marry, bachelor,  
 Her mother is the lady of the house,  
 And a good lady, and a wise, and virtuous :  
 I nurs'd her daughter, that you talk'd withal ;  
 I tell you,—he, that can lay hold of her,  
 Shall have the chinks.

*Rom.* Is she a Capulet ?  
 O dear account ! my life is my foe's debt.

*Ben.* Away, begone ; the sport is at the best.

*Rom.* Ay, so I fear ; the more is my unrest.

*1 Cap.* Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone ;  
 We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.<sup>2</sup>—  
 Is it e'en so ? Why, then I thank you all ;  
 I thank you, honest gentlemen ; good night :—  
 More torches here !—Come on, then let's to bed.  
 Ah, sirrah, [To 2 CAP.] by my fay, it waxes late ;  
 I'll to my rest. [Exit all but JULIET and Nurse.

*Jul.* Come hither, nurse : What is yon gentleman ?

*Nurse.* The son and heir of old Tiberio.

*Jul.* What's he, that now is going out of door ?

[2] It appears from the former part of this scene, that Capulet's company had supped. A banquet often meant, in old times, nothing more than a collation of fruit, wine, &c. STEEVENS.

*Nurse.* Marry, that, I think, be young Petruccio.

*Jul.* What's he, that follows there, that would not dance?

*Nurse.* I know not.

*Jul.* Go, ask his name :—if he be married,  
My grave is like to be my wedding-bed.

*Nurse.* His name is Romeo, and a Montague ;  
The only son of your great enemy.

*Jul.* My only love sprung from my only hate !  
Too early seen unknown, and known too late !  
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,  
That I must love a loathed enemy.

*Nurse.* What's this ? what this ?

*Jul.* A rhyme I learn'd even now  
Of one I danc'd withal. [One calls within, JULIET.

*Nurse.* Anon, anon :—  
Come, let's away ; the strangers all are gone. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter* CHORUS.<sup>3</sup>

Now old desire doth in his death-bed lie,  
And young affection gapes to be his heir ;  
That fair, which love groan'd for, and would die,  
With tender Juliet match'd, is now not fair.  
Now Romeo is belov'd, and loves again,  
Alike bewitched by the charm of looks ;  
But to his foe suppos'd he must complain,  
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks :  
Being held a foe, he may not have access  
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear ;  
And she as much in love, her means much less  
To meet her new-beloved any where :  
But passion lends them pow'r, time means to meet,  
Temp'ring extremities with extreme sweet. [*Exit.*

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An open Place, adjoining CAPULET'S Garden.*  
*Enter* ROMEO.

*Romeo.* Can I go forward, when my heart is here ?  
Turn back, dull earth, and find thy center out.

[*He climbs the wall, and leaps down within it.*

---

[3] The use of this Chorus is not easily discovered ; it conduces nothing to the progress of the play, but relates what is already known, or what the next scene will show ; and relates it without adding the improvement of any moral sentiment. JOHNSON.

*Enter BENVOLIO, and MERCUTIO.*

*Ben.* Romeo ! my cousin Romeo !

*Mer.* He is wise ;

And, on my life, hath stolen him home to bed.

*Ben.* He ran this way, and leap'd this orchard wall :  
Call, good Mercutio.

*Mer.* Nay, I'll conjure too.—

Romeo ! humours ! madman ! passion ! lover !  
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh,  
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied ;  
Cry but—Ah me ! couple but—love and dove ;  
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,  
One nick-name for her purblind son and heir,  
Young Adam Cupid,<sup>4</sup> he that shot so trim,  
When king Cophetua lov'd the beggar-maid.<sup>5</sup>—  
He heareth not, stirreth not, he moveth not ;  
The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.—  
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,  
By her high forehead, and her scarlet lip,  
By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh,  
And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,  
That in thy likeness thou appear to us.

*Ben.* An if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

*Mer.* This cannot anger him : 'twould anger him  
To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle  
Of some strange nature, letting it there stand  
Till she had laid it, and conjur'd it down ;  
That were some spite : my invocation  
Is fair and honest, and, in his mistress' name,  
I conjure only but to raise up him.

*Ben.* Come, he hath hid himself among those trees,  
To be consorted with the humorous night :<sup>6</sup>  
Blind is his love, and best befits the dark.

*Mer.* If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.  
Now will he sit under a medlar tree,  
And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit,  
As maids call medlars, when they laugh alone.—  
Romeo, good night :—I'll to my truckle-bed ;  
This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep :  
Come, shall we go ?

*Ben.* Go, then ; for 'tis in vain  
To seek him here, that means not to be found. [*Exe.*]

[4] Alluding to the famous archer *Adam Bell*. REED.

[5] See *Love's Labour's Lost*, p. 32.

[6] The humid, the moist dewy night. STEEVENS.

## SCENE II.

*www.libtool.com.cn*  
 CAPULET'S Garden. Enter ROMEO.

*Rom.* He jests at scars, that never felt a wound.—

[*JULIET appears above, at a window.*

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks!?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!—

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

Who is already sick and pale with grief,

That thou her maid art far more fair than she :

Be not her maid, since she is envious ;

Her vestal livery is but sick and green,

And none but fools do wear it ; cast it off.—

It is my lady ; O, it is my love :

O, that she knew she were !—

She speaks, yet she says nothing ; What of that ?

Her eye discourses, I will answer it.—

I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks :

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes

To twinkle in their spheres till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head ?

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,

As daylight doth a lamp ; her eye in heaven

Would through the airy region stream so bright,

That birds would sing, and think it were not night.

See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand !

O, that I were a glove upon that hand,

That I might touch that cheek !

*Jul.* Ah me !

*Rom.* She speaks :—

O, speak again, bright angel ! for thou art

As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,

As is a winged messenger of heaven

Unto the white-upturned wond'ring eyes

Of mortals, that fall back to gaze on him,

When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds,

And sails upon the bosom of the air.

*Jul.* O Romeo, Romeo ! wherefore art thou Romeo ?

Deny thy father, and refuse thy name :

Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,

And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

*Rom.* Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this? [*Aside.*

*Jul.* 'Tis but thy name, that is my enemy ;—

---

[?] Be not a votary to the moon, to Diana. JOHNSON.



Thou art thyself though, not a Montague.\*  
 What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,  
 Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part  
 Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!  
 What's in a name? that which we call a rose,  
 By any other name would smell as sweet;  
 So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,  
 Retain that dear perfection which he owes,  
 Without that title:—Romeo, doff thy name;  
 And for that name, which is no part of thee,  
 Take all myself.

*Rom.* I take thee at thy word:  
 Call me but love, and I'll be new baptiz'd;  
 Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

*Jul.* What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in night,  
 So stumblest on my counsel?

*Rom.* By a name  
 I know not how to tell thee who I am:  
 My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,  
 Because it is an enemy to thee;  
 Had I it written, I would tear the word.

*Jul.* My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words  
 Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound;  
 Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

*Rom.* Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

*Jul.* How cam'st thou hither, tell me? and wherefore?  
 The orchard walls are high, and hard to climb;  
 And the place death, considering who thou art,  
 If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

*Rom.* With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these  
 walls;

For stony limits cannot hold love out:  
 And what love can do, that dares love attempt;  
 Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

*Jul.* If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

*Rom.* Alack! there lies more peril in thine eye,  
 Than twenty of their swords; look thou but sweet,  
 And I am proof against their enmity.

*Jul.* I would not for the world, they saw thee here.

*Rom.* I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight;

[8] We must understand *though* in the sense of *then*, a sense it is perpetually used in by our ancient poets. So in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*,  
 "I keep but three men and a boy yet—but what *though*?"

Again in *K. Henry V.*

"It is a simple one, but what *though*."

RITSON:

And, but thou love me,<sup>9</sup> let them find me here ;  
 My life were better ended by their hate,  
 Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

*Jul.* By whose direction found'st thou out this place ?

*Rom.* By love, who first did prompt me to inquire ;  
 He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.

I am no pilot ; yet, wert thou as far  
 As that vast shore wash'd with the furthest sea,  
 I would adventure for such merchandise.

*Jul.* Thou know'st, the mask of night is on my face ;  
 Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek,  
 For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.  
 Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny  
 What I have spoke ; But farewell compliment !  
 Dost thou love me ? I know, thou wilt say—Ay ;  
 And I will take thy word : yet, if thou swear'st,  
 Thou may'st prove false ; at lovers' perjuries,  
 They say, Jove laughs. O, gentle Romeo,  
 If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully :  
 Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,  
 I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,  
 So thou wilt woo ; but, else, not for the world.  
 In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond ;  
 And therefore thou may'st think my haviour light ;  
 But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true  
 Than those that have more cunning to be strange.  
 I should have been more strange, I must confess,  
 But that thou over-heard'st, ere I was 'ware,  
 My true love's passion : therefore pardon me ;  
 And not impute this yielding to light love,  
 Which the dark night hath so discovered.

*Rom.* Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear,  
 That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops,—

*Jul.* O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon  
 That monthly changes in her circled orb,  
 Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

*Rom.* What shall I swear by ?

*Jul.* Do not swear at all ;  
 Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,  
 Which is the god of my idolatry,  
 And I'll believe thee.

*Rom.* If my heart's dear love—

*Jul.* Well, do not swear : Although I joy in thee,

[9] Mr. M. Mason thinks "but thou love me" means *unless thou love me*. He is certainly right. So in *Antony and Cleopatra* :

"But being charg'd, we will be still by land." STEEVENS.

I have no joy of this contract to-night :  
 It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden ;  
 Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be,  
 Ere one can say—It lightens. Sweet, good night !  
 This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,  
 May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.  
 Good-night, good-night ! as sweet repose and rest  
 Come to thy heart, as that within my breast !

*Rom.* O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied ?

*Jul.* What satisfaction canst thou have to-night ?

*Rom.* The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

*Jul.* I gave thee mine before thou didst request it :

And yet I would it were to give again.

*Rom.* Wouldst thou withdraw it ? for what purpose,  
 love ?

*Jul.* But to be frank, and give it thee again.

And yet I wish but for the thing I have :

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,

My love as deep ; the more I give to thee,

The more I have, for both are infinite.

*[Nurse calls within.]*

I hear some noise within ; Dear love, adieu !—

Anon, good nurse !—Sweet Montague, be true.

Stay but a little, I will come again.

*[Exit.]*

*Rom.* O blessed blessed night ! I am afeard,

Being in night, all this is but a dream,

Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

*Re-enter JULIET, above.*

*Jul.* Three words, dear Romeo, and good-night ; indeed

If that thy bent of love be honourable,

Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,

By one that I'll procure to come to thee,

Where, and what time, thou wilt perform the rite ;

And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,

And follow thee my lord throughout the world :

*Nurse.* *[Within.]* Madam.

*Jul.* I come, anon :—But if thou mean'st not well,  
 I do beseech thee,—

*Nurse.* *[Within.]* Madam.

*Jul.* By and by, I come :—

To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief :

To-morrow will I send.

*Rom.* So thrive my soul,—

*Jul.* A thousand times good night !

*Rom.* A thousand times the worse, to want thy light.  
 Love goes toward love, as school-boys from their books

But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.  
 [Retiring slowly.]

*Re-enter JULIET, above.*

*Jul.* Hist ! Romeo, hist !—O, for a falconer's voice,  
 To lure this tassel-gentle back again !<sup>1</sup>  
 Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud ;  
 Else would I tear the cave where echo lies,  
 And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine  
 With repetition of my Romeo's name.

*Rom.* It is my soul, that calls upon my name :  
 How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,  
 Like softest music to attending ears !

*Jul.* Romeo !

*Rom.* My sweet !

*Jul.* At what o'clock to-morrow  
 Shall I send to thee ?

*Rom.* At the hour of nine.

*Jul.* I will not fail ; 'tis twenty years till then.  
 I have forgot why I did call thee back.

*Rom.* Let me stand here till thou remember it.

*Jul.* I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,  
 Rememb'ring how I love thy company.

*Rom.* And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,  
 Forgetting any other home but this.

*Jul.* 'Tis almost morning, I would have thee gone :  
 And yet no further than a wanton's bird ;  
 Who lets it hop a little from her hand,  
 Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,  
 And with a silk thread plucks it back again,  
 So loving-jealous of his liberty.

*Rom.* I would, I were thy bird.

*Jul.* Sweet, so would I ;  
 Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.  
 Good-night, good-night ! parting is such sweet sorrow,  
 That I shall say—good-night, till it be morrow. [Exit.]

*Rom.* Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast !  
 —'Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest !  
 Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell ;  
 His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell. [Exit.]

[1] The *tassel* or *tiercel*, for so it should be spelt is the male of the goshawk ; so called, because it is a *tierce* or *third* less than the female. This is equally true of all birds of prey. This species of hawk had the epithet *gentle* annexed to it, from the ease with which it was tamed, and its attachment to man. STEEVENS.

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SCENE III.

*Friar LAURENCE's Cell. Enter Friar LAURENCE, with a basket.*

*Fri.* The grey-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning night,  
 Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light ;  
 And flecked darkness<sup>2</sup> like a drunkard reels  
 From forth day's path-way, made by Titan's wheels :  
 Now ere the sun advance his burning eye,  
 The day to cheer, and night's dank dew to dry,  
 I must up-fill this osier cage of ours,  
 With baleful weeds, and precious-juiced flowers.  
 The earth, that's nature's mother, is her tomb ;  
 What is her burying grave, that is her womb :  
 And from her womb children of divers kind  
 We sucking on her natural bosom find ;  
 Many for many virtues excellent,  
 None but for some, and yet all different.  
 O, mickle is the powerful grace,<sup>3</sup> that lies  
 In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities.  
 For nought so vile that on the earth doth live,  
 But to the earth some special good doth give ;  
 Nor aught so good, but, strain'd from that fair use,  
 Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse :  
 Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied ;  
 And vice sometime's by action dignified.  
 Within the infant rind of this small flower  
 Poison hath residence, and med'cine power :  
 For this, being smelt, with that part<sup>4</sup> cheers each part ;  
 Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.  
 Two such opposed foes encamp them still  
 In man as well as herbs, grace, and rude will ;  
 And, where the worsers is predominant,  
 Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

*Enter ROMEO.*

*Rom.* Good morrow, father !

*Fri.* *Benedicite !*

What early tongue so sweet saluteth me ?—  
 Young son, it argues a distemper'd head,  
 So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed ;  
 Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,  
 And where care lodges, sleep will never lie ;  
 But where unbruised youth with unstuff'd brain

[2] Flecked is spotted, dappled, streaked, or variegated. STEEVENS

[3] Efficacious virtue. JOHNSON

[4] With the part that smells. MALONE.

Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign :  
 Therefore thy earliness doth me assure,  
 Thou art up-rous'd by some distemp'ature ;  
 Or if not so, then here I hit it right—  
 Our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night.

*Rom.* That last is true, the sweeter rest was mine.

*Fri.* God pardon sin ! wast thou with Rosaline ?

*Rom.* With Rosaline, my ghostly father ? no ;  
 I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.

*Fri.* That's my good son : But where hast thou been  
 then ?

*Rom.* I'll tell thee, ere thou ask it me again.  
 I have been feasting with mine enemy ;  
 Where, on a sudden, one hath wounded me,  
 That's by me wounded ; both our remedies  
 Within thy help and holy physic lies :  
 I bear no hatred, blessed man ; for, lo,  
 My intercession likewise steads my foe.

*Fri.* Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift ;  
 Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.

*Rom.* Then plainly know, my heart's dear love is set  
 On the fair daughter of rich Capulet :  
 As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine ;  
 And all combin'd, save what thou must combine  
 By holy marriage : When, and where, and how,  
 We met, we woo'd, and made exchange of vow,  
 I'll tell thee as we pass ; but this I pray,  
 That thou consent to marry us this day.

*Fri.* Holy saint Francis ! what a change is here !  
 Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear,  
 So soon forsaken ? young men's love then lies  
 Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.  
 Jesu Maria ! what a deal of brine  
 Hath wash'd thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline !  
 How much salt water thrown away in waste,  
 To season love, that of it doth not taste !  
 The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,  
 Thy old groans ring yet in my ancient ears ;  
 Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit  
 Of an old tear that is not wash'd off yet.  
 If e'er thou wast thyself, and these woes thine,  
 Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline ;  
 And art thou chang'd ? pronounce this sentence then—  
 Women may fall, when there's no strength in men.

*Rom.* Thou chidd'st me oft for loving Rosaline.

*Fri.* For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.

*Rom.* And bad'st me bury love.

*Fri.* Not in a grave,

To lay one in, another out to have.

*Rom.* I pray thee, chide not : she, whom I love now,  
Doth grace for grace, and love for love allow :  
The other did not so.

*Fri.* O, she knew well,  
Thy love did read by rote, and could not spell.  
But come, young waverer, come go with me,  
In one respect I'll thy assistant be ;  
For this alliance may so happy prove,  
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

*Rom.* O, let us hence ; I stand on sudden haste.

*Fri.* Wisely, and slow ; They stumble, that run fast.  
[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE IV.

*A Street. Enter BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO.*

*Mer.* Where the devil should this Romeo be ?—  
Came he not home to-night ?

*Ben.* Not to his father's ; I spoke with his man.

*Mer.* Ah, that same pale hard-hearted wench, that  
Rosaline,

Torments him so, that he will sure run mad.

*Ben.* Tybalt, the kinsman of old Capulet,  
Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

*Mer.* A challenge, on my life.

*Ben.* Romeo will answer it.

*Mer.* Any man, that can write, may answer a letter.

*Ben.* Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he  
dares, being dared.

*Mer.* Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead ! stabbed  
with a white wench's black eye ; shot thorough the gear  
with a love-song ; the very pin of his heart cleft with  
the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft ; And is he a man to en-  
counter Tybalt ?

*Ben.* Why, what is Tybalt ?

*Mer.* More than prince of cats, I can tell you.<sup>5</sup> O,  
he is the courageous-captain of compliments :<sup>6</sup> he fights  
as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance, and pro-  
portion ; rests me his minim rest, one, two, and the

[5] *Tyber!*, the name given to the *cat*, in the story-book of *Reynard the Fox*.  
WARBURTON.

[6] A complete master of all the laws of ceremony, the principal man in  
the doctrine of punctilio. JOHNSON.

third in your bosom : the very butcher of a silk button, a duellist, a gentleman of the very first house,—of the first and second cause :<sup>7</sup> Ah, the immortal *passado* ! the *punto reverso* ! the hay !<sup>8</sup>—

*Ben.* The what ?

*Mer.* The pox of such antic, lispings, affecting fantasticoes ; these new tuners of accents !—*By Jesu, a very good blade !—a very tall man !—a very good whore !*—Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandsire,<sup>9</sup> that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these *pardonnez-moys*,<sup>2</sup> who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench ? O, their *bons*, their *bons* !

*Enter ROMEO.*

*Ben.* Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

*Mer.* Without his roe, like a dried herring :—O flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified !—Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flow'd in : Laura, to his lady, was but a kitchen-wench ;—marry, she had a better love to be-rhyme her ; Dido, a dowdy ; Cleopatra, a gipsy ; Helen and Hero, hildings and harlots ; Thisbé, a grey eye or so, but not to the purpose.—Signior Romeo, *bon jour* ! there's a French salutation to your French slop.<sup>3</sup> You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

*Rom.* Good-morrow to you both. What counterfeit did I give you ?

*Mer.* The slip, sir, the slip ; Can you not conceive ?

*Rom.* Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great ; and, in such a case as mine, a man may strain courtesy.

*Mer.* That's as much as to say—such a case as yours constrains a man to bow in the hams.

*Rom.* Meaning—to court'sy.

*Mer.* Thou hast most kindly hit it.

[7] A gentleman of the *first house* ;—of the *first and second cause* ; is a gentleman of the first rank, of the first eminence among these duellists. See *As You Like It*, act v. sc. 6. STEEVENS.

[8] All the terms of the modern fencing-school were originally Italian ; the rapier, or small thrusting sword, being first used in Italy. The *hay* is the word *hai*, you know it, used when a thrust reaches the antagonist, from which our fencers on the same occasion, without knowing, I suppose, any reason for it, cry out *ha* ! JOHNSON.

[9] Humorously apostrophising his ancestors, whose sober times were unacquainted with the fopperies here complained of. WARBURTON.

[1] *Pardonnez moi* became the language of doubt or hesitation among men of the sword, when the point of honour was grown so delicate, that neither mode of contradiction would be endured. JOHNSON.

[2] *Slops* are large loose breeches or trowsers worn at present only by sailors. STEEVENS.



*Rom.* A most courteous exposition.

*Mer.* Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

*Rom.* Pink for flower.

*Mer.* Right.

*Rom.* Why, then is my pump well flowered.<sup>6</sup>

*Mer.* Well said: Follow me this jest now, till thou hast worn out thy pump; that, when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing, solely singular.

*Rom.* O single-soled jest, solely singular for the singleness!

*Mer.* Come between us, good Benvolio; my wits fail.

*Rom.* Switch and spurs, switch and spurs; or I'll cry a match.

*Mer.* Nay, if thy wits run the wild-goose chase, I have done; for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy wits, than, I am sure, I have in my whole five: Was I with you there for the goose?

*Rom.* Thou wast never with me for any thing, when thou wast not there for the goose.

*Mer.* I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

*Rom.* Nay, good goose, bite not.<sup>4</sup>

*Mer.* Thy wit is a very bitter sweeting;<sup>5</sup> it is a most sharp sauce.

*Rom.* And is it not well served in to a sweet goose?

*Mer.* O, here's a wit of cheverel,<sup>6</sup> that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad!

*Rom.* I stretch it out for that word—broad; which added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

*Mer.* Why, is not this better now, than groaning for love? now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature: for this driveling love is like a great natural, that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole.

*Ben.* Stop there, stop there.

*Mer.* Thou desirest me to stop in my tale against the hair.

*Ben.* Thou would'st else have made thy tale large.

*Mer.* O, thou art deceived, I would have made it short: for I was come to the whole depth of my tale: and meant, indeed, to occupy the argument no longer.

[3] It was the custom to wear ribbons in the shoes formed into the shape of roses or any other flowers. STEEVENS.

[4] A proverbial expression to be found in Ray's Collection. STEEV.

[5] A bitter sweeting, is an apple of that name. STEEVENS.

[6] Cheverel is soft leather for gloves. JOHNSON.—Cheveril is French chevrouil, roebuck. MUSGRAVE.

*Enter Nurse and PETER.*

*Rom.* Here's goodly geer!

*Mer.* A sail, a sail, a sail!

*Ben.* Two, two; a shirt, and a smock.

*Nurse.* Peter!

*Peter.* Anon?

*Nurse.* My fan, Peter?

*Mer.* Pr'ythee, do, good Peter, to hide her face; for her fan's the fairer of the two.

*Nurse.* God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

*Mer.* God ye good den,<sup>7</sup> fair gentlewoman.

*Nurse.* Is it good den?

*Mer.* 'Tis no less, I tell you: for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.

*Nurse.* Out upon you! what a man are you?

*Rom.* One, gentlewoman, that God hath made himself to mar.

*Nurse.* By my troth, it is well said;—For himself to mar, quoth'a?—Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

*Rom.* I can tell you; but young Romeo will be older when you have found him, than he was when you sought him: I am the youngest of that name, for fault of a worse.

*Nurse.* You say well.

*Mer.* Yea, is the worst well? Very well took, i'faith; wisely, wisely.

*Nurse.* If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you.

*Ben.* She will indite him to some supper.

*Mer.* A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! So ho!

*Rom.* What hast thou found?<sup>8</sup>

*Mer.* No hare, sir; unless a hare, sir, in a lenten pie, that is something stale and hoar ere it be spent.

*An old hare hoar,  
And an old hare hoar,  
Is very good meat in lent:  
But a hare that is hoar,  
Is too much for a score,  
When it hoars ere it be spent.—*

[7] The business of Peter carrying the nurse's fan, seems ridiculous according to modern manners; but I find such was formerly the practice. In an old pamphlet, 1598, we are informed, that "The mistress must have one to carry her cloake and hood, another her fanne." FARMER.

[8] God give you a good even. STEEVENS.  
[9] Mercutio having roared out, *So ho!* the cry of the sportsmen when they start a hare, Romeo asks *what he has found*, and Mercutio answers, *No hare, &c.* The rest is a series of quibbles unworthy of explanation, which he who does not understand, needs not lament his ignorance. JOHNS.

Romeo, will you come to your father's ? we'll to dinner thither.

*Rom.* I will follow you.

*Mer.* Farewell, ancient lady ; farewell, lady, lady, lady. *[Exit MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO.]*

*Nurse.* Marry, farewell !—I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his ropery ?<sup>1</sup>

*Rom.* A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk ; and will speak more in a minute, than he will stand in a month.

*Nurse.* An 'a speak any thing against me, I'll take him down an 'a were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks ; and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave ! I am none of his flirt-gills ; I am none of his skains-mates :<sup>2</sup>—And thou must stand by too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure ?

*Pet.* I saw no man use you at his pleasure ; if I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you : I dare draw as soon as another man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel, and the law on my side.

*Nurse.* Now, afore God, I am so vexed, that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave !—Pray you, sir, a word : and as I told you, my young lady bade me inquire you out ; what she bade me say, I will keep to myself : but first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behaviour, as they say : for the gentlewoman is young ; and, therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly, it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

*Rom.* Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee,——

*Nurse.* Good heart ! and, i'faith, I will tell her as much : Lord, lord, she will be a joyful woman.

*Rom.* What wilt thou tell her, nurse ? thou dost not mark me.

*Nurse.* I will her, sir,—that you do protest ; which, as I take it, is a gentlemanlike offer.

*Rom.* Bid her devise some means to come to shrift  
This afternoon ;  
And there she shall at friar Laurence' cell

[1] *Ropery* was anciently used in the same sense as roguery is now. *Ropetricks* are mentioned in another place. STEEVENS.

[2] A *skain*, or *skain* was either a knife or a short dagger. By *skains-mates* the nurse means none of his loose companions. *Skain* is the Irish word for a knife. STEEVENS.

Be shriv'd, and married. Here is for thy pains.

*Nurse.* No, truly, sir; not a penny.

*Rom.* Go to; I say, you shall.

*Nurse.* This afternoon, sir? Well, she shall be there.

*Rom.* And stay, good nurse, behind the abbey-wall:  
Within this hour my man shall be with thee;  
And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair;<sup>3</sup>  
Which to the high top-gallant of my joy<sup>4</sup>  
Must be my convoy in the secret night.

Farewell!—Be trusty, and I'll quit thy pains.

Farewell!—Commend me to thy mistress.

*Nurse.* Now God in heaven bless thee!—Hark you, sir.

*Rom.* What say'st thou, my dear nurse?

*Nurse.* Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say—  
Two may keep counsel, putting one away?

*Rom.* I warrant thee; my man's as true as steel.

*Nurse.* Well, sir; my mistress is the sweetest lady—  
Lord, lord!—when 'twas a little prating thing,—O,—  
there's a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain  
lay knife aboard; but she, good soul, had as lieve see a  
toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes,  
and tell her that Paris is the properer man; but, I'll  
warrant you, when I say so, she looks as pale as any  
clout in the varshal world. Doth not rosemary and Ro-  
meo begin both with a letter?

*Rom.* Ay, nurse; What of that? both with an R.

*Nurse.* Ah, mocker! that's the dog's name. R is for  
the dog.<sup>5</sup> No; I know it begins with another letter:  
and she hath the prettiest sententious of it, of you and  
rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it.

*Rom.* Commend me to thy lady.

[*Exit.*

*Nurse.* Ay, a thousand times.—Peter!

*Pet.* Anon?

*Nurse.* Peter, take my fan, and go before. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE V.

CAPULET'S Garden. *Enter JULIET.*

*Jul.* The clock struck nine, when I did send the nurse;  
In half an hour she promis'd to return.  
Perchance, she cannot meet him:—that's not so.—

[3] Like stairs of rope in the tackle of a ship. JOHNSON.

[4] The top-gallant is the highest extremity of the mast of a ship. STEEV.

[5] I would read, "Ah mocker! that's the dog's name. R is for the-  
so; I know it begins with some other letter." MITSON.

O, she is lame ! love's heralds should be thoughts,  
 Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,  
 Driving back shadows over lowering hills :  
 Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love,  
 And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.  
 Now is the sun upon the highmost hill  
 Of this day's journey ; and from nine to twelve  
 Is three long hours,—yet she is not come.  
 Had she affections, and warm youthful blood,  
 She'd be as swift in motion as a ball ;  
 My words would bandy her to my sweet love,  
 And his to me :  
 But old folks, many feign as they were dead ;  
 Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

*Enter Nurse and PETER.*

O God, she comes !—O honey nurse, what news ?  
 Hast thou met with him ? Send thy man away.

*Nurse.* Peter, stay at the gate. [Exit PETER.]

*Jul.* Now, good sweet nurse,—O lord ! why look'st  
 thou sad ?

Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily ;  
 If good, thou sham'st the music of sweet news  
 By playing it to me with so sour a face.

*Nurse.* I am aweary, give me leave awhile ;—

Fie, how my bones ache ! What a jaunt have I had !

*Jul.* I would, thou hadst my bones, and I thy news :

Nay, come, I pray thee, speak ;—good, good nurse, speak.

*Nurse.* Jesu, what haste ? can you not stay awhile ?

Do you not see, that I am out of breath ?

*Jul.* How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath

To say to me—that thou art out of breath ?

The excuse, that thou dost make in this delay,

Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.

Is thy news good, or bad ? answer to that :

Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance :

Let me be satisfied, Is't good or bad ?

*Nurse.* Well, you have made a simple choice ; you  
 know not how to choose a man : Romeo ! no, not he ;  
 though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg  
 excels all men's ; and for a hand, and a foot, and a body,  
 —though they be not to be talked on, yet they are past  
 compare. He is not the flower of courtesy,—but, I'll  
 warrant him, as gentle as a lamb.—Go thy ways,  
 wench ; serve God.—What, have you dined at home ?

*Jul.* No, no : But all this did I know before ;

What says he of our marriage ? what of that ?

*Nurse.* Lord, how my head akes ! what a head have I ?  
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.

My back o' t'other side,—O, my back, my back !—

Beshrew your heart, for sending me about,

To catch my death with jaunting up and down !

*Jul.* I'faith, I am sorry that thou art not well :

Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love ?

*Nurse.* Your love says like an honest gentleman,

And a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome,

And, I warrant, a virtuous :—Where is your mother ?

*Jul.* Where is my mother ?—why, she is within ;

Where should she be ? how oddly thou reply'st !

*Your love says like an honest gentleman,—*

*Where is your mother ?*

*Nurse.* O, God's lady dear !

Are you so hot ? Marry, come up, I trow ;

Is this the poultice for my aking bones ?

Henceforward do your messages yourself.

*Jul.* Here's such a coil ;—Come, what says Romeo ?

*Nurse.* Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day ?

*Jul.* I have.

*Nurse.* Then hie you hence to friar Laurence' cell.

There stays a husband to make you a wife :

Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,

They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.

Hie you to church ; I must another way,

To fetch a ladder, by the which your love

Must climb a bird's nest soon, when it is dark :

I am a drudge, and toil in your delight ;

But you shall bear the burden soon at night.

Go, I'll to dinner ; hie you to the cell.

*Jul.* Hie to high fortune !—honest nurse, farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE VI.

*Friar LAURENCE's Cell. Enter Friar LAURENCE and ROMEO.*

*Fri.* So smile the heavens upon this holy act,

That after-hours with sorrow chide us not !

*Rom.* Amen, amen ! but come what sorrow can,

It cannot countervail the exchange of joy

That one short minute gives me in her sight :

Do thou but close our hands with holy words,

Then love-devouring death do what he dare,

It is enough I may but call her mine.

*Fri.* These violent delights have violent ends,  
And in their triumph die ; like fire and powder,  
Which, as they kiss, consume : The sweetest honey  
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness,<sup>6</sup>  
And in the taste confounds the appetite :  
Therefore, love moderately ; long love doth so ;  
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.<sup>6</sup>

*Enter JULIET.*

Here comes the lady :—O, so light a foot  
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint :  
A lover may bstride the gossomers<sup>7</sup>  
That idle in the wanton summer air,  
And yet not fall ; so light is vanity.

*Jul.* Good even to my ghostly confessor.

*Fri.* Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

*Jul.* As much to him, else are his thanks too much.

*Rom.* Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy  
Be heap'd like mine, and that thy skill be more  
To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath  
This neighbour air, and let rich music's tongue  
Unfold the imagin'd happiness that both  
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

*Jul.* Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,  
Braggs of his substance, not of ornament :  
They are but beggars that can count their worth ;<sup>8</sup>  
But my true love is grown to such excess,  
I cannot sum up half my sum of wealth.

*Fri.* Come, come with me, and we will make short  
work ;

For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone,  
Till holy church incorporate two in one. [ *Exeunt.*

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Public Place. Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO,  
Page, and Servants.*

*Ben.* I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire ;  
The day is hot,<sup>9</sup> the Capulets abroad,  
And, if we meet, we shall not scape a brawl ;

[6] He that travels too fast is as long before he comes to the end of his journey, as he that travels slow. Precipitation produces mishap. JOHNS.

[7] See *King Lear*, p. 88.

[8] So in *Antony and Cleopatra* ; " there's beggary in the love that can be reckoned." STEEVENS.

[9] It is observed that in Italy almost all assassinations are committed during the heat of summer. JOHNSON.

For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

*Mer.* Thou art like one of those fellows, that, when he enters the confines of a tavern, claps me his sword upon the table, and says, *God send me no need of thee!* and, by the operation of the second cup, draws it on the drawer, when, indeed, there is no need.

*Ben.* Am I like such a fellow?

*Mer.* Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy; and as soon moved to be moody, and as soon moody to be moved.

*Ben.* And what to?

*Mer.* Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou! why thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard, than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes; What eye, but such an eye, would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels, as an egg is full of meat; and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg, for quarrelling. Thou hast quarrelled with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun. Didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? with another, for tying his new shoes with old ribband? and yet thou wilt tutor me from quarrelling!

*Ben.* An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee-simple of my life for an hour and a quarter.

*Mer.* The fee-simple? O simple!

*Enter TYBALT, and others.*

*Ben.* By my head, here come the Capulets.

*Mer.* By my heel, I care not.

*Tyb.* Follow me close, for I will speak to them.—Gentlemen, good den: a word with one of you.

*Mer.* And but one word with one of us? Couple it with something; make it a word and a blow.

*Tyb.* You will find me apt enough to that, sir, if you will give me occasion.

*Mer.* Could you not take some occasion without giving?

*Tyb.* Mercutio, thou consortest with Romeo,—

*Mer.* Consort! what, dost thou make us minstrels? an thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords: here's my fiddlestick; here's that shall make you dance. 'Zounds, consort!



*Ben.* We talk here in the public haunt of men :  
 Either withdraw into some private place,  
 Or reason coldly of your grievance,  
 Or else depart ; here all eyes gaze on us.

*Mer.* Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze ;  
 I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

*Enter ROMEO.*

*Tyb.* Well, peace be with you, sir ! here comes my man.

*Mer.* But I'll be hanged, sir, if he wear your livery ;  
 Marry, go before to field, he'll be your follower ;  
 Your worship, in that sense, may call him—man.

*Tyb.* Romeo, the hate I bear thee, can afford  
 No better term than this—'Thou art a villain.

*Rom.* Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee  
 Doth much excuse the appertaining rage  
 To such a greeting :—Villain am I none ;  
 Therefore, farewell ; I see, thou know'st me not.

*Tyb.* Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries  
 That thou hast done me ; therefore turn, and draw.

*Rom.* I do protest, I never injur'd thee ;  
 But love thee better than thou canst devise,  
 Till thou shalt know the reason of my love ;  
 And so, good Capulet,—which name I tender  
 As dearly as mine own,—be satisfied.

*Mer.* O calm, dishonourable, vile submission !  
*A la stoccata*<sup>1</sup> carries it away. [*Draws.*  
 Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk ?

*Tyb.* What would'st thou have with me ?

*Mer.* Good king of cats,<sup>2</sup> nothing, but one of your nine  
 lives ; that I mean to make bold withal, and, as you shall  
 use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the eight. Will  
 you pluck your sword out of his pilcher by the ears ?<sup>3</sup>  
 make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

*Tyb.* I am for you. [*Drawing.*

*Rom.* Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

*Mer.* Come, sir, your passado. [*They fight.*

*Rom.* Draw, Benvolio ;

Beat down their weapons :—Gentlemen, for shame  
 Forbear this outrage ;—Tybalt—Mercutio—  
 The prince expressly hath forbid this bandying  
 In Verona streets :—hold, Tybalt ;—good Mercutio.

[*Exit TYBALT, and his Partizans.*

[1] *Stoccata*—the Italian term for a thrust or stab with a rapier. STEEV.

[2] Alluding to his name. MALONE.

[3] We should read *gatche*, which signifies a cloak or coat of skins, mean-  
 ing the scabbard. WARBURTON.

*Mer.* I am hurt ;—  
A plague o'both the houses !—I am sped :—  
Is he gone, and hath nothing ?

*Ben.* What, art thou hurt ?

*Mer.* Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch ; marry, 'tis enough.—  
Where is my page ?—go, villain, fetch a surgeon.

[*Exit Page.*]

*Rom.* Courage, man ; the hurt cannot be much.

*Mer.* No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door ; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve : ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world :—A plague o'both your houses !—'Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death ! a braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic !—Why the devil came you between us ? I was hurt under your arm.

*Rom.* I thought all for the best.

*Mer.* Help me into some house, Benvolio,  
Or I shall faint.—A plague o'both your houses !  
They have made worm's meat of me :  
I have it, and soundly too :—Your houses !

[*Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO.*]

*Rom.* This gentleman, the prince's near ally,  
My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt  
In my behalf ; my reputation stain'd  
With Tybalt's slander, Tybalt, that an hour  
Hath been my kinsman :—O sweet Juliet,  
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate,  
And in my temper soften'd valour's steel.

*Re-enter BENVOLIO.*

*Ben.* O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio's dead ;  
That gallant spirit hath aspir'd the clouds,  
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

*Rom.* This day's black fate on more days doth depend ;  
This but begins the woe, others must end.

*Re-enter TYBALT.*

*Ben.* Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

*Rom.* Alive ! in triumph ! and Mercutio slain !  
Away to heaven, respective lenity,  
And fire-ey'd fury be my conduct now !—  
Now, Tybalt, take the villain back again,  
That late thou gav'st me ; for Mercutio's soul  
Is but a little way above our heads,  
Staying for thine to keep him company ;  
Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.

*Tyb.* Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here,  
Shalt with him thence.

*Rom.* This shall determine that.

[*They fight ; TYBALT falls.*]

*Ben.* Romeo, away, be gone !

The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain :—  
Stand not amaz'd :—the prince will doom thee death,  
If thou art taken :—hence !—be gone !—away !

*Rom.* O ! I am fortune's fool !<sup>4</sup>

*Ben.* Why dost thou stay ? [Exit ROMEO.]

*Enter Citizens, &c.*

1 *Cit.* Which way ran he, that kill'd Mercutio ?

Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he ?

*Ben.* There lies that Tybalt.

1 *Cit.* Up, sir, go with me ;

I charge thee, in the prince's name, obey.

*Enter Prince, attended ; MONTAGUE, CAPULET, their Wives,  
and others.*

*Prince.* Where are the vile beginners of this fray ?

*Ben.* O noble prince, I can discover all  
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl :  
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,  
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

*La. Cap.* Tybalt, my cousin !—O my brother's child !  
Unhappy sight ! ah me, the blood is spill'd  
Of my dear kinsman !—Prince, as thou art true,  
For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.—  
O cousin, cousin !

*Prince.* Benvolio, who began this bloody fray ?

*Ben.* Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay ;  
Romeo that spoke him fair, bade him bethink  
How nice the quarrel was, <sup>s</sup> and urg'd withal  
Your high displeasure :—All this—uttered  
With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bow'd,—  
Could not take truce with the unruly spleen  
Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts  
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast ;  
Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,  
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats  
Cold death aside, and with the other sends  
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity

[4] I am always running in the way of evil fortune, like the fool in the play. JOHNSON

[5] How nice—how slight, how insignificant, how petty. JOHNSON.

Retorts it : Romeo, he cries aloud,  
*Hold, friends! friends, part!* and, swifter than his tongue,  
 His agile arm beats down their fatal points,  
 And 'twixt them rushes ; underneath whose arm  
 An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life  
 Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled :  
 But by and by comes back to Romeo,  
 Who had but newly entertain'd revenge,  
 And to't they go like lightning ; for, ere I  
 Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain ;  
 And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly :  
 This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

*La. Cap.* He is a kinsman to the Montague,  
 Affection makes him false,<sup>6</sup> he speaks not true :  
 Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,  
 And all those twenty could but kill one life :  
 I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give ;  
 Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

*Prince.* Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio ;  
 Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

*La. Mon.* Not Romeo, prince, he was Mercutio's friend ;  
 His fault concludes but, what the law should end,  
 The life of Tybalt.

*Prince.* And, for that offence,  
 Immediately we do exile him hence :  
 I have an interest in your hates' proceeding,  
 My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a bleeding ;  
 But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine,  
 That you shall all repent the loss of mine :  
 I will be deaf to pleading and excuses ;  
 Nor tears, nor prayers, shall purchase out abuses,  
 Therefore use none : let Romeo hence in haste,  
 Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.  
 Bear hence this body, and attend our will :  
 Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II.

*A Room in CAPULET'S House. Enter JULIET.*

*Jul.* Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,  
 Towards Phœbus' mansion ; such a waggoner  
 As Phaeton would whip you to the west,

---

[6] The charge of falsehood on Benvolio, though produced at hazard, is very just. The author, who seems to intend the character of Benvolio as good, meant perhaps to show, how the best minds, in a state of faction and discord, are detected to criminal partiality. JOHNSON.

And bring in cloudy night immediately.—  
 Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night!  
 That run-away's eyes may wink; and Romeo  
 Leap to these arms, untalk'd of, and unseen!—  
 Lovers can see to do their amorous rites  
 By their own beauties: or, if love be blind,  
 It best agrees with night.—Come, civil night,<sup>8</sup>  
 Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,  
 And learn me how to lose a winning match,  
 Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods:  
 Hood my unmann'd blood bating in my cheeks,<sup>9</sup>  
 With thy black mantle; till strange love, grown bold,  
 Think true love acted, simple modesty.  
 Come, night!—Come, Romeo! come, thou day in night!  
 For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night  
 Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.—  
 Come, gentle night; come, loving, black-brow'd night,  
 Give me my Romeo: and, when he shall die,  
 Take him and cut him out in little stars,  
 And he will make the face of heaven so fine,  
 That all the world will be in love with night,  
 And pay no worship to the garish sun.<sup>10</sup>—  
 O, I have bought the mansion of a love,  
 But not possess'd it; and, though I am sold,  
 Not yet enjoy'd: So tedious is this day,  
 As is the night before some festival  
 To an impatient child, that hath new robes,  
 And may not wear them. O, here comes my nurse,

*Enter Nurse, with cords.*

And she brings news; and every tongue, that speaks  
 But Romeo's name, speaks heavenly eloquence.—  
 Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there, the cords,  
 That Romeo bade thee fetch?

*Nurse.* Ay, ay, the cords. [*Throws them down.*]

*Jul.* Ah me! what news! why dost thou wring thy  
 hands?

[8] *Civil* is grave, decently solemn. JOHNSON.

[9] These are terms of falconry. An *unmann'd hawk* is one that is not brought to endure company. *Bating* (not *batting*, as it has hitherto been printed) is fluttering with the wings as striving to fly away. STEEV.

[10] Milton had this speech in his thoughts when he wrote *Il Penseroso*:

"Civil night,

"Thou sober-suited matron." *Shakespeare.*

"Till civil suited morn appear." *Milton.*

"Pay no worship to the garish sun." *Shakespeare.*

"Hide me from day's garish eye." *Milton.*

*Nur.* Ah well-a-day ! he's dead, he's dead, he's dead !  
We are undone, lady, we are undone !—  
Alack the day !—he's gone, he's kill'd, he's dead !

*Jul.* Can heaven be so envious ?

*Nurse.* Romeo can,  
Though heaven cannot :—O Romeo ! Romeo !—  
Who ever would have thought it ?—Romeo !

*Jul.* What devil art thou, that dost torment me thus ?  
This torture should be roar'd in dismal hell.  
Hath Romeo slain himself ? say thou but *I*,<sup>2</sup>  
And that bare vowel *I* shall poison more  
Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice :  
I am not *I*, if there be such an *I* ;  
Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer, *I*.  
If he be slain, say—*I* ; or if not, no :  
Brief sounds determine of my weal, or woe.

*Nurse.* I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes,—  
God save the mark !—here on his manly breast :  
A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse ;  
Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaub'd in blood,  
All in gore blood :—I swooned at the sight.

*Jul.* O break, my heart !—poor bankrupt, break at once !

To prison, eyes ! ne'er look on liberty !  
Vile earth, to earth resign ; end motion here ;  
And thou, and Romeo, press one heavy bier !

*Nurse.* O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had !  
O courteous Tybalt ! honest gentleman !  
That ever I should live to see thee dead !

*Jul.* What storm is this, that blows so contrary ?  
Is Romeo slaughter'd ; and is Tybalt dead ?  
My dear-lov'd cousin, and my dearer lord ?—  
Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom !  
For who is living, if those two are gone ?

*Nurse.* Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished ;  
Romeo, that kill'd him, he is banished.

*Jul.* O God !—did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood ?

*Nurse.* It did, it did ; alas the day ! it did.

*Jul.* O serpent heart, hid with a flow'ring face !  
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave ?  
Beautiful tyrant ! fiend angelic !  
Dove-feather'd raven ! wolfish-ravening lamb !

[2] In the author's time, the affirmative verb *ay*, was generally written *I* ; and by this means it both becomes a vowel, and answers in the sound to *ay* upon which the conceit turns in the second line. THEOBALD.

Despised substance of divinest show !  
 Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,  
 A damnd saint, an honourable villain !—  
 O, nature ! what hadst thou to do in hell,  
 When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend  
 In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh ?—  
 Was ever book, containing such vile matter,  
 So fairly bound ? O, that deceit should dwell  
 In such a gorgeous palace !

*Nurse.* There's no trust,  
 No faith, no honesty in men ; all perjur'd,  
 All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers.—  
 Ah, where's my man ? give me some *aqua vite* :—  
 These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.  
 Shame come to Romeo !

*Jul.* Blister'd be thy tongue,  
 For such a wish ! he was not born to shame :  
 Upon his brow shame is asham'd to sit ;  
 For 'tis a throne where honour may be crown'd  
 Sole monarch of the universal earth.  
 O, what a beast was I to chide at him !

*Nur.* Will you speak well of him that kill'd your cousin ?

*Jul.* Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband ?  
 Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,  
 When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it ?—  
 But, wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin ?  
 That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband :  
 Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring ;  
 Your tributary drops belong to woe,  
 Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.  
 My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain ;  
 And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my husband :  
 All this is comfort ; Wherefore weep I then ?  
 Some word there was, worsers than Tybalt's death,  
 That murder'd me : I would forget it fain ;  
 But, O ! it presses to my memory,  
 Like damnd guilty deeds to sinners' minds :  
*Tybalt is dead, and Romeo—banished ;*  
 That—*banished*, that one word—*banished*,  
 Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts.<sup>3</sup> Tybalt's death  
 Was woe enough, if it had ended there :  
 Or,—if sour woe delights in fellowship,  
 And needly will be rank'd with other griefs,—

[3] I am more affected by Romeo's banishment than I should be by the death of ten thousand such relations as Tybalt. RITSON.

Why follow'd not, when she said—Tybalt's dead,  
 Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,  
 Which modern lamentation might have mov'd ?<sup>4</sup>  
 But, with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,  
*Romeo is banished*,—to speak that word,  
 Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,  
 All slain, all dead :—*Romeo is banished*,—  
 There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,  
 In that word's death ; no words can that woe sound.—  
 Where is my father, and my mother, nurse ?

*Nurse.* Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse :  
 Will you go to them ? I will bring you thither.

*Jul.* Wash they his wounds with tears ? mine shall be  
 spent,

When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.  
 Take up those cords :—Poor ropes, you are beguil'd,  
 Both you and I ; for Romeo is exil'd :  
 He made you for a highway to my bed ;  
 But I, a maid, die maiden-widowed.  
 Come, cords ; come, nurse ; I'll to my wedding bed ;  
 And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead !

*Nurse.* Hie to your chamber : I'll find Romeo  
 To comfort you ;—I wot well where he is.  
 Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night ;  
 I'll to him ; he is hid at Laurence' cell.

*Jul.* O find him ! give this ring to my true knight,  
 And bid him come to take his last farewell. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III.

*Friar LAURENCE's Cell. Enter Friar LAURENCE and ROMEO.*

*Fri.* Romeo, come forth ; come forth, thou fearful man ;  
 Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,  
 And thou art wedded to calamity.

*Rom.* Father, what news ? what is the prince's doom ?  
 What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand,  
 That I yet know not ?

*Fri.* Too familiar  
 Is my dear son with such sour company :  
 I bring thee tidings of the prince's doom.

*Rom.* What less than doom's-day is the prince's doom ?  
*Fri.* A gentler judgment vanish'd from his lips,  
 Not body's death, but body's banishment.

<sup>4</sup> Shakespeare uses *modern* for *common*, or *slight* : I believe it was in his  
 time confounded in colloquial language with *moderate*. JOHNSON.



*Rom.* Ha ! banishment ? be merciful, say—death :  
For exile hath ~~more~~ <sup>more</sup> ~~terror~~ <sup>terror</sup> in his look,  
Much more than death ; do not say—banishment.

*Fri.* Hence from Verona art thou banished :  
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

*Rom.* There is no world without Verona walls,  
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.  
Hence-banished is banished from the world,  
And world's exile is death :—then banishment  
Is death mis-term'd : calling death—banishment,  
Thou cut'st my head off with a golden axe,  
And smil'st upon the stroke that murders me.

*Fri.* O deadly sin ! O rude unthankfulness !  
Thy fault our law calls death ; but the kind prince,  
Taking thy part, hath rush'd aside the law,  
And turn'd that black word death to banishment :  
This is dear mercy, and thou see'st it not.

*Rom.* 'Tis torture, and not mercy : heaven is here,  
Where Juliet lives ; and every cat, and dog,  
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,  
Live here in heaven, and may look on her,  
But Romeo may not.—More validity,  
More honourable state, more courtship lives  
In carrion flies, than Romeo :<sup>s</sup> they may seize  
On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,  
And steal immortal blessing from her lips ;  
Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,  
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin ;  
But Romeo may not ; he is banished :  
Flies may do this, when I from this must fly ;  
They are free men, but I am banished.  
And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death ?  
Hast thou no poison mix'd, no sharp-ground knife,  
No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,  
But—banished—to kill me ; banished ?  
O friar, the damned use that word in hell ;  
Howlings attend it : How hast thou the heart,  
Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,  
A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd,  
To mangle me with that word—banishment ?

*Fri.* Thou fond mad man, hear me but speak a word.

*Rom.* O, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

*Fri.* I'll give thee armour to keep off that word ;

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[5] *Validity* seems here to mean *worth* or *dignity* ; and *courtship* the state of a courtier permitted to approach the highest presence. JOHNSON.

Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,  
To comfort thee, though thou art banished.

*Rom.* Yet banished?—Hang up philosophy!  
Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,  
Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom;  
It helps not, it prevails not, talk no more.

*Fri.* O, then I see that madmen have no ears.

*Rom.* How should they, when that wise men have no  
eyes?

*Fri.* Let me dispute with thee of thy estate.

*Rom.* Thou canst not speak of what thou dost not feel:  
Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,  
An hour but married, Tybalt murdered,  
Doting like me, and like me banished,  
Then might'st thou speak, then might'st thou tear thy hair,  
And fall upon the ground, as I do now,  
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

*Fri.* Arise; one knocks; good Romeo, hide thyself.  
[Knocking within.]

*Rom.* Not I; unless the breath of heart-sick groans,  
Mist-like, infold me from the search of eyes. [Knocking.]

*Fri.* Hark, how they knock!—Who's there?—Romeo, arise;

Thou wilt be taken:—Stay a while:—stand up;

[Knocking.]  
Run to my study:—By and by:—God's will!  
What wilfulness is this?—I come, I come. [Knocking.]  
Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what's your  
will?

*Nurse.* [Within.] Let me come in, and you shall  
know my errand:

I come from lady Juliet.

*Fri.* Welcome then.

*Enter Nurse.*

*Nurse.* O, holy friar, O, tell me, holy friar,  
Where is my lady's lord, where's Romeo?

*Fri.* There on the ground, with his own tears made  
drunk.

*Nurse.* O, he is even in my mistress' case,  
Just in her case!

*Fri.* O woful sympathy!  
Piteous predicament!

*Nurse.* Even so lies she,  
Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering:—  
Stand up, stand up; stand, an you be a man:

For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand ;  
Why should you fall into so deep an O ?

*Rom.* Nurse !

*Nurse.* Ah sir ! ah sir !—death's the end of all.

*Rom.* Spak'st thou of Juliet ? how is it with her ?

Doth she not think me an old murderer,  
Now I have stain'd the childhood of our joy  
With blood remov'd but little from her own ?  
Where is she ? and how doth she ? and what says  
My conceal'd lady to our cancell'd love ?

*Nurse.* O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps ;  
And now falls on her bed, and then starts up,  
And Tybalt calls ; and then on Romeo cries,  
And then down falls again.

*Rom.* As if that name,  
Shot from the deadly level of a gun,  
Did murder her ; as that name's cursed hand  
Murder'd her kinsman.—O tell me, friar, tell me,  
In what vile part of this anatomy  
Doth my name lodge ? tell me, that I may sack  
The hateful mansion. [*Drawing his sword.*]

*Fri.* Hold thy desperate hand :  
Art thou a man ? thy form cries out, thou art ;  
Thy tears are womanish ; thy wild acts denote  
The unreasonable fury of a beast :  
Unseemly woman, in a seeming man !  
Or ill-beseeming beast, in seeming both !  
Thou hast amaz'd me : by my holy order,  
I thought thy disposition better temper'd.  
Hast thou slain Tybalt ? wilt thou slay thyself ?  
And slay thy lady too that lives in thee,  
By doing damned hate upon thyself ?  
Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and earth ?  
Since birth, and heaven, and earth, all three do meet  
In thee at once, which thou at once wouldst lose.  
Fye, fye ! thou sham'st thy shape, thy love, thy wit ;  
Which, like an usurer, abound'st in all,  
And usest none in that true use indeed  
Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit.  
Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,  
Digressing from the valour of a man :  
Thy dear love, sworn, but hollow perjury,  
Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish :  
Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,  
Mis-shapen in the conduct of them both,

Like powder in a skill-less soldier's flask,  
 Is set on fire by thine own ignorance;<sup>6</sup>  
 And thou dismember'd with thine own defence.<sup>7</sup>  
 What, rouse thee, man ! thy Juliet is alive,  
 For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead ;  
 There art thou happy : Tybalt would kill thee,  
 But thou slew'st Tybalt ; there art thou happy too :  
 The law, that threaten'd death, becomes thy friend,  
 And turns it to exile ; there art thou happy :  
 A pack of blessings lights upon thy back ;  
 Happiness courts thee in her best array ;  
 But, like a mis-behav'd and sullen wench,  
 Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love :  
 Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.  
 Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed,  
 Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her :  
 But, look, thou stay not till the watch be set,  
 For then thou canst not pass to Mantua ;  
 Where thou shalt live, till we can find a time  
 To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,  
 Beg pardon of the prince, and call thee back  
 With twenty hundred thousand times more joy  
 Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.—  
 Go before, nurse : commend me to thy lady ;  
 And bid her hasten all the house to bed,  
 Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto :  
 Romeo is coming.

*Nurse.* O Lord, I could have staid here all the night,  
 To hear good counsel. O, what learning is !—  
 My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

*Rom.* Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide.

*Nurse.* Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir :  
 Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late. [*Exit.*]

*Rom.* How well my comfort is reviv'd by this !

*Fri.* Go hence : Good-night ; and here stands all  
 your state ;<sup>8</sup>

Either be gone before the watch be set,  
 Or by the break of day disguis'd from hence :  
 Sojourn in Mantua ; I'll find out your man,  
 And he shall signify from time to time

[6] To understand the force of this allusion, it should be remembered that the ancient English soldiers, using *match*-locks instead of locks with flints, were obliged to carry a lighted *match* hanging at their belts, very near to the wooden *flask* in which they kept their powder. STEEVENS.

[7] And thou torn to pieces with thine own weapons. JOHNSON.

[8] The whole of your fortune depends on this. JOHNSON.

Every good hap to you, that chances here :  
Give me thy hand ; 'tis late : farewell ; good-night.

*Rom.* But that a joy past joy calls out on me,  
It were a grief, so brief to part with thee :  
Farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

*A Room in CAPULET'S House. Enter CAPULET, Lady CAPULET, and PARIS.*

*Cap.* Things have fallen out, sir, so unluckily,  
That we have had no time to move our daughter :  
Look you, she lov'd her kinsman Tybalt dearly,  
And so did I ;—Well, we were born to die.—  
'Tis very late, she'll not come down to-night :  
I promise you, but for your company,  
I would have been a-bed an hour ago.

*Par.* These times of woe afford no time to woo :—  
Madam, good-night : commend me to your daughter.

*La. Cap.* I will, and know her mind early to-morrow ;  
To-night she's mew'd up to her heaviness.

*Cap.* Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender  
Of my child's love.\* I think, she will be rul'd  
In all respects by me ; nay more, I doubt it not.  
Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed ;  
Acquaint her here with my son Paris' love ;  
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next—  
But, soft ; what day is this ?

*Par.* Monday, my lord.

*Cap.* Monday ? ha ! ha ! Well, Wednesday is too soon,  
O' Thursday let it be ;—O' Thursday, tell her,  
She shall be married to this noble earl :—  
Will you be ready ? do you like this haste ?  
We'll keep no great ado ;—a friend, or two :—  
For hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,  
It may be thought we held him carelessly,  
Being our kinsman, if we revel much :  
Therefore we'll have some half a dozen friends,  
And there an end. But what say you to Thursday ?

*Par.* My lord, I would that Thursday were to-morrow.

*Cap.* Well, get you gone :—O' Thursday be it then :—  
Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed,  
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding day.—  
Farewell, my lord.—Light to my chamber, ho !

[\*] *Desperate* means only *bold, adventurous* ; as if he had said in the vulgar phrase, "I will speak a bold word, and venture to promise you my daughter." JOHNSTON.

Afore me, it is so very late, that we  
May call it early by and by :—Good-night. [*Exeunt*]

## SCENE V.

*JULIET's Chamber. Enter ROMEO and JULIET.*

*Jul.* Wilt thou be gone ? it is not yet near day :  
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,  
That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear ;  
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree :  
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

*Rom.* It was the lark, the herald of the morn,  
No nightingale : look, love, what envious streaks  
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east ;  
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day  
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops :  
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

*Jul.* Yon light is not day-light, I know it, I :  
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,  
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,  
And light thee on thy way to Mantua :  
Therefore stay yet, thou need'st not to be gone.

*Rom.* Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death ;  
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.  
I'll say, yon grey is not the morning's eye,  
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow ;<sup>2</sup>  
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat  
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads.  
I have more care to stay, than will to go ;—<sup>2</sup>  
Come, death, and welcome ! Juliet wills it so.—  
How is't, my soul ? let's talk, it is not day.

*Jul.* It is, it is, hie hence, be gone, away ;  
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,  
Straining harsh discords, and unpleasing sharps.  
Some say, the lark makes sweet division ;  
This doth not so, for she divideth us.  
Some say, the lark and loathed toad change eyes ;  
O, now I would they had chang'd voices too !<sup>3</sup>  
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,

[1] The appearance of a cloud opposed to the moon. JOHNSON.

[2] *Care* was frequently used in Shakspeare's age for *inclination* M.

[3] The *toad* having very fine eyes, and the *lark* very ugly ones, was occasion of a common saying among the people, that *the toad and lark* i changed eyes. To this the speaker alludes. WARBURTON.

This tradition of the toad and lark I have heard expressed in a rustic rhyt

"———To heaven I'd fly,  
But that the toad bequill'd me of mine eye." JOHNSON

Hunting thee hence with hunts-up to the day.<sup>4</sup>  
O, now be gone ; more light and light it grows.

*Rom.* More light and light ?—more dark and dark  
our woes.

*Enter Nurse.*

*Nurse.* Madam !

*Jul.* Nurse ?

*Nurse.* Your lady mother's coming to your chamber :  
The day is broke, be wary, look about. [*Exit.*

*Jul.* Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

*Rom.* Farewell, farewell ! one kiss, and I'll descend.

[*ROMEO descends.*

*Jul.* Art thou gone so ? my love ! my lord ! my friend !  
I must hear from thee every day i' the hour,  
For in a minute there are many days :  
O ! by this count I shall be much in years,  
Ere I again behold my Romeo.

*Rom.* Farewell ! I will omit no opportunity  
That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

*Jul.* O, think'st thou, we shall ever meet again ?

*Rom.* I doubt it not : and all these woes shall serve  
For sweet discourses in our time to come.

*Jul.* O God ! I have an ill-divining soul :<sup>5</sup>  
Methinks, I see thee, now thou art below,  
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb :  
Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.

*Rom.* And trust me, love, in my eye so do you :  
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu ! adieu ! [*Exit.*

*Jul.* O fortune, fortune ! all men call thee fickle :  
If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him  
That is renown'd for faith ? Be fickle, fortune ;  
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,  
But send him back.

*La. Cap.* [*Within.*] Ho, daughter ! are you up ?

*Jul.* Who is't that calls ? Is it my lady mother ?  
Is she not down so late, or up so early ?  
What unaccustom'd cause procures her hither ?

*Enter Lady CAPULET.*

*La. Cap.* Why, how now, Juliet ?

*Jul.* Madam, I am not well.

<sup>4</sup> [4] The *hunts-up* was the name of the tune anciently played to wake the  
hunters, and collect them together. STEEVENS.

<sup>5</sup> [5] This miserable prescience of futurity I have always regarded as a  
circumstance particularly beautiful. The same kind of warning from the  
mind Romeo seems to have been conscious of, on his going to the entertain-  
ment at the house of Capulet. STEEVENS.

*La. Cap.* Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?  
 What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?  
 An if thou could'st, thou could'st not make him live;  
 Therefore, have done: Some grief shows much of love;  
 But much of grief shows still some want of wit.

*Jul.* Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.

*La. Cap.* So shall you feel the loss, but not the friend  
 Which you weep for.

*Jul.* Feeling so the loss,

I cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

*La. Cap.* Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his  
 death,

As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him.

*Jul.* What villain, madam?

*La. Cap.* That same villain, Romeo:

*Jul.* Villain and he are many miles asunder.—

God pardon him! I do, with all my heart:

And yet, no man, like he, doth grieve my heart.

*La. Cap.* That is, because the traitor murderer lives.

*Jul.* Ay, madam, from the reach of these my hands:  
 'Would, none but I might venge my cousin's death!

*La. Cap.* We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not:  
 Then weep no more. I'll send to one in Mantua,—  
 Where that same banish'd runagate doth live,—  
 That shall bestow on him so sure a draught,  
 That he shall soon keep Tybalt company:  
 And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.

*Jul.* Indeed, I never shall be satisfied  
 With Romeo, till I behold him—dead—  
 Is my poor heart so for a kinsman vex'd:—  
 Madam, if you could find out but a man  
 To bear a poison, I would temper it;  
 That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,  
 Soon sleep in quiet.—O, how my heart abhors  
 To hear him nam'd,—and cannot come to him,—  
 To wreak the love I bore my cousin Tybalt  
 Upon his body that hath slaughter'd him!

*La. Cap.* Find thou the means, and I'll find such a man.  
 But now I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

*Jul.* And joy comes well in such a needful time:  
 What are they, I beseech your ladyship?

*La. Cap.* Well, well, thou hast a careful father, child;  
 One, who, to put thee from thy heaviness,  
 Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy,  
 That thou expect'st not, nor I look'd not for.

*Jul.* Madam, in happy time, what day is that?



*La. Cap.* Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn,  
The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,  
The county Paris, at Saint Peter's church,  
Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

*Jul.* Now, by Saint Peter's church, and Peter too,  
He shall not make me there a joyful bride.  
I wonder at this haste ; that I must wed  
Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo.  
I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam,  
I will not marry yet ; and when I do, I swear,  
It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,  
Rather than Paris :—These are news indeed !

*La. Cap.* Here comes your father ; tell him so yourself,  
And see how he will take it at your hands.

*Enter CAPULET and Nurse.*

*Cap.* When the sun sets, the air doth drizzle dew ;  
But for the sunset of my brother's son,  
It rains downright.—

How now ? a conduit, girl ? what, still in tears ?  
Evermore showering ? In one little body  
Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind ;  
For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,  
Do ebb and flow with tears ; the bark thy body is,  
Sailing in this salt flood ; the winds, thy sighs ;  
Who,—raging with thy tears, and they with them,—  
Without a sudden calm, will overset  
Thy tempest-tossed body.—How now, wife !  
Have you deliver'd to her our decree ?

*La. Cap.* Ay, sir ; but she will none, she gives you  
thanks.

I would, the fool were married to her grave !

*Cap.* Soft, take me with you, take me with you, wife.  
How ! will she none ? doth she not give us thanks ?  
Is she not proud ? Doth she not count her bless'd,  
Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought  
So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom ?

*Jul.* Not proud, you have ; but thankful, that you have :  
Proud can I never be of what I hate ;

[6] It is remarked, that " Paris, though in one place called *Earl*, is most commonly styled the *Countie* in this play. Shakspeare seems to have preferred, for some reason or other, the *Italian Comte* to our *Count* : perhaps he took it from the old English novel, from which he is said to have taken " his plot." He certainly did so : Paris is there first styled a young *Earle*, and afterwards *Counte*, *Countee*, and *County* ; according to the unsettled orthography of the time. FARMER.

But thankful even for hate, that is meant love.

*Cap.* How now ! how now, chop-logic ! What is this ? Proud,—and, I thank you,—and, I thank you not ;— And yet not proud ;—Mistress minion, you, Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds, But settle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next, To go with Paris to Saint Peter's church, Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither. Out, you green-sickness carrion ! Out, you baggage ! You tallow-face !<sup>7</sup>

*La. Cap.* Fye, fye ! what, are you mad ?

*Jul.* Good father, I beseech you on my knees, Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

*Cap.* Hang thee, young baggage ! disobedient wretch ! I tell thee what,—get thee to church o' Thursday, Or never after look me in the face : Speak not, reply not, do not answer me ; My fingers itch.—Wife, we scarce thought us bless'd, That God had sent us but this only child ; But now I see this one is one too much, And that we have a curse in having her : Out on her, hilding !

*Nurse.* God in heaven bless her !— You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.

*Cap.* And why, my lady wisdom ? hold your tongue, Good prudence ; smatter with your gossips, go.

*Nurse.* I speak no treason.

*Cap.* O, God ye good den !

*Nurse.* May not one speak ?

*Cap.* Peace, you mumbling fool !

Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl, For here we need it not.

*La. Cap.* You are too hot.

*Cap.* God's bread ! it makes me mad : Day, night, late, early, At home, abroad, alone, in company, Waking, or sleeping, still my care hath been To have her match'd : and having now provided A gentleman of princely parentage, Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly train'd, Stuff'd (as they say) with honourable parts,

[7] Such was the indelicacy of the age of Shakspeare, that authors were not contented only to employ these terms of abuse in their own original performances, but even felt no reluctance to introduce them in their versions of the most chaste and elegant of the Greek or Roman poets. Stanyhurst, the translator of Virgil in 1582, makes Dido call Æneas—Hedge-brat, cullion, and tar-breech, in the course of one speech. STEEVENS.

Proportion'd as one's heart could wish a man,—  
 And then to have a wretched pining fool,  
 A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,  
 To answer—*I'll not wed,—I cannot love,  
 I am too young,—I pray you, pardon me ;—*  
 But, an you will not wed, I'll pardon you :  
 Graze where you will, you shall not house with me ;  
 Look to't, think on't, I do not use to jest.  
 Thursday is near ; lay hand on heart, advise :  
 An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend ;  
 An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die i'the streets,  
 For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,  
 Nor what is mine shall never do thee good :  
 Trust to't, bethink you, I'll not be forsworn. [Exit.]

*Jul.* Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,  
 That sees into the bottom of my grief ?  
 O, sweet my mother, cast me not away !  
 Delay this marriage for a month, a week ;  
 Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed  
 In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

*La. Cap.* Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word ;  
 Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee. [Exit.]

*Jul.* O God !—O nurse ! how shall this be prevented ?  
 My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven ;  
 How shall that faith return again to earth,  
 Unless that husband send it me from heaven  
 By leaving earth ?—comfort me, counsel me.—  
 Alack, alack, that heaven should practise stratagems  
 Upon so soft a subject as myself !—  
 What say'st thou ? hast thou not a word of joy ?  
 Some comfort, nurse.

*Nurse.* 'Faith, here 'tis : Romeo  
 Is banished ; and all the world to nothing,  
 That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you ;  
 Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.  
 Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,  
 I think it best you married with the county.<sup>8</sup>  
 O, he's a lovely gentleman !  
 Romeo's a dishclout to him ; an eagle, madam,  
 Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye,  
 As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,

[8] The character of the Nurse exhibits a just picture of those whose actions have no principles for their foundation. She has been unfaithful to the trust reposed in her by Capulet, and is ready to embrace any expedient that offers, to avert the consequences of her first infidelity. STEVENS.

I think you are happy in this second match,  
For it excels your first ; or if it did not,  
Your first is dead ; or 'twere as good he were,  
As living here and you no use of him.

*Jul.* Speakest thou from thy heart ?

*Nurse.* From my soul too ;

Or else beshrew them both.

*Jul.* Amen !

*Nurse.* To what ?

*Jul.* Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous much.  
Go in ; and tell my lady I am gone,  
Having displeas'd my father, to Laurence' cell,  
To make confession, and to be absolv'd.

*Nurse.* Marry, I will ; and this is wisely done. [*Exit.*]

*Jul.* Ancient damnation ! O most wicked fiend !  
Is it more sin—to wish me thus forsworn,  
Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue  
Which she hath prais'd him with above compare  
So many thousand times ?—Go, counsellor ;  
Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain,—  
I'll to the friar, to know his remedy ;  
If all else fail, myself have power to die. [*Exit.*]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Friar LAURENCE'S Cell. Enter Friar LAURENCE  
and PARIS.*

*Friar.* On Thursday, sir ? the time is very short.

*Par.* My father Capulet will have it so ;  
And I am nothing slow, to slack his haste.

*Fri.* You say, you do not know the lady's mind ;  
Uneven is the course, I like it not.

*Par.* Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,  
And therefore have I little talk'd of love ;  
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.  
Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous,  
That she doth give her sorrow so much sway ;  
And, in his wisdom, hastes our marriage,  
To stop the inundation of her tears ;  
Which, too much minded by herself alone,  
May be put from her by society :  
Now do you know the reason of this haste.

*Fri.* I would I knew not why it should be slow'd. [*Asi.*]  
—Look, sir, here comes the lady towards my cell.

*Enter JULIET.*

*Par.* Happily met, my lady, and my wife !

*Jul.* That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

*Par.* That may be, must be, love, on Thursday next.

*Jul.* What must be shall be.

*Fri.* That's a certain text.

*Par.* Come you to make confession to this father ?

*Jul.* To answer that, were to confess to you.

*Par.* Do not deny to him, that you love me.

*Jul.* I will confess to you, that I love him.

*Par.* So will you, I am sure, that you love me.

*Jul.* If I do so, it will be of more price,

Being spoke behind your back, than to your face.

*Par.* Poor soul, thy face is much abus'd with tears.

*Jul.* The tears have got small victory by that ;

For it was bad enough, before their spite.

*Par.* Thou wrong'st it, more than tears, with that report.

*Jul.* That is no slander, sir, that is a truth ;  
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

*Par.* Thy face is mine, and thou hast slander'd it.

*Jul.* It may be so, for it is not mine own.—

Are you at leisure, holy father, now ;

Or shall I come to you at evening mass ?<sup>9</sup>

*Fri.* My leisure serves me, pensive daughter, now :—  
My lord, we must entreat the time alone.

*Par.* God shield, I should disturb devotion !—

Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse you :

Till then, adieu ! and keep this holy kiss. • [Exit.

*Jul.* O, shut the door ! and when thou hast done so,  
Come weep with me ; past hope, past cure, past help !

*Fri.* Ah, Juliet, I already know thy grief ;

It strains me past the compass of my wits :

I hear thou must, and nothing must prorogue it,

On Thursday next be married to this county.

*Jul.* Tell me not, friar, that thou hear'st of this,

Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it :

If, in thy wisdom, thou canst give no help,

Do thou but call my resolution wise,

And with this knife I'll help it presently.

God join'd my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands ;

And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo seal'd,

Shall be the label to another deed,<sup>2</sup>

[9] Juliet means *vespers*. There is no such thing as *evening mass*. " *Masses* are only sung in the morning, and when the priests are fasting." HIBSON.

Or my true heart with treacherous revolt  
 Turn to another, this shall slay them both.  
 Therefore, out of thy long-experienc'd time,  
 Give me some present counsel ; or, behold,  
 'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife  
 Shall play the umpire ; arbitrating that  
 Which the commission of thy years and art<sup>2</sup>  
 Could to no issue of true honour bring.  
 Be not so long to speak ; I long to die,  
 If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

*Fri.* Hold, daughter ; I do spy a kind of hope,  
 Which craves as desperate an execution  
 As that is desperate which we would prevent.  
 If, rather than to marry county Paris,  
 Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself ;  
 Then is it likely, thou wilt undertake  
 A thing like death to chide away this shame,  
 That cop'st with death himself to scape from it ;  
 And, if thou dar'st, I'll give thee remedy.

*Jul.* O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,  
 From off the battlements of yonder tower ;  
 Or walk in thievish ways ; or bid me lurk  
 Where serpents are ; chain me with roaring bears ;  
 Or shut me nightly in a charnel-house,  
 O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,  
 With reeky shanks, and yellow chapless skulls ;  
 Or bid me go into a new-made grave,  
 And hide me with a dead man in his shroud ;  
 Things that, to hear them told, have made me tremble ;  
 And I will do it without fear or doubt,  
 To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.

*Fri.* Hold, then ; go home, be merry, give consent.  
 To marry Paris : Wednesday is to-morrow ;  
 To-morrow night look that thou lie alone,  
 Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber :  
 Take thou this phial, being then in bed,  
 And this distilled liquor drink thou off :  
 When, presently, through all thy veins shall run  
 A cold and drowsy humour, which shall seize

[1] The seals of deeds in our author's time were not impressed on the parchment itself on which the deed was written, but were appended on distinct slips or labels affixed to the deed. Hence in *K. Richard II.* the duke of York discovers a covenant which his son Aumerle had entered into by the depending seal :

"What seal is that which hangs without thy bosom ?" MALONE.

[2] *Commission* is for authority or power. JOHNSON.

Each vital spirit ; for no pulse shall keep  
 His natural progress, but surcease to beat :  
 No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou liv'st ;  
 The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade  
 To paly ashes ; thy eyes' windows fall,  
 Like death, when he shuts up the day of life ;  
 Each part, depriv'd of supple government,  
 Shall stiff, and stark, and cold, appear like death :  
 And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death  
 Thou shalt remain full two and forty hours,  
 And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.  
 Now when the bridegroom in the morning comes  
 To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead :  
 Then (as the manner of our country is.)  
 In thy best robes uncover'd on the bier,  
 Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault,  
 Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.  
 In the mean time, against thou shalt awake,  
 Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift ;  
 And hither shall he come ; and he and I  
 Will watch thy waking, and that very night  
 Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.  
 And this shall free thee from this present shame ;  
 If no unconstant toy,<sup>4</sup> nor womanish fear,  
 Abate thy valour in the acting it.

*Jul.* Give me, O give me ! tell me not of fear.

*Fri.* Hold ; get you gone, be strong and prosperous  
 In this resolve : I'll send a friar with speed  
 To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.

*Jul.* Love, give me strength ! and strength shall  
 help afford.

Farewell, dear father ! [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

*A Room in CAPULET's House. Enter CAPULET, Lady CAPULET, Nurse, and Servants.*

*Cap.* So many guests invite as here are writ.—

[*Exit Servant.*]

Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Serv.* You shall have none ill, sir ; for I'll try if  
 they can lick their fingers.

[4] If no fickle freak, no light caprice, no change of fancy, hinder the performance. JOHNSON.

[1] Twenty cooks for half a dozen guests ! Either Capulet has altered his mind strangely, or our author forgot what he had just made him tell us. P. 55. RITSON.

*Cap.* How canst thou try them so ?

*2 Serv.* Marry, sir, 'tis an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers ; therefore he, that cannot lick his fingers, goes not with me.

*Cap.* Go, begone.—

[*Exit Servant.*]

We shall be much unfurnish'd for this time.—

What, is my daughter gone to friar Lawrence ?

*Nurse.* Ay, forsooth.

*Cap.* Well, he may chance to do some good on her :  
A peevish self-will'd harlotry it is.

*Enter JULIET.*

*Nur.* See where she comes from shrift with merry look.

*Cap.* How now, my head-strong ? where have you been gadding ?

*Jul.* Where I have learn'd me to repent the sin  
Of disobedient opposition

To you, and your behests ; and am enjoin'd

By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here,

And beg your pardon :—Pardon, I beseech you !

Henceforward I am ever rul'd by you.

*Cap.* Send for the county ; go tell him of this ;  
I'll have this knot knit up to-morrow morning.

*Jul.* I met the youthful lord at Laurence's cell ;

And gave him what became love I might,

Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

*Cap.* Why, I am glad on't ; this is well,—stand up :

This is as't should be.—Let me see the county ;

Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.—

Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar,

All our whole city is much bound to him.

*Jul.* Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,

To help me sort such needful ornaments

As you think fit to furnish me to-morrow ?

*La. Cap.* No, not till Thursday ; there is time enough.

*Cap.* Go, nurse, go with her :—we'll to church to-morrow.

[*Exeunt JULIET and Nurse.*]

*La. Cap.* We shall be short in our provision ;<sup>3</sup>

'Tis now near night.

*Cap.* Tush ! I will stir about,

And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife :

Go thou to Juliet, help to deck her up ;

I'll not to bed to-night ;—let me alone ;

I'll play the housewife for this once.—What, ho !—

[3] We shall be defective. JOHNSON.



They are all forth :—Well, I will walk myself  
 To county Paris, to prepare him up  
 Against to-morrow : my heart is wondrous light,  
 Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE III.

*JULIET's Chamber. Enter JULIET and Nurse.*

*Jul.* Ay, those attires are best :—But, gentle nurse,  
 I pray thee, leave me to myself to-night ;  
 For I have need of many orisons  
 To move the heavens to smile upon my state,  
 Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of sin.

*Enter Lady CAPULET.*

*La. Cap.* What, are you busy ? do you need my help ?

*Jul.* No, madam ; we have cull'd such necessaries  
 As are behoveful for our state to-morrow :  
 So please you, let me now be left alone,  
 And let the nurse this night sit up with you ;  
 For, I am sure, you have your hands full all,  
 In this so sudden business.

*La. Cap.* Good night !

Get thee to bed, and rest ; for thou hast need.

[*Exeunt Lady CAP. and Nurse.*]

*Jul.* Farewell !—God knows, when we shall meet again.  
 I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,  
 That almost freezes up the heat of life :  
 I'll call them back again to comfort me ;—  
 Nurse !—What should she do here ?  
 My dismal scene I needs must act alone.—  
 Come, phial.—

What if this mixture do not work at all ?  
 Must I of force be married to the county !—  
 No, no ;—this shall forbid it :—Lie thou there.—

[*Laying down a dagger.*]

What if it be a poison, which the friar  
 Subtly hath minister'd to have me dead ;  
 Lest in this marriage he should be dishonour'd,  
 Because he married me before to Romeo ?  
 I fear, it is : and yet, methinks, it should not,  
 For he hath still been tried a holy man :  
 I will not entertain so bad a thought.—  
 How if, when I am laid into the tomb,  
 I wake before the time that Romeo

Come to redeem me ? there's a fearful point !  
 Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,  
 To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,  
 And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes ?  
 Or, if I live, is it not very like,  
 The horrible conceit of death and night,  
 Together with the terror of the place,—  
 As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,<sup>4</sup>  
 Where, for these many hundred years, the bones  
 Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd ;  
 Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,  
 Lies fest'ring in his shroud ; where, as they say,  
 At some hours in the night spirits resort ;—  
 Alack, alack ! is it not like, that I,<sup>5</sup>  
 So early waking,—what with loathsome smells ;  
 And shrieks, like mandrakes torn out of the earth,  
 That living mortals, hearing them, run mad ;—  
 O ! if I wake, shall I not be distraught,<sup>6</sup>  
 Environed with all these hideous fears ?  
 And madly play with my forefathers' joints ?  
 And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud ?  
 And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,  
 As with a club, dash out my desperate brains ?  
 O, look ! methinks, I see my cousin's ghost  
 Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body  
 Upon a rapier's point :—Stay, Tybalt, stay !—  
 Romeo, I come ! this do I drink to thee.

[*She throws herself on the bed.*]

#### SCENE IV.

*CAPULET's Hall. Enter Lady CAPULET and Nurse.*

*La. Cap.* Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices, nurse.

*Nurse.* They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.

*Enter CAPULET.*

*Cap.* Come, stir, stir, stir ! the second cock hath crow'd,

[4] This idea was probably suggested to our poet by his native place. The charnel at Stratford-upon-Avon is a very large one, and perhaps contains a greater number of bones than are to be found in any other repository of the same kind in England. I was furnished with this observation by Mr. Murphy, whose very elegant and spirited defence of Shakspeare against the criticisms of Voltaire, is not one of the least considerable our of many favours which he has conferred on the literary world. STEEVENS.

[5] This speech is confused, and inconsequential, according to the disorder of Juliet's mind. JOHNSON.

[6] Distracted. STEEVENS.

The curfeu bell hath rung,<sup>7</sup> 'tis three o'clock :—  
 Look to the bak'd meats, good Angelica :  
 Spare not for cost.

*Nurse.* Go, go, you cot-quean, go,  
 Get you to bed ; 'faith, you'll be sick to-morrow  
 For this night's watching.

*Cap.* No, not a whit ; What ! I have watch'd ere now  
 All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

*La. Cap.* Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt in your time, \*  
 But I will watch you from such watching now.

[*Excunt Lady CAPULET and Nurse.*]

*Cap.* A jealous-hood, a jealous-hood !—Now, fellow,  
 What's there ?

*Enter Servants, with spits, logs, and baskets.*

1 *Serv.* Things for the cook, sir ; but I know not what.

*Cap.* Make haste, make haste. [*Ex. 1 Serv.*] Sirrah,  
 fetch drier logs ;

Call Peter, he will show thee where they are.

2 *Serv.* I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,  
 And never trouble Peter for the matter. [*Exit.*]

*Cap.* 'Mass, and well said ; a merry whoreson ! ha,  
 Thou shalt be logger-head.—Good faith, 'tis day :  
 The county will be here with music straight,

[*Music within.*]

For so he said he would. I hear him near :—

*Nurse* !—Wife !—what, ho !—what, nurse, I say !

*Enter Nurse.*

Go, waken Juliet, go, and trim her up ;

I'll go and chat with Paris :—Hie, make haste,

Make haste ! the bridegroom he is come already :

Make haste, I say ! [*Excunt.*]

[7] The *curfeu bell* is universally rung at *eight or nine* o'clock at night ; generally according to the season. The term is here used with peculiar impropriety, as it is not believed that *any* bell was ever rung so early as *three* in the morning. The derivation of *curfeu* is well known, but it is a mere vulgar error that the institution was a badge of slavery imposed by the Norman conqueror. To *put out the fire* became necessary only because it was time to go to bed : And if the *curfeu* commanded all fires to be extinguished, the morning bell ordered them to be lighted again. In short, the ringing of those two bells was a manifest and essential service to people who had scarcely any other means of measuring their time. RITSON.

[8] In Norfolk, and many other parts of England, the cant term for a weasle is—a *mouse-hunt*. The intrigues of this animal, like those of the cat kind, are usually carried on during the night. This circumstance will account for the appellation which Lady Capulet allows her husband to have *formerly* deserved. STEVENS.

## SCENE V.

*JULIET's Chamber ; JULIET on the Bed. Enter Nurse.*

*Nurse.* Mistress !—what, mistress !—Juliet !—fast, I warrant her, she :—  
 Why, lamb !—why, lady !—fye, you slug-a-bed !—  
 Why, love, I say !—madam ! sweet-heart !—why, bride !—  
 What, not a word ?—you take your pennyworths now ;  
 Sleep for a week ; for the next night, I warrant,  
 The county Paris hath set up his rest,  
 That you shall rest but little.—God forgive me,  
 (Marry, and amen !) how sound is she asleep !  
 I need must wake her :—Madam, madam, madam !  
 Ay, let the county take you in your bed ;  
 He'll fright you up, i'faith.—Will it not be ?  
 What, drest ! and in your clothes ! and down again !  
 I must needs wake you : Lady ! lady ! lady !  
 Alas ! alas !—Help ! help ! my lady's dead !—  
 O, well-a-day, that ever I was born !—  
 Some aqua-vitæ, ho !—my lord ! my lady !

*Enter Lady CAPULET.*

*La. Cap.* What noise is here ?

*Nurse.* O lamentable day !

*La. Cap.* What is the matter ?

*Nurse.* Look, look ! O heavy day !

*La. Cap.* O me, O me !—my child, my only life,  
 Revive, look up, or I will die with thee !—  
 Help, help !—call help.

*Enter CAPULET.*

*Cap.* For shame, bring Juliet forth ; her lord is come.

*Nur.* She's dead, deceas'd, she's dead ; alack the day !

*La. Cap.* Alack the day ! she's dead, she's dead,  
 she's dead.

*Cap.* Ha ! let me see her :—Out, alas ! she's cold ;  
 Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff ;  
 Life and these lips have long been separated :  
 Death lies on her, like an untimely frost  
 Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.  
 Accursed time ! unfortunate old man !

*Nurse.* O lamentable day !

*La. Cap.* O woful time !

*Cap.* Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,  
 Ties up my tongue, and will not let me speak.

*Enter Friar LAURENCE and PARIS, with Musicians.*

*Fri.* Come, is the bride ready to go to church ?

*Cap.* Ready to go, but never to return :

O son, the night before thy wedding-day  
Hath death lain with thy bride.—See, there she lies,  
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.

Death is my son-in-law, death is my heir ;

My daughter he hath wedded ! I will die,

And leave him all ; life leaving, all is death's.

*Par.* Have I thought long to see this morning's face,  
And doth it give me such a sight as this ?

*La. Cap.* Accurs'd, unhappy, wretched, hateful day !  
Most miserable hour, that e'er time saw

In lasting labour of his pilgrimage !

But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,

But one thing to rejoice and solace in,

And cruel death hath catch'd it from my sight.

*Nurse.* O woe ! O woful, woful, woful day !

Most lamentable day ! most woful day,

That ever, ever, I did yet behold !

O day ! O day ! O day ! O hateful day !

Never was seen so black a day as this :

O woful day ! O woful day !

*Par.* Beguil'd, divorced, wronged, spited, slain !

Most détestable death, by thee beguil'd,

By cruel cruel thee quite overthrown !—

O love ! O life !—not life, but love in death !

*Cap.* Despis'd, distressed, hated, martyr'd, kill'd !

Uncomfortable time ! why cam'st thou now

To murder murder our solemnity ?—

O child ! O child !—my soul, and not my child !—

Dead art thou, dead !—alack ! my child is dead ;

And, with my child, my joys are buried !

*Fri.* Peace, ho, for shame ! confusion's cure lives not

In these confusions. Heaven and yourself

Had part in this fair maid ; now heaven hath all,

And all the better is it for the maid :

Your part in her you could not keep from death ;

But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.

The most you sought was—her promotion ;

For 'twas your heaven, she should be advanc'd :

And weep ye now, seeing she is advanc'd,

Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself ?

O, in this love, you love your child so ill,

That you run mad, seeing that she is well :

She's not well married, that lives married long ;  
 But she's best married, that dies married young.

Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary  
 On this fair corse ; and, as the custom is,  
 In all her best array bear her to church :  
 For though fond nature bids us all lament,  
 Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

*Cap.* All things, that we ordained festival,  
 Turn from their office to black funeral :  
 Our instruments, to melancholy bells ;  
 Our wedding cheer, to a sad burial feast ;  
 Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change ;  
 Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,  
 And all things change them to the contrary.

*Fri.* Sir, go you in,—and, madam, go with him ;—  
 And go, sir Paris ;—every one prepare  
 To follow this fair corse unto her grave :  
 The heavens do low'r upon you, for some ill ;  
 Move them no more, by crossing their high will.

[*Exit*. CAPULET, Lady CAP. PARIS, and Friar.

1 *Mus.* 'Faith, we may put up our pipes, and be gone.

*Nurse.* Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up ;

For, well you know, this is a pitiful case. [*Exit.*

1 *Mus.* Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

*Enter* PETER.

*Pet.* Musicians, O, musicians, *Heart's case, heart's case* ;  
 O, an you will have me live, play—*heart's case*.

1 *Mus.* Why *heart's case* ?

*Pet.* O, musicians, because my heart itself plays,—  
*My heart is full of woe* : O, play me some merry  
 dump,<sup>1</sup> to comfort me.

2 *Mus.* Not a dump we ; 'tis no time to play now.

*Pet.* You will not then ?

*Mus.* No.

*Pet.* I will then give it you soundly.

1 *Mus.* What will you give us ?

*Pet.* No money, on my faith ; but the gleek :<sup>2</sup> I will  
 give you the minstrel.

[9] See *Hamlet*, p. 15.

[1] *Dumps* were heavy mournful tunes ; possibly indeed any sort of movements were once so called, as we sometimes meet with a *merry dump*. Hence *doleful dumps*, deep sorrow, or grievous affliction, as in the next page, and in the less ancient ballad of *Chey Chace*. It is still said of a person uncommonly sad, that he is in the *dumps*. RITSON.

[2] The use of this cant term is no where explained ; and is all probability cannot at this distance of time, be recovered. To *gleek* however signified to put a joke or trick upon a person, perhaps to *jest* according to the coarse humour of that age. RITSON.

1 *Mus.* Then will I give you the serving-creature.

*Pet.* Then will I lay the serving-creature's dagger on your pate. I will carry no crotchets. I'll *re* you, I'll *fa* you ; Do you note me ?

1 *Mus.* An you *re* us, and *fa* us, you note us.

2 *Mus.* Pray you, put up your dagger, and put out your wit.

*Pet.* Then have at you with my wit : I will dry-beat you with an iron wit, and put up my iron dagger :— Answer me like men :

*When gripping grief the heart doth wound,*

*And doleful dumps the mind oppress,*

*Then music, with her silver sound ;*

Why, *silver sound* ? why, *music with her silver sound* ?

What say you, Simon Catling ?

1 *Mus.* Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

*Pet.* Pretty !—What say you, Hugh Rebeck ?<sup>3</sup>

2 *Mus.* I say—*silver sound*, because musicians sound for silver.

*Pet.* Pretty too !—What say you, James Sound-post ?

2 *Mus.* 'Faith, I know not what to say.

*Pet.* O, I cry you mercy ! you are the *singer* : I will say for you. It is—*music with her silver sound*, because such fellows as you have seldom gold for sounding :

*Then music with her silver sound,*

*With speedy help doth lend redress.*

[*Exit, singing.*

1 *Mus.* What a pestilent knave is this same ?

2 *Mus.* Hang him, Jack ! Come, we'll in here ; tarry for the mourners, and stay dinner. [*Exeunt.*

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Mantua. A Street. Enter ROMEO.*

*Romeo.* If I may trust the flattering eye of sleep,<sup>4</sup>  
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand :  
<sup>5</sup>My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne :

[3] The fiddler is so called from an instrument with three strings, which is mentioned by several of the old writers. STEEVENS.

[4] If I may confide in those delightful visions which I have seen while asleep. MALONE.

[5] The three following lines are very gay and pleasing. But why does Shakspeare give Romeo this involuntary cheerfulness just before the extremity of unhappiness ? Perhaps to show the vanity of trusting to those uncertain and casual exaltations or depressions, which many consider as certain foretokens of good and evil. JOHNSON.

And, all this day, an unaccustom'd spirit  
 Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.  
 I dreamt, my lady came and found me dead ;  
 (Strange dream ! that gives a dead man leave to think,)  
 And breath'd such life with kisses in my lips,  
 That I reviv'd, and was an emperor.  
 Ah me ! how sweet is love itself possess'd,  
 When but love's shadows are so rich in joy ?

*Enter BALTHASAR.*

News from Verona !—How now, Balthasar ?  
 Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar ?  
 How doth my lady ? Is my father well ?  
 How fares my Juliet ? That I ask again ;  
 For nothing can be ill, if she be well.

*Bal.* Then she is well, and nothing can be ill ;  
 Her body sleeps in Capels' monument,  
 And her immortal part with angels lives.  
 I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,  
 And presently took post to tell it you :  
 O pardon me for bringing these ill news,  
 Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

*Rom.* Is it even so ? then I defy you, stars !—  
 Thou know'st my lodging ; get me ink and paper,  
 And hire post horses : I will hence to-night.

*Bal.* Pardon me, sir, I will not leave you thus :  
 Your looks are pale and wild, and do import  
 Some misadventure.

*Rom.* Tush, thou art deceiv'd ;  
 Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do :  
 Hast thou no letters to me from the friar ?

*Bal.* No, my good lord.

*Rom.* No matter : Get thee gone,  
 And hire those horses ; I'll be with thee straight. [*Ex. BAL.*

—Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to night.  
 Let's see for means :—O, mischief ! thou art swift  
 To enter in the thoughts of desperate men !  
 I do remember an apothecary,—

And hereabouts he dwells,—whom late I noted  
 In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,  
 Culling of simples ; meager were his looks,  
 Sharp misery had worn him to the bones :  
 And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,  
 An alligator stuff'd, and other skins  
 Of ill-shap'd fishes ; and about his shelves  
 A beggarly account of empty boxes,



Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds,  
 Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses,  
 Were thinly scatter'd, to make up a show.  
 Noting this penury, to myself I said—  
 An if a man did need a poison now,  
 Whose sale is present death in Mantua,  
 Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.  
 O, this same thought did but fore-run my need ;  
 And this same needy man must sell it me.  
 As I remember, this should be the house :  
 Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.—  
 What, ho ! apothecary !

*Enter Apothecary.*

*Ap.* Who calls so loud ?

*Rom.* Come hither, man.—I see, that thou art poor ;  
 Hold, there is forty ducats : Let me have  
 A dram of poison ; such soon-speeding geer  
 As will disperse itself through all the veins,  
 That the life-weary taker may fall dead ;  
 And that the trunk may be discharg'd of breath  
 As violently, as hasty powder fir'd  
 Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

*Ap.* Such mortal drugs I have ; but Mantua's law  
 Is death, to any he that utters them.

*Rom.* Art thou so bare, and full of wretchedness,  
 And fear'st to die ? famine is in thy cheeks,  
 Need and oppression starveth in thy eyes,  
 Upon thy back hangs ragged misery,  
 The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law :  
 The world affords no law to make thee rich ;  
 Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.

*Ap.* My poverty, but not my will, consents.

*Rom.* I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

*Ap.* Put this in any liquid thing you will,  
 And drink it off ; and, if you had the strength  
 Of twenty men, it would despatch you straight.

*Rom.* There is thy gold ; worse poison to men's souls,  
 Doing more murders in this loathsome world,  
 Than these poor compounds that thou may'st not sell :  
 I sell thee poison, thou hast sold me none.  
 Farewell ; buy food, and get thyself in flesh.—  
 Come, cordial, and not poison ; go with me  
 To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II.

*Friar LAURENCE's Cell. Enter Friar JOHN.*

*John.* Holy Franciscan friar ! brother ! ho !

*Enter Friar LAURENCE.*

*Lau.* This same should be the voice of friar John.—  
Welcome from Mantua : what says Romeo ?  
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

*John.* Going to find a bare-foot brother out,  
One of our order, to associate me,<sup>6</sup>  
Here in this city visiting the sick,  
And finding him, the searchers of the town,  
Suspecting, that we both were in a house  
Where the infectious pestilence did reign,  
Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth ;  
So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.

*Lau.* Who bare my letter then to Romeo ?

*John.* I could not send it,—here it is again,—  
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,  
So fearful were they of infection.

*Lau.* Unhappy fortune ! by my brotherhood,  
The letter was not nice,<sup>7</sup> but full of charge,  
Of dear import ; and the neglecting it  
May do much danger : Friar John, go hence ;  
Get me an iron crow, and bring it straight  
Unto my cell.

*John.* Brother, I'll go and bring it thee. [Exit.

*Lau.* Now must I to the monument alone ;  
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake ;  
She will beshrew me much, that Romeo  
Hath had no notice of these accidents :  
But I will write again to Mantua,  
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come ;  
Poor living corse, clos'd in a dead man's tomb ! [Exit.

## SCENE III.

*A Churchyard ; in it, a Monument belonging to the CAPULETS.*

*Enter PARIS, and his Page, bearing flowers and a torch.*

*Par.* Give me thy torch, boy : Hence, and stand aloof ;—  
Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.  
Under yon yew-trees lay thee all along,  
Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground ;

[6] Each friar has always a companion assigned him by the superior when he asks leave to go out ; and thus, says Baretto, they are a check upon each other. STEEVENS.

[7] Was not written on a trivial or idle subject. STEEVENS.

So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread,  
 (Being loose *unfirm*, with digging up of graves)  
 But thou shalt hear it : whistle then to me,  
 As signal that thou hear'st something approach.  
 Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

*Page.* I am almost afraid to stand alone  
 Here in the churchyard ; yet I will adventure. [*Retires.*]

*Par.* Sweet flower, with flowers I strew thy bridal bed :  
 Sweet tomb, that in thy circuit dost contain  
 The perfect model of eternity ;  
 Fair Juliet, that with angels dost remain,<sup>8</sup>  
 Accept this latest favour at my hands ;  
 That living honour'd thee, and, being dead,  
 With funeral praises do adorn thy tomb !

[*The Boy whistles.*]

The boy gives warning, something doth approach.  
 What cursed foot wanders this way to-night,  
 To cross my obsequies, and true love's rites ?  
 What, with a torch !—muffle me, night, awhile.

[*Retires.*]

*Enter ROMEO and BALTHASAR, with a torch, mattock, &c.*

*Rom.* Give me that mattock, and the wrenching iron :  
 Hold, take this letter ; early in the morning  
 See thou deliver it to my lord and father.  
 Give me the light : Upon thy life, I charge thee,  
 Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,  
 And do not interrupt me in my course.  
 Why I descend into this bed of death,  
 Is, partly, to behold my lady's face :  
 But, chiefly, to take thence from her dead finger  
 A precious ring ; a ring, that I must use  
 In dear employment :<sup>9</sup> therefore hence, begone :—  
 But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry  
 In what I further shall intend to do,  
 By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint,  
 And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs :  
 The time and my intents are savage-wild ;  
 More fierce, and more inexorable far

[8] These four lines from the old edition. POPE.

The folio has these lines :

“ Sweet flow'r, with flow'rs thy bridal bed I strew ;

“ O woe ! thy canopy is dust and stones,

“ Which with sweet water nightly I will dew,

“ Or, wanting that, with tears distill'd by moans.

“ The obsequies that I for thee will keep,

“ Nightly shall be, to strew thy grave and weep.” JOHNSON.

[9] That is, *action of importance*. Gems were supposed to have great powers and virtues. JOHNSON.

Than empty tigers, or the roaring sea.

*Bal.* I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

*Rom.* Soshalt thou show me friendship.—Take thou that:  
Live, and be prosperous ; and farewell, good fellow.

*Bal.* For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout ;

His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt. [*Retires.*]

*Rom.* Thou détestable maw, thou womb of death,

Gorg'd with the dearest morsel of the earth,

Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,

[*Breaking open the door of the Monument.*]

And, in despite, I'll cram thee with more food !

*Par.* This is that banish'd haughty Montague,

That murder'd my love's cousin ;—with which grief,

It is supposed, the fair creature dy'd,—

And here is come to do some villainous shame

To the dead bodies : I will apprehend him.— [*Advances.*]

Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague ;

Can vengeance be pursu'd further than death ?

Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee :

Obey, and go with me, for thou must die.

*Rom.* I must, indeed ; and therefore came I hither.—

Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man,

Fly hence and leave me ; think upon these gone ;

Let them affright thee.—I beseech thee, youth,

Heap not another sin upon my head,

By urging me to fury :—O, be gone !

By heaven, I love thee better than myself ;

For I come hither arm'd against myself :

Stay not, be gone ;—live, and hereafter say—

A madman's mercy bade thee run away.

*Par.* I do defy thy conjurations,

And do attach thee as a felon here.

*Rom.* Wilt thou provoke me ? then have at thee, boy.

[*They fight.*]

*Page.* O lord, they fight: I will go call the watch. [*Exit.*]

*Par.* O, I am slain ! [*Falls.*].—If thou be merciful,

Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet.

[*Dies.*]

*Rom.* In faith, I will :—Let me peruse this face ;—

Mercutio's kinsman, noble county Paris :—

What said my man, when my betossed soul

Did not attend him as we rode ? I think,

He told me, Paris should have marry'd Juliet :

Said he not so ? or did I dream it so ?

Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,

To think it was so ? O, give me thy hand,

One writ with me in sour misfortune's book !

I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave,—  
 A grave ? O, no ; a lantern, slaughter'd youth,  
 For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes  
 This vault a feasting presence full of light.  
 Death, lie thou there by a dead man interr'd.

[*Laying PARIS in the Monument;*

How oft, when men are at the point of death,  
 Have they been merry ? which their keepers call  
 A lightning before death : O, how may I  
 Call this a lightning ?—O, my love ! my wife !  
 Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,  
 Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty :  
 Thou art not conquer'd ; beauty's ensign yet  
 Is crimson in thy lips, and in thy cheeks,  
 And death's pale flag is not advanced there.—  
 Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet ?  
 O, what more favour can I do to thee,  
 Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain,  
 To sunder his that was thine enemy ?  
 Forgive me, cousin !—Ah, dear Juliet,  
 Why art thou yet so fair ? shall I believe  
 That unsubstantial death is amorous ;  
 And that the lean abhorred monster keeps  
 Thee here in dark to be his paramour ?  
 For fear of that, I will still stay with thee,  
 And never from this palace of dim night  
 Depart again : here, here will I remain  
 With worms that are thy chambermaids ; O, here  
 Will I set up my everlasting rest,  
 And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars  
 From this world-wearied flesh.—Eyes, look your last !  
 Arms, take your last embrace ! and lips, O you  
 The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss  
 A dateless bargain to engrossing death !—  
 Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide !  
 Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on  
 The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark !  
 Here's to my love ! [*Drinks.*]—O, true apothecary !  
 Thy drugs are quick.—Thus with a kiss I die. [*Dies.*]

*Enter, at the other end of the Churchyard, Friar LAURENCE, with a lantern, crow, and shade.*

*Fri.* Saint Francis be my speed ! how oft to-night

---

[1] A *presence* means a publick room, which is at times the *presence-chamber* of the sovereign. M. MASON.

Have my old feet stumbled at graves?—Who's there?  
Who is it that consorts, so late, the dead?

*Bal.* Here's one, a friend, and one that knows you well.

*Fri.* Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,  
What torch is yond', that vainly lends his light  
To grubs and eyeless skulls? as I discern,  
It burneth in the Capels' monument.

*Bal.* It doth so, holy sir; and there's my master,  
One that you love.

*Fri.* Who is it?

*Bal.* Romeo.

*Fri.* How long hath he been there?

*Bal.* Full half an hour.

*Fri.* Go with me to the vault.

*Bal.* I dare not, sir:

My master knows not, but I am gone hence;  
And fearfully did menace me with death,  
If I did stay to look on his intents.

*Fri.* Stay then, I'll go alone:—Fear comes upon me;  
O, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.

*Bal.* As I did sleep under this yew-tree here,  
I dreamt my master and another fought,  
And that my master slew him.<sup>3</sup>

*Fri.* Romeo?—

[*Advances.*]

Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains  
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?—  
What mean these masterless and gory swords  
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace?

[*Enters the Monument.*]

Romeo! O, pale!—Who else? what, Paris too?  
And steep'd in blood?—Ah, what an unkind hour  
Is guilty of this lamentable chance?—

The lady stirs.

[*JULIET wakes and stirs.*]

*Jul.* O, comfortable friar! where is my lord?

I do remember well where I should be,

And there I am:—Where is my Romeo? [*Noise within.*]

[2] This accident was reckoned ominous. So in *King Henry*. VI. part 3:

"For many men that *stumble* at the threshold,  
Are well foretold that danger lurks within."

Again, in *Richard III.* Hastings, going to execution, says;

"Three times to-day my footcloth horse did *stumble*." STEEVENS.

[3] This is one of the touches of nature that would have escaped the hand of any painter less attentive to it than Shakspeare. What happens to a person while he is under the manifest influence of fear, will seem to him, when he is recovered from it, like a dream. Homer. Book 8th, represents Rhesus dying fast asleep, and as it were beholding his enemy in a dream plunging a sword into his bosom. Eustathius and Dacier both applaud this image as very natural; for a man in such a condition, says Mr. Pope, awakes no further than to see confusedly what environs him, and to think it not a reality but a vision. STEEVENS.

*Fri.* I hear some noise.—Lady, come from that nest  
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep ;  
A greater Power than we can contradict  
Hath thwarted our intents ; come, come away ;  
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead ;  
And Paris too ; come, I'll dispose of thee  
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns :  
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming ;  
Come, go, good Juliet,—[*Noise again.*] I dare stay no  
longer. [*Exit.*]

*Jul.* Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.—  
What's here ? a cup, clos'd in my true love's hand ?  
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end :—  
O churl ! drink all ; and leave no friendly drop,  
To help me after ?—I will kiss thy lips ;  
Haply, some poison yet doth hang on them,  
To make me die with a restorative. [*Kisses him.*]  
Thy lips are warm !

*1 Watch.* [*Within.*] Lead, boy :—Which way ?

*Jul.* Yea, noise ?—then I'll be brief.—O happy dagger !  
[*Snatching ROMEO's dagger.*]  
This is thy sheath ; [*Stabs herself.*] there rust, and let  
me die. [*Falls on ROMEO's body, and dies.*]

*Enter Watch, with the Page of PARIS.*

*Page.* This is the place ; there, where the torch  
doth burn.

*1 Watch.* The ground is bloody ; Search about the  
churchyard :

Go, some of you, who'er you find, attach. [*Exe. some.*]  
Pitiful sight ! here lies the county slain ;—  
And Juliet bleeding ; warm, and newly dead,  
Who here hath lain these two days buried.—  
Go, tell the prince,—run to the Capulets,—  
Raise up the Montagues,—some others search ;—

[*Exe. other Watchmen.*]  
We see the ground whereon these woes do lie ;  
But the true ground of all these piteous woes,  
We cannot without circumstance descry.

*Enter some of the Watch, with BALTHASAR.*

*2 Watch.* Here's Romeo's man, we found him in the  
churchyard.

*1 Watch.* Hold him in safety, till the prince come  
hither.

*Enter another Watchman, with Friar LAURENCE.*

*3 Watch.* Here is a friar, that trembles, sighs, and weeps:  
We took this mattock and this spade from him,  
As he was coming from this churchyard side.

*1 Watch.* A great suspicion; Stay the friar too.

*Enter the Prince and Attendants.*

*Prince.* What misadventure is so early up,  
That calls our person from our morning's rest?

*Enter CAPULET, Lady CAPULET, and others.*

*Cap.* What should it be, that they so shriek abroad?

*La. Cap.* The people in the street cry—Romeo,  
Some—Juliet, and some—Paris; and all run,  
With open outcry, toward our monument.

*Prince.* What fear is this, which startles in our ears?

*1 Watch.* Sovereign, here lies the county Paris slain;  
And Romeo dead; and Juliet, dead before,  
Warm and new kill'd.

*Prince.* Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.

*1 Watch.* Here is a friar, and slaughter'd Romeo's man;  
With instruments upon them, fit to open  
These dead men's tombs.

*Cap.* O, heavens!—O, wife! look how our daughter bleeds!

This dagger hath mista'en,—for, lo! his house  
Is empty on the back of Montague,—  
And is mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom.

*La. Cap.* O me! this sight of death is as a bell,  
That warns my old age to a sepulchre.

*Enter MONTAGUE and others.*

*Prince.* Come, Montague; for thou art early up  
To see thy son and heir more early down.

*Mon.* Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night;  
Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath:  
What further woe conspires against mine age?

*Prince.* Look, and thou shalt see.

*Mon.* O thou untaught! what manners is in this,  
To press before thy father to a grave?

*Prince.* Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,  
Till we can clear these ambiguities,  
And know their spring, their head, their true descent;  
And then will I be general of your woes,  
And lead you even to death: Mean time forbear,  
And let mischance be slave to patience.—



Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

*Fri.* I am the greatest, able to do least,  
Yet most suspected, at the time and place  
Doth make against me, of this direful murder ;  
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge  
Myself condemned, and myself excus'd.

*Prince.* Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

*Fri.* I will be brief, for my short date of breath  
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.  
Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet ;  
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife :  
I married them ; and their stolen marriage-day  
Was Tybalt's dooms-day, whose untimely death  
Banish'd the new-made bridegroom from this city ;  
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pin'd.  
You—to remove that siege of grief from her,—  
Betroth'd, and would have married her perforce,  
To county Paris :—Then comes she to me,  
And, with wild looks, bid me devise some means  
To rid her from this second marriage,  
Or, in my cell there would she kill herself.  
Then gave I her, so tutor'd by my art,  
A sleeping potion ; which so took effect  
As I intended ; for it wrought on her  
The form of death : meantime I writ to Romeo,  
That he should hither come at this dire night,  
To help to take her from her borrow'd grave,  
Being the time the potion's force should cease.  
But he which bore my letter, friar John,  
Was staid by accident ; and yesternight  
Return'd my letter bask : Then all alone,  
At the prefixed hour of her waking,  
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault ;  
Meaning to keep her closely at my cell,  
Till I conveniently could send to Romeo :  
But, when I came, (some minute ere the time  
Of her awakening,) here untimely lay  
The noble Paris, and true Romeo, dead.  
She wakes ; and I entreated her come forth,  
And bear this work of heaven with patience :  
But then a noise did scare me from the tomb ;  
And she, too desperate, would not go with me,  
But (as it seems) did violence on herself.  
All this I know ; and to the marriage  
Her nurse is privy : And, if aught in this  
Miscarried by my fault, let my old life

Be sacrific'd, some hour before his time,  
Unto the rigour of severest law.—

*Prince.* We still have known thee for a holy man.—  
Where's Romeo's man? what can he say in this?

*Bal.* I brought my master news of Juliet's death;  
And then in post he came from Mantua,  
To this same place, to this same monument.  
This letter he early bid me give his father;  
And threaten'd me with death, going in the vault,  
If I departed not, and left him there.

*Prince.* Give me the letter, I will look on it.—  
Where is the county's page, that rais'd the watch?—  
Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

*Page.* He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave;  
And bid me stand aloof, and so I did:  
Anon, comes one with light to ope the tomb;  
And, by and by, my master drew on him;  
And then I ran away to call the watch.

*Prince.* This letter doth make good the friar's words,  
Their course of love, the tidings of her death:  
And here he writes—that he did buy a poison  
Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal  
Came to this vault to die, and lie with Juliet.—  
Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!—  
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,  
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!  
And I, for winking at your discords too,  
Have lost a brace of kinsmen:—all are punish'd.

*Cap.* O, brother Montague, give me thy hand:  
This is my daughter's jointure, for no more  
Can I demand.

*Mon.* But I can give thee more:  
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;  
That, while Verona by that name is known,  
There shall no figure at such rate be set,  
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

*Cap.* As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie;  
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

*Prince.* A glooming peace this morning with it brings;  
The sun, for sorrow, will not show his head:  
Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things;  
Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished:  
For never was a story of more woe,  
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

[*Exeunt.*]

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**HAMLET,**  
**PRINCE OF DENMARK.**

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*ACT IV. Scene VII.*

*Queen.* Her coronet weeds clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke ;  
whea down her weedy trophies, and herself, fell in the weeping brook.

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## OBSERVATIONS: [www.libtool.com.cn](http://www.libtool.com.cn)

IF the dramas of Shakspeare were to be characterised, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of Hamlet the praise of variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the argument of the play would make a long tale. The scenes are interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity; with merriment that includes judicious and instructive observations, and solemnity, not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of man. New characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of Hamlet causes much mirth, the mournful distraction of Ophelia fills the heart with tenderness, and every personage produces the effect intended, from the apparition that in the first act chills the blood with horror, to the fop in the last, that exposes affectation to just contempt.

The conduct is perhaps not wholly secure against objections: The action is indeed for the most part in continual progression, but there are some scenes which neither forward nor retard it. Of the feigned madness of Hamlet there appears no adequate cause, for he does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity. He plays the madman most, when he treats Ophelia with so much rudeness, which seems to be useless and wanton cruelty.

◊ Hamlet is, through the whole piece, rather an instrument than an agent. After he has, by the stratagem of the play, convicted the king, he makes no attempt to punish him, and his death is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet had no part in producing.

The catastrophe is not very happily produced; the exchange of weapons is rather an expedient of necessity, than a stroke of art. A scheme might easily be formed to kill Hamlet with the dagger, and Laertes with the bowl.

The poet is accused of having shown little regard to poetical justice, and may be charged with equal neglect of poetical probability. The apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; the revenge which he demands is not obtained, but by the death of him that was required to take it; and the gratification which would arise from the destruction of an usurper and a murderer, is abated by the untimely death of Ophelia, the young, the beautiful, the harmless, and the pious:

JOHNSON.

## PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CLAUDIUS, *king of Denmark.*

HAMLET, *son to the former, and nephew to the present king.*

POLONIUS, *lord chamberlain.*

HORATIO, *friend to Hamlet.*

LAERTES, *son to Polonius.*

VOLTIMAND,  
CORNELIUS,  
ROSENCRANTZ,  
GUILDENSTERN, } *courtiers.*

OSRICK, *a courtier.*

*Another courtier.*

*A Priest.*

MARCELLUS, } *officers.*  
BERNARDO, }

FRANCISCO, *a soldier.*

REYNALDO, *servant to Polonius.*

*A Captain. An Ambassador.*

*Ghost of Hamlet's father.*

FORTINBRAS, *prince of Norway.*

GERTRUDE, *queen of Denmark, and mother of Hamlet.*

OPHELIA, *daughter of Polonius.*

*Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Grave-Diggers, Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants.*

**SCENE, Elsinore.**

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The original story on which this play is built, may be found in Saxo Grammaticus, the Danish historian. From thence Belleforest adopted it in his collection of novels, which he began in 1564, and continued to publish through succeeding years. From this work, *The History of Hamblett*, quarto, bl. l. was translated. I have yet met with no earlier edition of the play than one in the year 1604, though it must have been performed before that time, as I have seen a copy of Speght's edition of Chaucer, which formerly belonged to Dr. Harvey (the antagonist of Nash) who, in his own hand-writing, has set down Hamlet as a performance with which he was well acquainted, in the year 1598. His words are these: "The younger sort take much delight in Shakspeare's Venus and Adonis; but his Lucrece, and his tragedy of Hamlet, prince of Denmarke, have it in them to please the wiser sort, 1598." STEEVENS.

Shakspeare's Hamlet was written, if my conjecture be well grounded, in 1596. MALONE.



# HAMLET.

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle. FRANCISCO*  
*on his post. Enter to him BERNARDO.*

*Bernardo.*

**W**HO's there ?

*Fran.* Nay, answer me : stand, and unfold  
Yourself.

*Ber.* Long live the king !<sup>1</sup>

*Fran.* Bernardo ?

*Ber.* He.

*Fran.* You come most carefully upon your hour.

*Ber.* 'Tis now struck twelve ; get thee to bed, Francisco.

*Fran.* For this relief, much thanks : 'tis bitter cold,  
And I am sick at heart.

*Ber.* Have you had quiet guard ?

*Fran.* Not a mouse stirring.

*Ber.* Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,  
The rivals of my watch,<sup>2</sup> bid them make haste.

*Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.*

*Fran.* I think, I hear them.—Stand, ho ! Who is there ?

*Hor.* Friends to this ground.

*Mar.* And liegemen to the Dane.

*Fran.* Give you good-night.

*Mar.* O, farewell, honest soldier :  
Who hath reliev'd you ?

*Fran.* Bernardo hath my place.

Give you good night.

[*Exit.*

*Mar.* Holla ! Bernardo !

*Ber.* Say,

What, is Horatio there ?

*Hor.* A piece of him.

*Ber.* Welcome, Horatio ; welcome, good Marcellus.

*Hor.* What, has this thing appear'd again to-night ?

[1] This sentence appears to be the watch-word. STEEVENS.

[2] *Rivals* for partners. WARB.—*Rival* is constantly used by Shakspeare for a partner or associate. MALONE.

*Ber.* I have seen nothing.

*Mar.* Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy ;  
And will not let belief take hold of him,  
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us :  
Therefore I have entreated him along,  
With us to watch the minutes of this night ;  
That, if again this apparition come,  
He may approve our eyes,<sup>3</sup> and speak to it :

*Hor.* Tush ! tush ! 'twill not appear.

*Ber.* Sit down awhile ;  
And let us once again assail your ears,  
That are so fortified against our story,  
What we two nights have seen.

*Hor.* Well, sit we down,  
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

*Ber.* Last night of all,  
When yon same star, that's westward from the pole,  
Had made his course to illumine that part of heaven  
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,  
The bell then beating one,—

*Mar.* Peace, break thee off ; look, where it comes again !

*Enter Ghost.*

*Ber.* In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

*Mar.* Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio.<sup>4</sup>

*Ber.* Looks it not like the king ? mark it, Horatio.

*Hor.* Most like:—it harrows me with fear, and wonder.

*Ber.* It would be spoke to.

*Mar.* Speak to it, Horatio.

*Hor.* What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,  
Together with that fair and warlike form  
In which the majesty of buried Denmark  
Did sometimes march ? by heaven I charge thee, speak.

*Mar.* It is offended.

*Ber.* See ! it stalks away.

*Hor.* Stay ; speak : speak I charge thee, speak.

[*Exit Ghost.*]

*Mar.* 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

*Ber.* How now, Horatio ? you tremble, and look pale :  
Is not this something more than fantasy ?  
What think you of it ?

[3] Add a new testimony to that of our eyes. JOHNSON.

[4] It has always been a vulgar notion that supernatural beings can only be spoken to with propriety or effect by persons of learning. Thus Toby, in the *Night-walker*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, says :

"Let's call the butler up, for he speaks latin."

"And that will daunt the devil." REED.

*Hor.* Before my God, I might not this believe,  
Without the sensible and true avouch  
Of mine own eyes.

*Mar.* Is it not like the king ?

*Hor.* As thou art to thyself :  
Such was the very armour he had on,  
When he the ambitious Norway combated ;  
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,  
He smote the sledded Polack on the ice.<sup>5</sup>  
'Tis strange.

*Mar.* Thus, twice before, and jump at this dead hour,<sup>6</sup>  
With martial stalk, hath he gone by our watch.

*Hor.* In what particular thought to work, I know not ;<sup>7</sup>  
But, in the gross and scope of mine opinion,<sup>8</sup>  
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

*Mar.* Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,  
Why this same strict and most observant watch  
So nightly toils the subject of the land ?  
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,  
And foreign mart for implements of war ;  
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task  
Does not divide the Sunday from the week :  
What might we toward, that this sweaty haste  
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day ;  
Who is't, that can inform me ?

*Hor.* That can I ;

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,  
Whose image but even now appear'd to us,  
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,  
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,  
Dar'd to the combat ; in which our valiant Hamlet  
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him,)  
Did slay this Fortinbras ; who, by a seal'd compact,  
Well ratified by law, and heraldry,  
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands,  
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror :  
Against the which, a moiety competent  
Was gaged by our king ; which had return'd  
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,  
Had he been vanquisher ; as, by the same co-mart,

[5] He speaks of a prince of Poland whom he slew in battle. POPE.  
*Polack was*, in that age, the term for an inhabitant of Poland. JOHNSON.

[6] *Jump* and *just* were synonymous in the time of Shakspeare. STEEV.

[7] *What particular train of thinking to follow.* STEEVENS.

[8] *Gross and scope*,—general thoughts, and tendency at large. JOHNSON.

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And carriage of the article design'd,<sup>9</sup>  
 His fell to Hamlet : Now, sir, young Fortinbras,  
 Of unimproved mettle hot and full,<sup>1</sup>  
 Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,  
 Shark'd up a list of landless resolute,<sup>2</sup>  
 For food and diet to some enterprize  
 That hath a stomach in't ; which is no other  
 (As it doth well appear unto our state,)  
 But to recover of us, by strong hand,  
 And terms compulsory, those 'foresaid lands  
 So by his father lost : And this, I take it,  
 Is the main motive of our preparations ;  
 The source of this our watch ; and the chief head  
 Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

*Ber.* I think, it be no other, but even so :  
 Well may it sort,<sup>3</sup> that this portentous figure  
 Comes armed through our watch ; so like the king  
 That was, and is, the question of these wars.

*Hor.* A mote it is, to trouble the mind's eye.  
 In the most high and palmy state of Rome,  
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,  
 The grave stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead  
 Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.

As, stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,  
 Disasters in the sun ; and the moist star,<sup>4</sup>  
 Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,  
 Was sick almost to dooms-day with eclipse.  
 And even the like precursor of fierce events,<sup>5</sup>  
 As harbingers preceding still the fates,  
 And prologue to the omen coming on,—  
 Have heaven and earth together démonstrated  
 Unto our climatures and countrymen.—

*Re-enter Ghost.*

But, soft ; behold ! lo, where it comes again !  
 I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion !  
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,<sup>7</sup>  
 Speak to me :

[9] Carriage is *import* : Design'd is *formed, drawn up between them.*

[1] Full of spirit not regulated or guided by knowledge or experience. JOHNSON.

[2] I believe to *shark up* means to pick up without distinction, as the shark-fish collects his prey. STEEVENS.

[3] The cause and the effect are proportionate and suitable. JOHNSON.

[4] The moon. MALONE.—[5] Fierce for terrible. WALKINGTON.

[7] The speech of Horatio to the spectre is very elegant and noble, and congruous to the common traditions of the causes of apparitions. JOHNSON.

If there be any good thing to be done,  
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,  
Speak to me :

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,  
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,  
O, speak !

Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life  
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,  
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,

[*Cock crows.*

Speak of it:—stay, and speak.—Stop it, Marcellus.

*Mar.* Shall I strike at it with my partizan ?

*Hor.* Do, if it will not stand.

*Ber.* 'Tis here !

*Hor.* 'Tis here !

*Mar.* 'Tis gone !

[*Exit Ghost.*

We do it wrong, being so majestic,  
To offer it the show of violence ;  
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,  
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

*Ber.* It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

*Hor.* And then it started like a guilty thing  
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,  
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,  
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat  
Awake the god of day ; and, at his warning,<sup>8</sup>  
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,<sup>9</sup>  
The extravagant and erring spirit hies<sup>1</sup>  
To his confine : and of the truth herein

[8] Bourne of Newcastle, in his *Antiquities of the common People*, informs us, " It is a received tradition among the vulgar, that at the time of cock-crowing, the midnight spirits forsake these lower regions, and go to their proper places.—Hence it is, says he, that in country places, where the way of life requires more early labour, they always go cheerfully to work at that time ; whereas if they are called abroad sooner, they imagine every thing they see a wandering ghost." FARMER.

[9] According to the pneumatology of the time, every element was inhabited by its peculiar order of spirits, who had dispositions different, according to their various places of abode. The meaning therefore is, that all spirits *extravagans*, wandering out of their element, whether aerial spirits visiting earth, or earthly spirits ranging the air, return to their station, to their proper limits in which they are *confined*. We might read,

" —And at his warning

" Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies

" To his confine, whether in sea or air,

" Or earth, or fire. And of." &c.

But this change, though it would smooth the construction, is not necessary, and being unnecessary, should not be made against authority. JOHNSON

[1] *Extravagant*, out of bounds. *Berring*, erratic. STEVENSON

This present object made probation.

*Mar.* It faded on the crowing of the cock.  
Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
This bird of dawning singeth all night long :  
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad ;  
The nights are wholesome ; then no planets strike,  
No fairy takes,<sup>2</sup> nor witch hath power to charm,  
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

*Hor.* So have I heard, and do in part believe it.  
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,  
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill :  
Break we our watch up ; and, by my advice,  
Let us impart what we have seen to-night  
Unto young Hamlet : for, upon my life,  
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him :  
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,  
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty ?

*Mar.* Let's do't, I pray ; and I this morning know  
Where we shall find him most convenient. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II.

*The same. A Room of State in the same. Enter the King, Queen, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, and Attendants.*

*King.* Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death  
The memory be green ; and that it us befitted  
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom  
To be contracted in one brow of woe ;  
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,  
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,  
Together with remembrance of ourselves.  
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,  
The imperial jointress of this warlike state,  
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy,—  
With one auspicious, and one dropping eye ;  
With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,  
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—  
Taken to wife : nor have we herein barr'd  
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone  
With this affair along :—For all, our thanks.

Now follows, that you know, young Fontinbras,—

[2] No fairy strikes with lameness or diseases JOHNSON.

Holding a weak supposal of our worth ;  
 Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,  
 Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,  
 Colleagu'd with this dream of his advantage,  
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,  
 Importing the surrender of those lands  
 Lost by his father, with all bands of law,  
 To our most valiant brother.—So much for him.  
 Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.  
 Thus much the business is : We have here writ  
 To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—  
 Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears  
 Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress  
 His further gait herein ; in that the levies,  
 The lists, and full proportions, are all made  
 Out of his subject :—and we here despatch  
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,  
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway ;  
 Giving to you no further personal power  
 To business with the king, more than the scope  
 Of these dilated articles allow.

Farewell ; and let your haste commend your duty.

*Cor. Vol.* In that, and all things, will we show our duty.

*King.* We doubt it nothing ; heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you ?  
 You told us of some suit ; What is't, Laertes ?  
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,  
 And lose your voice : What would'st thou beg, Laertes,  
 That shall not be my offer, not thy asking ?  
 The head is not more native to the heart,<sup>3</sup>  
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,  
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.  
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes ?

*Laer.* My dread lord,  
 Your leave and favour to return to France ;  
 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,  
 To show my duty in your coronation ;  
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,  
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,  
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

*King.* Have you your father's leave ? What says  
 Polonius ?

---

[3] Formerly the heart was supposed the seat of wisdom, and hence the poet speaks of the close connexion between the heart and head. MALONE.

*Pol.* He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave,  
By laboursome petition; and, at last,  
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:  
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

*King.* Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,  
And thy best graces: spend it at thy will.—

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

*Ham.* A little more than kin, and less than kind.<sup>4</sup>

[*Aside.*]

*King.* How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

*Ham.* Not so, my lord, I am too much i'the sun.

*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,  
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not, for ever, with thy veiled lids,<sup>5</sup>

Seek for thy noble father in the dust:

Thou know'st, 'tis common; all, that live, must die,  
Passing through nature to eternity.

*Ham.* Ay, madam, it is common.

*Queen.* If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

*Ham.* Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not seems.

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,  
Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,  
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,  
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,  
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,  
That can denote me truly: These, indeed, seem,  
For they are actions that a man might play;  
But I have that within, which passeth show;  
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe.

*King.* 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,

Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father:  
But, you must know, your father lost a father;  
That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound  
In filial obligation, for some term  
To do obsequious sorrow:<sup>6</sup> But to persevér  
In obstinate condolement, is a course  
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:  
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven;

[4] *Kind* is the Teutonick word for child. If we understand *kind* in its ancient sense, then the meaning will be,—*I am more than thy kinsman, for I am thy step-son*; being such, *I am less near to thee than thy natural offspring*, and therefore not entitled to the appellation of *son*, which you have now given me. MALONE.

[5] With lowering eyes, cast down eyes. JOHNSON.

[6] *Obsequious*, is here for *obsequial*, or funeral ceremonies, JOHNSON.



A heart unfortified, or mind impatient ;  
 An understanding simple and unschool'd :  
 For what, we know, must be, and is as common  
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,  
 Why should we, in our peevish opposition,  
 Take it to heart ? Fye ! 'tis a fault to heaven,  
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,  
 To reason most absurd ; whose common theme  
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,  
 From the first corse, till he that died to-day,  
*This must be so.* We pray you, throw to earth  
 This unprevailing woe ; and think of us  
 As of a father : for let the world take note,  
 You are the most immediate to our throne ;  
 And, with no less nobility of love<sup>7</sup>  
 Than that which dearest father bears his son,  
 Do I impart toward you. For your intent  
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,  
 It is most retrograde to our desire :  
 And, we beseech you, bend you to remain  
 Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

*Queen.* Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet ;  
 I pray thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

*Ham.* I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

*King.* Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply ;  
 Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come ;  
 This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet  
 Sits smiling to my heart ; in grace whereof,  
 No jocund health,<sup>8</sup> that Denmark drinks to-day  
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell ;  
 And the king's rouse<sup>9</sup> the heaven shall bruit  
 Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt King, Queen, Lords, &c. POLONIUS*  
 and LAERTES.

*Ham.* O, that this too too solid flesh would melt  
 Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew !<sup>11</sup>  
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! O God !  
 How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable

[7] Eminence and distinction of love. HEA

[8] The king's intemperance is very strong  
 that happens to him gives him occasion to drink

[9] The king's draught of jollity. See Othello

[11] *Resolve* means the same as *dissolve*. The wo  
 son. STEEVENS.

Seem to me all the uses of this world !  
 Eye on't ! 'Tis an unweeded garden,  
 That grows to seed ; things rank, and gross in nature,  
 Possess it merely. That it should come to this !  
 But two months dead !—nay, not so much, not two :  
 So excellent a king ; that was, to this,  
 Hyperion to a satyr :<sup>2</sup> so loving to my mother,  
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven<sup>3</sup>  
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth !  
 Must I remember ? why, she would hang on him,  
 As if increase of appetite had grown  
 By what it fed on : And yet, within a month,—  
 Let me not think on't ;—Frailty, thy name is woman !—  
 A little month ; or ere those shoes were old,  
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,  
 Like Niobe, all tears :—why she, even she,—  
 O heaven ! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,  
 Would have mourn'd longer,—married with my uncle ;  
 My father's brother ; but no more like my father,  
 Than I to Hercules : Within a month ;  
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,  
 She married ;—O most wicked speed, to post  
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets !  
 It is not, nor it cannot come to, good :  
 But break, my heart ; for I must hold my tongue !

*Enter HORATIO, BERNARDO, and MARCELLUS.*

*Hor.* Hail to you lordship !

*Ham.* I am glad to see you well :

*Horatio*,—or I do forget myself.

*Hor.* The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

*Ham.* Sir, my good friend ; I'll change that name with you.

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio ?—  
 Marcellus ?

*Mar.* My good lord,——

*Ham.* I am very glad to see you ;—good even, sir.—

[2] This similitude at first sight seems to be a little far-fetched ; but it has an exquisite beauty. By the Satyr is meant Pan, as by Hyperion, Apollo. Pan and Apollo were brothers, and the allusion is to the contention between those gods for the preference in music. WARBURTON.

[3] *Beteem* occurs in the tenth book of Arthur Golding's version of Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, 1587, and from the corresponding latin, must necessarily signify, to *wechsafe, deign, permit, or suffer* :

“ —Yet could he not *beteeme*

“ The shape of anie other bird than egle for to seeme.”

Sign. R. i. b.

“ —nulla tamen alite verti

“ *Dignatur, nisi quæ possit sua fulmina fere.*”

V. 157. STEEV.

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg ?

*Hor.* A truant disposition, good my lord.

*Ham.* I would not hear your enemy say so ;  
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence ;  
To make it truster of your own report  
Against yourself : I know, you are no truant.  
But what is your affair in Elsinore ?

We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

*Hor.* My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

*Ham.* I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student ;  
I think, it was to see my mother's wedding.

*Hor.* Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

*Ham.* Thrift, thrift, Horatio ! the funeral bak'd meats<sup>4</sup>  
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage-tables.  
'Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven<sup>5</sup>  
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio !—  
My father,—Methinks, I see my father.

*Hor.* Where,  
My lord ?

*Ham.* In my mind's eye, Horatio.

*Hor.* I saw him once, he was a goodly king.

*Ham.* He was a man, take him for all in all,  
I shall not look upon his like again.

*Hor.* My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

*Ham.* Saw ! who ?

*Hor.* My lord, the king your father.

*Ham.* The king my father !

*Hor.* Season your admiration for a while  
With an attent ear ; till I may deliver,  
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,  
This marvel to you.

*Ham.* For God's love, let me hear.

*Hor.* Two nights together had these gentlemen,  
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,  
In the dead waist and middle of the night,  
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,  
Armed at point, exactly, cap-à-pé,  
Appears before them, and, with solemn march,  
Goes slow and stately by them : thrice he walk'd,  
By their oppress'd and fear-surprized eyes,

[4] It was anciently the general custom to give a cold entertainment to mourners at a funeral. In distant counties this practice is still continued among the yeomanry. See *Romeo and Juliet*, p. 73. COLLINS.

[5] Dearest, for *direst*, most dreadful, most dangerous. JOHNSON.  
*Dearest* signifies, most consequential, important. See *Timon of Athens*, act 5. sc. ii. STEEVENS.

Within his truncheon's length ; whilst they, distill'd  
 Almost to jelly with the act of fear,  
 Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me  
 In dreadful secrecy impart they did ;  
 And I with them, the third night kept the watch :  
 Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,  
 Form of the thing, each word made true and good,  
 The apparition comes : I knew your father ;  
 These hands are not more like.

*Ham.* But where was this ?

*Mar.* My lord, upon the platform where we watch

*Ham.* Did you not speak to it ?

*Hor.* My lord, I did ;

But answer made it none : yet once, methought,  
 It lifted up its head, and did address  
 Itself to motion, like as it would speak :  
 But, even then, the morning cock crew loud ;  
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,  
 And vanish'd from our sight.

*Ham.* 'Tis very strange.

*Hor.* As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true ;  
 And we did think it writ down in our duty,  
 To let you know of it.

*Ham.* Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.  
 Hold you the watch to-night ?

*All.* We do, my lord.

*Ham.* Arm'd, say you ?

*All.* Arm'd, my lord.

*Ham.* From top to toe ?

*All.* My lord, from head to foot.

*Ham.* Then saw you not

His face ?

*Hor.* O, yes, my lord ; he wore his beaver up.

*Ham.* What, look'd he frowningly ?

*Hor.* A countenance more

In sorrow than in anger.

*Ham.* Pale, or red ?

*Hor.* Nay, very pale.

*Ham.* And fix'd his eyes upon you ?

*Hor.* Most constantly.

*Ham.* I would, I had been there.

*Hor.* It would have much amaz'd you.

*Ham.* Very like,

Very like : Staid it long ?

*Hor.* While one with moderate haste might tel  
 hundred.

*Mar. Ber.* Longer, longer.

*Hor.* Not when I saw it.

*Ham.* His beard was grizz'd, nor?

*Hor.* It was, as I have seen it in his life,  
A sable silver'd.

*Ham.* I will watch to-night ;  
Perchance, 'twill walk again.

*Hor.* I warrant, it will.

*Ham.* If it assume my noble father's person,  
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,  
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,  
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,  
Let it be tenable in your silence still ;  
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,  
Give it an understanding, but no tongue ;  
I will requite your loves : So, fare you well :  
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,  
I'll visit you.

*All.* Our duty to your honour.

*Ham.* Your loves, as mine to you : Farewell.

[*Exe. HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.*  
My father's spirit in arms ! all is not well ;  
I doubt some foul play : 'would, the night were come !  
Till then sit still, my soul : Foul deeds will rise,  
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.  
*[Exit.*

## SCENE III.

*A Room in POLONIUS' House. Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.*

*Laer.* My necessaries are embark'd ; farewell :  
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,  
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,  
But let me hear from you.

*Oph.* Do you doubt that ?

*Laer.* For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,  
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood ;  
A violet in the youth of primy nature,  
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,  
The perfume and suppliance of a minute ;<sup>6</sup>  
No more.

*Oph.* No more but so ?

*Laer.* Think it no more :  
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone

[6] *The perfume, and suppliance of a minute* ; what is supplied to us for a minute. The idea seem to be taken from the short duration of vegetable perfume. STEEVENS.

In thews, and bulk ; but, as this temple waxes,  
 The inward ~~service of the mind and soul~~  
 Grows wide withal. Perhaps, he loves you now ;  
 And now no soil, nor cautel, doth besmirch  
 The virtue of his will :<sup>7</sup> but, you must fear,  
 His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own :  
 For he himself is subject to his birth :  
 He may not, as unvalued persons do,  
 Carve for himself ; for on his choice depends  
 The safety and the health of the whole state ;  
 And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd  
 Unto the voice and yielding of that body,  
 Whereof he is the head : Then if he says he loves you,  
 It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,  
 As he in his particular act and place  
 May give his saying deed ; which is no further,  
 Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.  
 Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,  
 If with too credent ear you list his songs ;  
 Or lose your heart ; or your chaste treasure open  
 To his unmaster'd importunity.<sup>8</sup>  
 Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister ;  
 And keep you in the rear of your affection,<sup>9</sup>  
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.  
 The chariest maid is prodigal enough,  
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon :  
 Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes :  
 The canker galls the infants of the spring,  
 Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd ;  
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth  
 Contagious blastments are most imminent.  
 Be wary then : best safety lies in fear ;  
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

*Oph.* I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,  
 As watchman to my heart : But, good my brother,  
 Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,  
 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven ;  
 Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,  
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,  
 And recks not his own read.<sup>1</sup>

[7] *The virtue of his will* means his virtuous intentions. *Cautel* means craft. So Coriolanus says :

“ —Be caught by *cautelous* baits and practice.” MASON.

[8] Unmaster'd—i. e. licentious. JOHNSON.

[9] Do not advance so far as your affection would lead you. JOHNSON.

[1] That is, heeds not his own lessons. POPE.

*Laer.* O fear me not.  
I stay too long;—But here my father comes.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace :  
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

*Pol.* Yet here, Laertes ! aboard, aboard, for shame ;  
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,<sup>2</sup>  
And you are staid for : There,—my blessing with you ;  
[*Laying his hand on* LAERTES' head.

And these few precepts in thy memory  
Look thou charácter. Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.  
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.  
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel ;  
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade.<sup>3</sup> Beware  
Of entrance to a quarrel : but, being in,  
Bear it that the opposer may beware of thee.  
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice :  
Take each man's censure,<sup>4</sup> but reserve thy judgment.  
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
But not express'd in fancy ; rich, not gaudy :  
For the apparel oft proclaims the man ;  
And they in France, of the best rank and station,  
Are most select and generous, chief in that.  
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be ;  
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,  
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.  
This above all,—To thine ownself be true ;  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.  
Farewell ; my blessing season this in thee !<sup>5</sup>

*Laer.* Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

*Pol.* The time invites you ; go, your servants tend.

*Laer.* Farewell, Ophelia ; and remember well  
What I have said to you.

[2] *The shoulder of your sail*—this is a common sea-phrase. STEEVENS.

[3] The literal sense is, Do not make thy palm callous by shaking every man by the hand. The figurative meaning may be, Do not by promiscuous conversation make thy mind insensible to the difference of characters.

JOHNSON.

[4] Censure—opinion. So in *K. Henry VI.*

"The king is old enough to give his censure." STEEVENS.

[5] Season, for infuse. WARBURTON.—It is more than to infuse, it is to infix it in such a manner as that it may never wear out. JOHNSON.

*Oph.* 'Tis in my memory lock'd,  
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

*Laer.* Farewell.

[*Exit.*]

*Pol.* What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

*Oph.* So please you, something touching the lord  
Hamlet.

*Pol.* Marry, we'll bethought :

'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late  
Given private time to you : and you yourself  
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.  
If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me,  
And that in way of caution,) I must tell you,  
You do not understand yourself so clearly,  
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour :  
What is between you ? give me up the truth.

*Oph.* He hath, my lord, of late, made many tenders  
Of his affection to me.

*Pol.* Affection ? puh ! you speak like a green girl,  
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.<sup>6</sup>  
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them ?

*Oph.* I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

*Pol.* Marry, I'll teach you : think yourself a baby ;  
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,  
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly ;  
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,  
Wronging it thus.) you'll tender me a fool.

*Oph.* My lord, he hath importun'd me with love,  
In honourable fashion.

*Pol.* Ay, fashion you may call it :<sup>7</sup> go to, go to.

*Oph.* And hath given countenance to his speech,  
my lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

*Pol.* Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,  
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul  
Lends the tongue vows : these blazes, daughter,  
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,  
Even in their promise, as it is a making,—  
You must not take for fire. From this time,  
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence ;  
Set your entreatments<sup>8</sup> at a higher rate,  
Than a command to parley. For lord Hamlet,  
Believe so much in him, That he is young ;

[6] *Sifted* means *tempted*. See St. Luke xxxi. 22. HARRIS.

[7] She uses *fashion* for *manner*, and *he* for a *transient practice*. JOHN.

[8] *Entreatments* here means *company, conversation, from the French entretien*. JOHNSON.



And with a larger tether may he walk,<sup>9</sup>  
 Than may be given you : In few, Ophelia,  
 Do not believe his vows : for they are brokers  
 Not of that die which their investments show,  
 But mere implorators of unholy suits,  
 Breathing life sanctified and pious bonds,<sup>1</sup>  
 The better to beguile. This is for all,—  
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,  
 Have you so slander any moment's leisure,  
 As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet.  
 Look to't, I charge you ; come your ways.

*Oph.* I shall obey, my lord.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV.

*The Platform.* Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.

*Ham.* The air bites shrewdly ; it is very cold.

*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air.

*Ham.* What hour now ?

*Hor.* I think, it lacks of twelve.

*Mar.* No, it is struck.

*Hor.* Indeed ? I heard it not ; it then draws near the  
 season,

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*  
 What does this mean, my lord ?

*Ham.* The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,  
 Keeps wassel, and the swaggering up-spring reels ;<sup>2</sup>  
 And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,  
 The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out  
 The triumph of his pledge.

*Hor.* Is it a custom ?

*Ham.* Ay, marry, is't :

But to my mind,—though I am native here,  
 And to the manner born,—it is a custom  
 More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.  
 This heavy-headed revel, east and west,  
 Makes us traduc'd, and tax'd of other nations :  
 They clepe us, drunkards, and with swinish phrase  
 Soil our addition ; and, indeed it takes  
 From our achievements, though perform'd at height,

[9] *Tether* is that string by which an animal, set to graze in grounds uninclosed, is confined within the proper limits. JOHNSON.

[1] Theobald for *bonds* substitutes *bawds*. JOHNSON.

[2] The blustering upstart. JOHNSON. §

The pith and marrow of our attribute.<sup>3</sup>  
 So, oft it chanceth in particular men,  
 That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,  
 As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,  
 Since nature cannot choose his origin,)  
 By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,<sup>4</sup>  
 Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason ;  
 Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens  
 The form of plausible manners ;—that these men,—  
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect ;  
 Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,—  
 Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,  
 As infinite as man may undergo)<sup>5</sup>  
 Shall in the general censure take corruption  
 From that particular fault : The dram of base  
 Doth all the noble substance often dout,<sup>6</sup>  
 To his own scandal.

*Enter Ghost.*

*Hor.* Look, my lord, it comes !

*Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace defend us !—  
 Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,  
 Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,  
 Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,  
 Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,  
 That I will speak to thee ; I'll call thee, Hamlet,  
 King, father, royal Dane : O, answer me :<sup>7</sup>  
 Let me not burst in ignorance ! but tell,  
 Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,  
 Have burst their cerements ! why the sepulchre,  
 Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd,  
 Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,

[3] The best and most valuable part of the praise that would be otherwise attributed to us. JOHNSON.

[4] Complexion—*humour* ; as sanguine, melancholy, phlegmatic, &c. WARBURTON.

[5] As large as can be accumulated upon man. JOHNSON.

[6] *Dout* is a word formed by the coalescence of two others (*do* and *out*) like *don* for *do on*, *doff* for *do off*, both of which are used by Shakspeare. In Warwickshire they always say—*dout* the candle, *dout* the fire, put out or extinguish them. STEEVENS.

[7] Hamlet's speech to the apparition of his father seems to me to consist of three parts. When first he sees the spectre, he fortifies himself with an invocation, "Angels and ministers of grace defend us !"

As the spectre approaches, he deliberates with himself, and determines that whatever it be he will venture to address it.

The five next lines he says while his father is advancing ; he then, as he had determined, speaks to him, and calls him—Hamlet, King, Father, Royal Dane : O, answer me. JOHNSON.

To cast thee up again ! What may this mean,  
 That thou, dead ~~corse, again, in complete~~ steel,<sup>8</sup>  
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
 Making night hideous ; and we fools of nature,  
 So horribly to shake our disposition<sup>9</sup>  
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls ?  
 Say, why is this ? wherefore ? what should we do ?

*Hor.* It beckons you to go away with it,  
 As if it some impartment did desire  
 To you alone.

*Mar.* Look, with what courteous action  
 It waves you to a more removed ground :  
 But do not go with it.

*Hor.* No, by no means.

*Ham.* It will not speak ; then I will follow it.

*Hor.* Do not, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, what should be the fear ?  
 I do not set my life at a pin's fee :<sup>1</sup>  
 And, for my soul, what can it do to that,  
 Being a thing immortal as itself ?  
 It waves me forth again ;—I'll follow it.

*Hor.* What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,  
 Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,  
 That beetles o'er his base into the sea ?  
 And there assume some other horrible form,  
 Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,  
 And draw you into madness ? think of it :  
 The very place puts toys of desperation,<sup>2</sup>  
 Without more motive, into every brain,  
 That looks so many fathoms to the sea,  
 And hears it roar beneath.

*Ham.* It waves me still :—

Go on, I'll follow thee.

*Mar.* You shall not go, my lord.

*Ham.* Hold off your hands.

*Hor.* Be rul'd, you shall not go.

*Ham.* My fate cries out,  
 And makes each petty artery in this body  
 As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.— [*Ghost beckons.*]

[8] It is probable that Shakspeare introduced his ghost in armour, that it might appear more solemn by such a discrimination from the other characters ; though it was really the custom of the Danish kings to be buried in that manner. Vide *Olaus Wormius*, cap. 7. STEEVENS.

[9] Disposition, for *frame*. WARBURTON.

[1] The value of a pin. JOHNSON.

[2] Toys for *whims*. WARBURTON.

Still am I call'd ;—unhand me, gentlemen, ;—

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me :<sup>3</sup>—

I say, away :—Go on, I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and HAMLET*]

*Hor.* He waxes desperate with imagination.

*Mar.* Let's follow ; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

*Hor.* Have after :—To what issue will this come ?

*Mar.* Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

*Hor.* Heaven will direct it.

*Mar.* Nay, let's follow him.

[*Exeunt.* —

### SCENE V.

*A more remote part of the Platform. Re-enter Ghost and HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Whither wilt thou lead me ? Speak, I'll go no further.

*Ghost.* Mark me.

*Ham.* I will.

*Ghost.* My hour is almost come,  
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames  
Must render up myself.

*Ham.* Alas, poor ghost !

*Ghost.* Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing  
To what I shall unfold.

*Ham.* Speak, I am bound to hear.

*Ghost.* So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

*Ham.* What ?

*Ghost.* I am thy father's spirit ;  
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night ;  
And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires,  
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,  
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid  
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul ; freeze thy young blood ;  
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres ;  
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,  
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine :  
But this eternal blazon must not be  
To ears of flesh and blood :—List, list, O list !—  
If thou didst ever thy dear father love,—

*Ham.* O heaven !

*Ghost.* Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

[3] *To let* among the old authors, signifies, to prevent, to hinder. STEE-

*Ham.* Murder ?

*Ghost.* Murder most foul, as in the best it is ;  
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

*Ham.* Haste me to know it ; that I, with wings as swift  
As meditation, or the thoughts of love,  
May sweep to my revenge.

*Ghost.* I find thee apt ;  
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed  
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,<sup>4</sup>  
Would'st thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear :  
'Tis given out, that sleeping in mine orchard,  
A serpent stung me : so the whole ear of Denmark  
Is by a forged process of my death  
Rankly abus'd : but know, thou noble youth,  
The serpent that did sting thy father's life,  
Now wears his crown.

*Ham.* O, my prophetic soul ! my uncle !

*Ghost.* Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,  
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,  
(O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power  
So to seduce !) won to his shameful lust  
The will of my most seeming virtuous queen :  
O, Hamlet, what a falling-off was there !  
From me, whose love was of that dignity,  
That it went hand in hand even with the vow  
I made to her in marriage ; and to decline  
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor  
To those of mine !  
But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,  
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven ;  
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,  
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,  
And prey on garbage.  
But, soft ! methinks, I scent the morning air ;  
Brief let me be :—Sleeping within mine orchard,<sup>5</sup>  
My custom always of the afternoon,  
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,

[4] Shakspeare, apparently through ignorance, makes Roman Catholics of these pagan Danes ; and here gives a description of purgatory ; but yet mixes it with the Pagan fable of Lethe's wharf. Whether he did it to insinuate to the zealous Protestants of his time, that the Pagan and Popish purgatory stood both upon the same footing of credibility, or whether it was by the same kind of incontinent inadvertence that Michael Angelo brought Charon's bark into his picture of the Last Judgment is not easy to decide. WARB.

[5] Orchard for garden. So in *Romeo and Juliet* :

“ The orchard walls are high, and hard to climb.”

See also *Much Ado about Nothing*, p. 27.

STEEVENS.

With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial;<sup>6</sup>  
 And in the porches of mine ears did pour  
 The leperous distilment ; whose effect  
 Holds such an enmity with blood of man,  
 That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through  
 The natural gates and alleys of the body ;  
 And, with a sudden vigour, it doth posset  
 And curd, like eager droppings into milk,  
 The thin and wholesome blood : so did it mine ;  
 And a most instant tetter bark'd about,  
 Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,  
 All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,  
 Of life, of crown, of queen, at once despatch'd :  
 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,  
 Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd :<sup>7</sup>  
 No reckoning made, but sent to my account  
 With all my imperfections on my head :  
 O, horrible ! O, horrible ! most horrible !<sup>8</sup>  
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not ;  
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be  
 A couch for luxury<sup>9</sup> and damnd incest.  
 But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,  
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive  
 Against thy mother aught ; leave her to heaven,  
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,  
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once !  
 The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,  
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire.\*  
 Adieu, adieu, adieu ! remember me.

[E]

*Ham.* O all you host of heaven ! O earth ! What e  
 And shall I couple hell ?—O fye !—Hold, hold, my he!

[6] The word here used was more probably designed by a metaphor either of the poet or transcriber, for *hebenon*, that is, *henbane* ; of which most common kind (*hyoscyamus niger*) is certainly narcotic, and perhaps taken in a considerable quantity, might prove poisonous. Galen calls it in the third degree ; by which in this, as well as opium, he seems to mean an actual coldness, but the power it has of benumbing the faculties.

[7] *Unhousel'd*, is without having received the sacrament. *Disappointed*, Dr. Johnson observes, is the same as *unappointed*, and may be properly plain'd *unprepared*. *Unanel'd* is without extreme unction. STEEV

[8] It was ingeniously hinted to me by a very learned lady, that this seems to belong to Hamlet, in whose mouth it is a proper and natural exclamation ; and who, according to the practice of the stage, may be supposed to interrupt so long a speech. JOHNSON.

[9] For *lewdness*. STEEVENS.

[\*] Fire that is no longer seen when the light of morning approaches. STEEV

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,  
 But bear me stiffly up!—Remember thee?  
 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat  
 In this distracted globe.<sup>1</sup> Remember thee?  
 Yea, from the table of my memory  
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,  
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,  
 That youth and observation copied there;  
 And thy commandment all alone shall live  
 Within the book and volume of my brain,  
 Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven.  
 O most pernicious woman!  
 O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!  
 My tables,—meet it is, I set it down,  
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;  
 At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark: [*Writing.*]  
 So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;  
 It is, *Adieu, adieu! remember me.*  
 I have sworn't.

*Hor.* [*within.*] My lord, my lord,——

*Mar.* [*within.*] Lord Hamlet,——

*Hor.* [*within.*] Heaven secure him!

*Ham.* So be it!

*Mar.* [*within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

*Ham.* Hillo, ho, ho, boy! Come, bird, come.<sup>2</sup>

*Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.*

*Mar.* How is't, my noble lord?

*Hor.* What news, my lord?

*Ham.* O, wonderful!

*Hor.* Good my lord, tell it.

*Ham.* No;

You will reveal it.

*Hor.* Not I, my lord, by heaven.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord.

*Ham.* How say you then; would heart of man once  
 think it?—

But you'll be secret,——

*Hor. Mar.* Ay, by heaven, my lord.

*Ham.* There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all Denmark,  
 But he's an arrant knave.

*Hor.* There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the  
 grave,

---

[1] In this *head*, confused with thought. STEEVENS.  
 [2] This is the call which falconers use to their hawk in the air when  
 they would have him come down to them. HANMER.

To tell us this.

*Ham.* Why, right; you are in the right ;  
And so, without more circumstance at all,  
I hold it fit, that we shake hands, and part :  
You, as your business, and desire, shall point you ;—  
For every man hath business, and desire,  
Such as it is,—and, for my own poor part,  
Look you, I will go pray.

*Hor.* These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

*Ham.* I am sorry they offend you, heartily ; yes,  
'Faith, heartily.

*Hor.* There's no offence, my lord.

*Ham.* Yes, by Saint Patrick,<sup>3</sup> but there is, Horatio,  
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,—  
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you :  
For your desire to know what is between us,  
O'er-master it as you may. And now, good friends,  
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,  
Give me one poor request.

*Hor.* What is't, my lord ?

We will.

*Ham.* Never make known what you have seen to-night.

*Hor. Mar.* My lord, we will not.

*Ham.* Nay, but swear't.

*Hor.* In faith,

My lord, not I.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord, in faith.

*Ham.* Upon my sword.<sup>4</sup>

*Mar.* We have sworn, my lord, already.

*Ham.* Indeed, upon my sword, indeed,

*Ghost.* [*beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Ha, ha, boy ! say'st thou so ? Art thou there,  
true-penny ?

Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—  
Consent to swear.

*Hor.* Propose the oath, my lord.

[3] How the poet comes to make Hamlet swear by St. Patrick, I know not. However, at this time all the northern world had their learning from Ireland ; to which place it had retired, and there flourished under the auspices of this Saint. But it was, I suppose, only said at random ; for he makes Hamlet a student at Wittenberg. WARBURTON.

[4] It was common to swear upon the sword, that is, upon the cross which the old swords always had upon the hilt. JOHNSON.  
Spenser observes that the Irish in his time, 1596, used commonly to swear by their sword. This custom is of the highest antiquity ; having prevailed, as we learn from Lucian, amongst the Scythians. MALONE.



*Ham.* Never to speak of this that you have seen,  
Swear by my sword.

*Ghost.* [*beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* *Hic & ubique?* then we'll shift our ground :—  
Come hither, gentlemen,  
And lay your hands again upon my sword :  
Swear by my sword,

Never to speak of this that you have heard.

*Ghost.* [*beneath.*] Swear by his sword.

*Ham.* Well said, old mole ! canst work i'the earth  
so fast ?

A worthy pioneer !—Once more remove, good friends.

*Hor.* O day and night, but this is wondrous strange.

*Ham.* And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.  
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come ;—

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy !

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,

As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet

To put an antick disposition on,—

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,

With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As, *Well, well, we know* ;—or, *We could, an if we would* ;

—or, *If we list to speak* ;—or, *There be, an if they might* ;—

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me : This do you swear,

So grace and mercy at your most need help you !

*Ghost.* [*beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Rest, rest, perturbed spirit !—So, gentlemen,

With all my love I do commend me to you :

And what so poor a man as Hamlet is

May do, to express his love and friending to you,

God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together ;

And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.

The time is out of joint ;—O cursed spite !

That ever I was born to set it right !

Nay, come, let's go together.

[*Exeunt.*]

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## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in POLONIUS's House. Enter POLONIUS and REYNALDO.*

*Pol.* Give him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo.

*Rey.* I will, my lord.

*Pol.* You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo, Before you visit him, to make inquiry Of his behaviour.

*Rey.* My lord, I did intend it.

*Pol.* Marry, well said: very well said. Look you, sir, Inquire me first what Danskers<sup>5</sup> are in Paris; And how, and who, what means, and where they keep, What company, at what expence; and finding, By this compassment and drift of question, That they do know my son, come you more nearer Than your particular demands will touch it. Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him; As thus,—*I know his father, and his friends, And, in part, him*;—Do you mark this, Reynaldo?

*Rey.* Ay, very well, my lord.

*Pol.* *And, in part, him*;—*but, you may say, not well: But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild; Addicted so and so*;—and there put on him What forgeries you please: marry, none so rank As may dishonour him; take heed of that; But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips, As are companions noted and most known To youth and liberty.

*Rey.* As gaming, my lord.

*Pol.* Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling, Drabbing:—You may go so far.

*Rey.* My lord, that would dishonour him.

*Pol.* 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge. You must not put another scandal on him, That he is open to incontinency; That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so quaintly, That they may seem the taints of liberty: The flash and out-break of a fiery mind; A savageness in unreclaimed blood,<sup>6</sup>

[5] *Danske* (in Warner's Albion's England) is the ancient name of Denmark. STEEVENS.

[6] Savageness for *wildness*. WARBURTON.

Of general assault.<sup>7</sup> [www.libtool.com.cn](http://www.libtool.com.cn)

*Rey.* But, my good lord,—

*Pol.* Wherefore should you do this ?

*Rey.* Ay, my lord,  
I would know that.

*Pol.* Marry, sir, here's my drift ;  
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant :  
You laying these slight sullies on my son,  
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i'the working,  
Mark you,  
Your party in converse, him you would sound,  
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes,<sup>8</sup>  
The youth, you breathe of, guilty, be assur'd,  
He closes with you in this consequence ;  
*Good sir*, or so ; or *friend*, or *gentleman*,—  
According to the phrase, or the addition,  
Of man, and country.

*Rey.* Very good, my lord.

*Pol.* And then, sir, does he this,—He does—  
What was I about to say ?—By the mass, I was about  
to say something :—Where did I leave ?

*Rey.* At, closes in the consequence.

*Pol.* At, closes in the consequence,—*Ay, marry ;*  
He closes with you thus :—*I know the gentleman ;*  
*I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,*  
*Or then, or then ; with such, or such ; and, as you say,*  
*There was he gaming ; there o'ertook in his rouse ;*  
*There falling out at tennis : or, perchance,*  
*I saw him enter such a house of sale,*  
*(Videlicet, a brothel,) or so forth.—*  
See you now ;

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth :  
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,  
With windlaces, and with assays of bias,  
By indirections find directions out ;  
So, by former lecture and advice,  
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not ?

*Rey.* My lord, I have.

*Pol.* God be wi' you : fare you well.

*Rey.* Good my lord,—

*Pol.* Observe his inclination in yourself.<sup>9</sup>

*Rey.* I shall, my lord.

[7] i. e. Such as youth in general is liable to.      WARBURTON.

[8] Crimes already named.      STEEVENS.

[9] In your own person, not by spies.      JOHNSON.

*Pol.* And let him ply his music.  
*Rey.* Well, my lord.

[*Exit.*

*Enter OPHELIA.*

*Pol.* Farewell!—How now, Ophelia? what's the matter?

*Oph.* O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

*Pol.* With what, in the name of heaven?

*Oph.* My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,  
 Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbrac'd;  
 No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,  
 Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle;<sup>1</sup>  
 Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;  
 And with a look so piteous in purpose,  
 As if he had been loosed out of hell,  
 To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.

*Pol.* Mad for thy love?

*Oph.* My lord, I do not know;

But, truly, I do fear it.

*Pol.* What said he?

*Oph.* He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;  
 Then goes he to the length of all his arm;  
 And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,  
 He falls to such perusal of my face,  
 As he would draw it. Long staid he so;  
 At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,  
 And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—  
 He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound,  
 As it did seem to shatter all his bulk,  
 And end his being: That done, he lets me go;  
 And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,  
 He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;  
 For out o' doors he went without their helps,  
 And, to the last, bended their light on me.

*Pol.* Come, go with me; I will go seek the king.  
 This is the very ecstasy of love;  
 Whose violent property foredoes itself,  
 And leads the will to desperate undertakings,  
 As oft as any passion under heaven,  
 That does afflict our natures. I am sorry,—

What, have you given him any hard words of late?

*Oph.* No, my good lord; but, as you did command,  
 I did repel his letters, and denied  
 His access to me.

[1] *Down-gyved* means, hanging down like the loose cincture which confines the fetters round the ankles. STEVENS.

*Pol.* That hath made him mad.  
 I am sorry, that with better heed and judgment,  
 I had not quoted him.<sup>2</sup> I fear'd, he did but trifle,  
 And meant to wreck thee ; but, beshrew my jealousy !  
 It seems, it is as proper to our age  
 To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,  
 As it is common for the younger sort  
 To lack discretion.<sup>3</sup> Come, go we to the king :  
 This must be known ; which, being kept close, might  
 move  
 More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.<sup>4</sup>  
 Come. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

*A Room in the Castle. Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and Attendants.*

*King.* Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern !  
 Moreover that we much did long to see you,  
 The need, we have to use you, did provoke  
 Our hasty sending. Something have you heard  
 Of Hamlet's transformation ; so I call it,  
 Since not the exterior nor the inward man  
 Resembles that it was : What it should be,  
 More than his father's death, that thus hath put him  
 So much from the understanding of himself,  
 I cannot dream of : I entreat you both,  
 That,—being of so young days brought up with him :  
 And, since, so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,—  
 That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court  
 Some little time : so by your companies  
 To draw him on to pleasures ; and to gather,  
 So much as from occasion you may glean,  
 Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,  
 That, open'd, lies within our remedy.  
*Queen.* Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you ;  
 And, sure I am, two men there are not living,

[2] To quote, is I believe, to reckon, to take an account of, to take the quotient or result of a computation. JOHNSON.

[3] This is not the remark of a weak man. The vice of age is too much suspicion. Men long accustomed to the wiles of life cast commonly beyond themselves, let their cunning go farther than reason can attend it. This is always the fault of a little mind, made artful by long commerce with the world. JOHNSON.

[4] This must be made known to the king, for (being kept secret) the hiding Hamlet's love might occasion more mischief to us from him and the queen, than the uttering or revealing of it will occasion hate and resentments from Hamlet. JOHNSON.

To whom he more adheres. If it will please you  
To show us ~~so much gentry, and good will,~~  
As to expend your time with us a while,  
For the supply and profit of our hope,  
Your visitation shall receive such thanks  
As fits a king's remembrance.

*Ros.* Both your majesties  
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,  
Put your dread pleasures more into command  
Than to entreaty.

*Guil.* But we both obey ;  
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,  
To lay our service freely at your feet,  
To be commanded,

*King.* Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern.

*Queen.* Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosencrantz:  
And I beseech you instantly to visit  
My too much changed son.—Go, some of you,  
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

*Guil.* Heavens make our presence, and our practices,  
Pleasant and helpful to him !

*Queen.* Ay, amen.

[*Exeunt* ROS. GUIL. and some Attendants.]

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,  
Are joyfully return'd.

*King.* Thou still hast been the father of good news.

*Pol.* Have I; my lord ? Assure you, my good liege,  
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,  
Both to my God, and to my gracious king :  
And I do think, (or else this brain of mine  
Hunts not the trail<sup>o</sup> of policy so sure  
As it hath us'd to do) that I have found  
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

*King.* O, speak of that ; that do I long to hear.

*Pol.* Give first admittance to the ambassadors ;  
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.<sup>o</sup>

*King.* Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found  
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

*Queen.* I doubt, it is no other but the main ;  
His father's death, and our o'er-hasty marriage.

[<sup>o</sup>] The trail is the course of an animal pursued by the scent. JOHNSON.

[<sup>o</sup>] The fruit, the dessert after the meat. JOHNSON.

*Re-enter* POLONIUS, with VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.

*King.* Well, we shall sift him.—Welcome, my good friends!

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

*Vol.* Most fair return of greetings, and desires.

Upon our first, he sent out to suppress  
His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd  
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;  
But, better look'd into, he truly found  
It was against your highness: Whereat griev'd,—  
That so his sickness, age, and impotence  
Was falsely borne in hand,—sends out arrests  
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;  
Receives rebuke from Norway; and, in fine,  
Makes vow before his uncle, never more  
To give the assay of arms against your majesty.  
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,  
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee;  
And his commission, to employ those soldiers,  
So levied as before, against the Polack:  
With an entreaty, herein further shown,

[*Gives a paper.*]

That it might please you to give quiet pass  
Through your dominions for this enterprize;  
On such regards of safety, and allowance,  
As therein are set down.

*King.* It likes us well;

And, at our more consider'd time, we'll read,  
Answer, and think upon this business.

Mean time, we thank you for your well-took labour:  
Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together:<sup>7</sup>

Most welcome home! [*Exeunt* VOLT. and COR.]

*Pol.* This business is well ended.

My liege, and madam, to expostulate<sup>8</sup>  
What majesty should be, what duty is,  
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,  
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.  
Therefore,—since brevity is the soul of wit,  
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,—  
I will be brief: Your noble son is mad:  
Mad call I it: for, to define true madness,  
What is't, but to be nothing else but mad:  
But let that go.

[7] The king's intemperance is never suffered to be forgotten. JOHNSON

[8] To expostulate for to inquire or discuss. WARBURTON.

*Queen.* More matter, with less art.

*Pol.* Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.

That he is mad, 'tis true : 'tis true, 'tis pity ;  
And pity 'tis, 'tis true : a foolish figure,  
But farewell it, for I will use no art.

Mad let us grant him then : and now remains,  
That we find out the cause of this effect ;  
Or, rather say, the cause of this defect ;  
For this effect, defective, comes by cause :  
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.  
Perpend.

I have a daughter ; have, whilst she is mine ;  
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,  
Hath given me this : Now gather, and surmise.

—*To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautifed* ~~Ophelia,~~

*Ophelia,*—  
That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase ; *beautifed* is a vile  
phrase ; but you shall hear.— Thus :

*In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.—*

*Queen.* Came this from Hamlet to her ?

*Pol.* Good madam, stay awhile ; I will be faithful.—

*Doubt thou, the stars are fire ;* [Reads.

*Doubt, that the sun doth move :*

*Doubt truth to be a liar ;*

*But never doubt, I love.*

*O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers ; I have not  
art to reckon my groans : but that I love thee best, O  
most best, believe it. Adieu.*

*Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst  
this machine is to him, Hamlet.*

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me :  
And more above,<sup>9</sup> hath his solicitings,  
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,  
All given to mine ear.

*King.* But how hath she  
Receiv'd his love ?

*Pol.* What do you think of me ?

*King.* As of a man faithful and honourable.

*Pol.* I would fain prove so. But what might you think,  
When I had seen this hot love on the wing,  
(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,  
Before my daughter told me,) what might you,

[9] Moreover, besides. JOHNSON.



Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,  
 If I had play'd the desk, or table-book ;<sup>2</sup>  
 Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb ;  
 Or look'd upon this love with idle sight ;  
 What might you think ? no, I went round to work,<sup>2</sup>  
 And my young mistress thus did I bespeak ;  
*Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy sphere ;*  
*This must not be :* and then I precepts gave her,  
 That she should lock herself from his resort,  
 Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.  
 Which done, she took the fruits of my advice ;<sup>3</sup>  
 And he, repulsed, (a short tale to make,)  
 Fell into a sadness ; then into a fast ;  
 Thence to a watch ; thence into a weakness ;  
 Thence to a lightness ; and, by this declension,  
 Into the madness wherein now he raves,  
 And all we mourn for.<sup>4</sup>

*King.* Do you think, 'tis this ?

*Queen.* It may be, very likely.

*Pol.* Hath there been such a time, (I'd fain know that,)  
 That I have positively said, 'Tis so,  
 When it prov'd otherwise ?

*King.* Not that I know.

*Pol.* Take this from this, if this be otherwise :

[*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*]

If circumstances lead me, I will find  
 Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed  
 Within the centre.

*King.* How may we try it further ?

*Pol.* You know, sometimes he walks four hours to-  
 gether,  
 Here in the lobby.

*Queen.* So he does, indeed.

*Pol.* At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him :  
 Be you and I behind an arras then ;  
 Mark the encounter : if he love her not,  
 And be not from his reason fallen thereon,  
 Let me be no assistant for a state,  
 But keep a farm, and carters.

*King.* We will try it.

[1] If I had locked up this secret in my own breast, as closely as it were confined in a desk or table-book. MALONE.

[2] Roundly, without reserve. So Polonius, in the third act,  
 "—be round with him." STEEVENS.

[3] She took the fruits of advice when she obeyed advice, the advice was then made fruitful. JOHNSON.

[4] See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

*Enter HAMLET, reading.*

*Queen.* But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

*Pol.* Away, I do beseech you, both away ;

I'll board him presently :—O, give me leave.—

*[Exit King, Queen, and Attendants.]*

How does my good lord Hamlet ?

*Ham.* Well, God-'a-mercy.

*Pol.* Do you know me, my lord ?

*Ham.* Excellent well ; you are a fishmonger.

*Pol.* Not I, my lord.

*Ham.* Then I would you were so honest a man.

*Pol.* Honest, my lord ?

*Ham.* Ay, sir ; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

*Pol.* That's very true, my lord.

*Ham.* For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god, kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter ?

*Pol.* I have, my lord.

*Ham.* Let her not walk i'the sun : conception is a blessing ; but as your daughter may conceive,—friend, look to't.

*Pol.* How say you by that ? *[Aside.]* Still harping on my daughter :—yet he knew me not at first ; he said, I was a fishmonger : He is far gone, far gone : and, truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love ; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord ?

*Ham.* Words, words, words !

*Pol.* What is the matter, my lord ?

*Ham.* Between who ?

*Pol.* I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

*Ham.* Slanders, sir : for the satirical rogue says here, that old men have grey beards ; that their faces are wrinkled ; their eyes purging thick amber, and plum-tree gum ; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams : All of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down ; for yourself, sir, shall be as old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

*Pol.* Though this be madness, yet there's method in it. *[Aside.]* Will you walk out of the air, my lord ?

*Ham.* Into my grave ?

*Pol.* Indeed, that is out o'the air.—How pregnant sometimes his replies are ! a happiness that often mad-

ness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

*Ham.* You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal ; except my life, except my life, except my life.

*Pol.* Fare you well, my lord.

*Ham.* These tedious old fools !

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Pol.* You go to seek the lord Hamlet ; there he is.

*Ros.* God save you, sir ! [*To POLONIUS. Ex. POL.*]

*Guil.* My honour'd lord !—

*Ros.* My most dear lord !—

*Ham.* My excellent good friends ! How dost thou, Guildenstern ?—Ah, Rosencrantz ! Good lads, how do ye both ?

*Ros.* As the indifferent children of the earth.

*Guil.* Happy, in that we are not overhappy :

On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

*Ham.* Nor the soles of her shoe ?

*Ros.* Neither, my lord.

*Ros.* Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours ?

*Guil.* 'Faith, her privates we.

*Ham.* In the secret parts of fortune ? O, most true ; she is a strumpet. What news ?

*Ros.* None, my lord ; but that the world's grown honest.

*Ham.* Then is dooms-day near : But your news is not true. Let me question more in particular : What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither ?

*Guil.* Prison, my lord !

*Ham.* Denmark's a prison.

*Ros.* Then is the world one.

*Ham.* A goodly one ; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons ; Denmark being one o'the worst.

*Ros.* We think not so, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, then 'tis none to you ; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so : to me it is a prison.

*Ros.* Why, then your ambition makes it one : 'tistoo narrow for your mind.

*Ham.* O God ! I could be bounded in a nut-shell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

*Guil.* Which dreams, indeed, are ambition ; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

*Ham.* A dream itself is but a shadow.

*Ros.* Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

*Ham.* Then are our beggars, bodies ; and our monarchs, and outstretch'd heroes, the beggars' shadows : \* Shall we to the court ? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

*Ros. Guil.* We'll wait upon you.

*Ham.* No such matter : I will not sort you with the rest of my servants : for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore ?

*Ros.* To visit you, my lord ; no other occasion.

*Ham.* Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks ; but I thank you : and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny. Were you not sent for ? Is it your own inclining ? Is it a free visitation ? Come, come, deal justly with me : come, come ; nay, speak.

*Guil.* What should we say, my lord ?

*Ham.* Any thing—but to the purpose. You were sent for ; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour : I know, the good king and queen have sent for you.

*Ros.* To what end, my lord ?

*Ham.* That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no ?

*Ros.* What say you ?

[To GUILD.]

*Ham.* Nay, then I have an eye of you : <sup>s</sup> [Aside.]—if you love me, hold not off.

*Guil.* My lord, we were sent for.

*Ham.* I will tell you why ; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king

[4] Shakspeare seems here to design a ridicule of those declamations against wealth and greatness, that seem to make happiness consist in poverty. JOHNS. [5] I have a glimpse of your meaning. STEEV.

and queen moult no feather. I have of late\* (but, wherefore, I know not,) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises : and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a steril promontory ; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'er-hanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man ! how noble in reason ! how infinite in faculties ! in form, and moving, how express and admirable ! in action, how like an angel ! in apprehension, how like a god ! the beauty of the world ! the paragon of animals ! and yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust † man delights not me, nor woman neither ; though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

*Ros.* My lord, there is no such stuff in my thoughts.

*Ham.* Why did you laugh then, when I said *Man delights not me* ?

*Ros.* To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten<sup>7</sup> entertainment the players shall receive from you ; we coted<sup>8</sup> them on the way, and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

*Ham.* He that plays the king, shall be welcome ; his majesty shall have tribute of me : the adventurous knight shall use his foil, and target : the lover shall not sigh gratis : the humorous man shall end his part in peace : the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o'the sere :<sup>9</sup> and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't.—What players are they ?

*Ros.* Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

*Ham.* How chances it, they travel ? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

*Ros.* I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

*Ham.* Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city ? Are they so follow'd ?

[6] This is an admirable description of a rooted melancholy sprung from thickness of blood ; and artfully imagined to hide the true cause of his disorder from the penetration of these two friends, who were set over him as spies. WARBURTON.

[7] Sparing ; like the entertainments given in Lent. STEEVENS.

[8] To cote is to overtake. STEEVENS

[9] Those who are asthmatical, and to whom laughter is most uneasy. This is the case, as I am told, with those whose lungs are tickled by the sere or serum. STEEVENS.

*Ros.* No, indeed, they are not.

*Ham.* How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

*Ros.* Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: But there is, sir, an aiery of children, little eyases,<sup>1</sup> that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for't: these are now the fashion; and so berattle the common stages, (so they call them) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither.

*Ham.* What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they escoted?<sup>2</sup> Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing?<sup>3</sup> will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like, if their means are no better) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

*Ros.* 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre them on to controversy:<sup>4</sup> there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

*Ham.* Is it possible?

*Guil.* O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

*Ham.* Do the boys carry it away?

*Ros.* Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.<sup>5</sup>

*Ham.* It is not very strange: for my uncle is king of Denmark;<sup>6</sup> and those, that would make mouths at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. [*Flourish of trumpets within.*]

*Guil.* There are the players.

*Ham.* Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands. Come then: the appurtenance of welcome is

[1] See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

[2] Paid. From the French *escot*; a shot or reckoning. JOHNSON.

[3] *Quality*—profession. Will they follow the *profession* of players no longer than they keep the voices of boys? JOHNSON.

[4] To provoke any animal to rage, is to *tarre* him. JOHNSON.

[5] They not only carry away the world, but the world-bearer too: Alluding to the story of Hercules's relieving Atlas. Warburton.

The allusion may be to the Globe playhouse on the Bankside, the sign of which was *Hercules carrying the Globe*. STEEVENS.

[6] I do not wonder that the new players have so suddenly risen to reputation, my uncle supplies another example of the facility with which honour is conferred upon new claimants. JOHNSON.

fashion and ceremony ; let me comply with you in this garb ; lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome : but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceived.

*Guil.* In what, my dear lord ?

*Ham.* I am but mad north-north-west : when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* Well be with you, gentlemen !

*Ham.* Hark you, Guildenstern ;—and you too ;—at each ear a hearer : That great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

*Ros.* Happily, he's the second time come to them ; for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

*Ham.* I will prophecy, he comes to tell me of the players ; Mark it.—You say right, sir : o'Monday morning ; 'twas then, indeed.

*Pol.* My lord, I have news to tell you.

*Ham.* My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

*Pol.* The actors are come hither, my lord.

*Ham.* Buz, buz !

*Pol.* Upon mine honour,—

*Ham.* Then came each actor on his ass,—

*Pol.* The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited : Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.<sup>7</sup> For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.

*Ham.* O *Jephthah*, judge of *Israel*,—what a treasure hadst thou !

*Pol.* What a treasure had he, my lord ?

*Ham.* Why—*One fair daughter, and no more,  
The which he loved passing well.*

*Pol.* Still on my daughter.

[*Aside.*

*Ham.* Am I not i' the right, old *Jephthah* ?

*Pol.* If you call me *Jephthah*, my lord, I have a daughter, that I love passing well.

*Ham.* Nay, that follows not.

*Pol.* What follows then, my lord ?

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[7] The tragedies of Seneca were translated into English by Thomas Newton. One comedy of Plautus, the *Menachmi*, was likewise translated and published in 1595. STEEVENS.

*Ham.* Why, *As by lot, God wot,*<sup>8</sup> and then, you know, *It came to pass. As most like it was,*—The first row of the pious chanson will show you more ;<sup>9</sup> for look, my abridgment comes.

*Enter Four or Five Players.*

You are welcome, masters ; welcome, all :—I am glad to see thee well :—welcome, good friends.—O, old friend ! Why, thy face is valanced<sup>1</sup> since I saw thee last ; Com'st thou to beard me in Denmark ?—What ! my young lady and mistress ! By'r-lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven, than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine.<sup>2</sup> Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring.<sup>3</sup>—Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see : We'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality ; come, a passionate speech.

*1 Play.* What speech, my lord ?

*Ham.* I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted ; or, if it was, not above once : for the play, I remember, pleased not the million : 'twas caviare to the general ;<sup>4</sup> but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments, in such matters, cried in the top of mine,) an excellent play ; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said, there were no sallets in the lines, to make the matter savoury ; nor no matter in the phrase, that might indite the author of affection ;<sup>5</sup> but called it, an honest method,<sup>6</sup> as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved : 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido ; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter : If it live in your memory, begin at this line ; let me see, let me see ;—

[8] The old song from which these quotations are taken, is printed in the 2d and 3d edit. of Dr. Percy's *Reliques of ancient English poetry*. STEEV.

[9] The *pious chansons* were a kind of Christmas carols, containing some scriptural history thrown into loose rhymes, and sung about the streets by the common people when they went that season to solicit alms. STEEV.

[1] Fringed with a beard. The valance is the fringes or drapery hanging round the tester of a bed. MALONE.

[2] A *chioppine* is a high shoe or clog, worn by the Italians. STEEVENS.

[3] That is, *cracked too much for use*. This is said to a young player who acted the parts of women. JOHNSON.

[4] The caviare is the spawn of the sterlett, a fish of the sturgeon kind, which seldom grows above thirty inches long. It is found in many of the rivers of Russia, but the Volga produces the best and in the greatest plenty. STEEVENS.

[5] Convict the author of being a fantastical affected-writer. STEEV.

[6] *Honest for chaste*. WARBURTON.



*The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,—*  
 'tis not so ; it begins with Pyrrhus.—  
*The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,*  
*Black as his purpose, did the night resemble*  
*When he lay couch'd in the ominous horse,*  
*Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd*  
*With heraldry more dismal ; head to foot*  
*Now is he total gules ;<sup>7</sup> horridly trick'd*  
*With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons ;*  
*Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,*  
*That lend a tyrannous and a damned light*  
*To their lord's murder : Roasted in wrath, and fire,*  
*And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,*  
*With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus*  
*Old grandsire Priam seeks ;—So proceed you.*  
*Pol.* 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken ; with good ac-  
 cent, and good discretion.

1 Play. Anon he finds him  
*Striking too short at Greeks ; his antique sword,*  
*Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,*  
*Refugnant to command : Unequal match'd,*  
*Pyrrhus at Priam drives ; in rage, strikes wide ;*  
*But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword*  
*The unnerv'd father falls. Then senseless Ilium,*  
*Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top*  
*Stoops to his base ; and with a hideous crash*  
*Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear : for, lo ! his sword*  
*Which was declining on the milky head*  
*Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick :*  
*So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood ;*  
*And, like a neutral to his will and matter,*  
*Did nothing.*  
*But, as we often see, against some storm,*  
*A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,*  
*The bold winds speechless, and the orb below*  
*As hush as death : anon the dreadful thunder*  
*Doth rend the region : So, after Pyrrhus' pause,*  
*A roused vengeance sets him new a work ;*  
*And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall*  
*On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,*  
*With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword*  
*Now falls on Priam.—*  
*Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune ! All you gods,*

[7] Gules is a term in the barbarous jargon peculiar to heraldry, and signifies red. STEEVENS.

*In general synod, take away her power ;  
Break all the spokes and fellices from her wheel,  
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,  
As low as to the fiends !*

*Pol.* This is too long.

*Ham.* It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—  
*Pr'ythee*, say on :—He's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry,  
or he sleeps :—say on : come to Hecuba.

*1 Play.* *But who, ah wo ! had seen the mobled queen ?*—

*Ham.* The mobled queen ?

*Pol.* That's good ; mobled queen is good.

*1 Play.* *Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the  
flames*

*With bisson rheum :<sup>9</sup> a clout upon that head,  
Where late the diadem stood ; and, for a robe,  
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,  
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up ;  
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,  
'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd :  
But if the gods themselves did see her then,  
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport  
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs ;  
The instant burst of clamour that she made,  
(Unless things mortal move them not at all,)  
Would have made milch the burning eye of heaven,  
And passion in the gods.*

*Pol.* Look, whether he has not turned his colour, and  
has tears in's eyes.—*Pr'ythee*, no more.

*Ham.* 'Tis well ; I'll have thee speak out the rest of  
this soon.—Good my lord, will you see the players well  
bestowed ? Do you hear, let them be well used ; for they  
are the abstract, and brief chronicles, of the time.  
After your death you were better have a bad epitaph,  
than their ill report while you live.

*Pol.* My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

*Ham.* Odd's bodikin, man, much better : Use every  
man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping ? Use  
them after your own honour and dignity : The less they  
deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

*Pol.* Come, sirs. [*Exit POL. with some of the Players.*]

[8] *Mobled* or *mabled* signifies veiled. So Sandys, speaking of the Turkish women, says, "their heads and faces are mabled in fine linen, that no more is to be seen of them than their eyes." *Travels*. WARBURTON.

The ordinary morning head dress of ladies has always been called a *mob cap*. STEEVENS.

[9] *Bisson*, or *boesen*, i. e. blind. A word still in use in some parts of the north of England. STEEVENS.

*Ham.* Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow.—Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the murder of Gonzago?

*1 Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* We'll have it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in't? could you not?

*1 Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Very well.—Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit Player.*—My good friends, [*to Ros. and GUIL.*] I'll leave you till night: You are welcome to Elsinore.

*Ros.* Good my lord! [*Exc. Ros. and GUIL.*]

*Ham.* Ay, so, God be wi' you:—Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous, that this player here,

But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

Could force his soul so to his own conceit,

That from her working, all his visage wann'd;

Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,<sup>1</sup>

A broken voice, and his whole function suiting

With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!

For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,

That he should weep for her? What would he do,

Had he the motive and the cue for passion,

That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,

And cleave the general ear<sup>2</sup> with horrid speech

Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,

Confound the ignorant; and amaze, indeed,

The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,

Like John a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,

And can say nothing; no, not for a king,

Upon whose property, and most dear life,

A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?

Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?

Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?

Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i'the throat,

As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?

Ha!

[1] The word *aspect* (as Mr. Farmer rightly observes) was in Shakspeare's time accented on the second syllable. STEEVENS.

[2] The ear of all mankind. So before,—*Caviare to the general*, that is, to the multitude. JOHNSON.

Why, I should take it : for it cannot be,  
 But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall  
 To make oppression bitter ; or, ere this,  
 I should have fatted all the region kites  
 With this slave's offal : Bloody, bawdy villain !  
 Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain !  
 Why, what an ass am I ? This is most brave ;  
 That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,  
 Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,  
 Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,  
 And fall a cursing, like a very drab,  
 A scullion !  
 Fye upon't ! foh ! About my brains !<sup>4</sup> Humph ! I have  
 heard,

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,  
 Have by the very cunning of the scene  
 Been struck so to the soul, that presently  
 They have proclaim'd their malefactions ;  
 For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak  
 With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players  
 Play something like the murder of my father,  
 Before mine uncle ; I'll observe his looks ;  
 I'll tent him<sup>5</sup> to the quick ; if he do blench,<sup>6</sup>  
 I know my course. The spirit, that I have seen,  
 May be a devil ; and the devil hath power  
 To assume a pleasing shape ; yea, and, perhaps,  
 Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,  
 (As he is very potent with such spirits.)  
 Abuses me to damn me : I'll have grounds  
 More relative than this : The play's the thing,  
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. [Exit.

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Castle. Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.*

*King.* And can you, by no drift of conference  
 Get from him, why he puts on this confusion ;  
 Grating so harshly all his days of quiet  
 With turbulent and dangerous lunacy ?

*Ros.* He does confess, he feels himself distracted ;

[3] Kindless—unnatural. JOHNSON.

[4] *Wits, to your work. Brain, go about the present business* JOHNSON.

[5] *Tent him*—search his wounds. [6] *Blench*, i. e. shrink. JOHNSON.

But from what cause he will by no means speak.

*Guil.* Nor do we find him forward to be sounded ;  
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,  
When we would bring him on to some confession  
Of his true state.

*Queen.* Did he receive you well ?

*Ros.* Most like a gentleman.

*Guil.* But with much forcing of his disposition.

*Ros.* Niggard of question ; but, of our demands,  
Most free in his reply.

*Queen.* Did you assay him  
To any pastime ?

*Ros.* Madam, it so fell out, that certain players  
We o'er-raught on the way :<sup>7</sup> of these we told him ;  
And there did seem in him a kind of joy  
To hear of it : They are about the court ;  
And, as I think, they have already order  
This night to play before him.

*Pol.* 'Tis most true :

And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties,  
To hear and see the matter.

*King.* With all my heart ; and it doth much content me  
To hear him so inclin'd.

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,  
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

*Ros.* We shall, my lord. [*Exe. ROS. and GUIL.*]

*King.* Sweet Gertrude, leave us too :  
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither ;  
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here  
Affront Ophelia :<sup>8</sup>

Her father, and myself (lawful espials,)  
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,  
We may of their encounter frankly judge ;  
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,  
If't be the great affliction of his love, or no,  
That thus he suffers for.

*Queen.* I shall obey you :—

And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,  
That your good beauties be the happy cause  
Of Hamlet's wildness : so shall I hope, your virtues  
Will bring him to his wonted way again,  
To both your honours.

*Oph.* Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit Queen.*]

[7] *O'er-raught*—is over-reached, that is, over-took. JOHNSON.

[8] *To affront*—is only to meet directly. JOHNSON.

*Pol.* Ophelia, walk you here :—Gracious, so please you,  
 We will bestow ourselves:—Read on this book; [*To OPH.*  
 That show of such an exercise may colour  
 Your loneliness.—We are oft to blame in this,—  
 'Tis too much prov'd,—that, with devotion's visage,  
 And pious action, we do sugar o'er  
 The devil himself.

*King.* O, 'tis too true ! how smart  
 A lash that speech doth give my conscience !  
 The harlot's cheek, beautied with plast'ring art,  
 Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,<sup>9</sup>  
 Than is my deed to my most painted word :  
 O heavy burden ! [*Aside.*

*Pol.* I hear him coming ; lets withdraw, my lord.  
 [*Exeunt King and POL.*

*Enter HAMLET.*<sup>1</sup>

*Ham.* To be, or not to be, that is the question :—  
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer  
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune ;  
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
 And, by opposing, end them ?—To die,—to sleep,—  
 No more ;—and, by a sleep, to say we end  
 The heart-ach, and the thousand natural shocks  
 That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation  
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die ;—to sleep ;—  
 To sleep ! perchance to dream ;—ay, there's the rub ;  
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,  
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,<sup>2</sup>  
 Must give us pause : There's the respect,  
 That makes calamity of so long life :  
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
 The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,  
 The insolence of office, and the spurns  
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,  
 When he himself might his quietus<sup>3</sup> make  
 With a bare bodkin ?<sup>4</sup> who would fardels bear,  
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life ;<sup>5</sup>  
 But that the dread of something after death,—

[9] That is, compared with the thing that helps it. JOHNSON.

[1] See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

[2] *Mortal coil*—turmoil, bustle. Warburton.

[3] *Quietus*—the term for a sheriff's acquittance. Steevens.

[4] *Bodkin*—the ancient term for a small dagger. Steevens.

[5] *To grunt*, is the true reading, but can scarcely be borne by modern ears. JOHNSON.

The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn  
No traveller returns,—puzzles the will ;  
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,  
Than fly to others that we know not of ?

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,  
And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought ;  
And enterprizes of great pith and moment,  
With this regard, their currents turn awry,  
And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now !  
The fair Ophelia :—Nymph, in thy orisons  
Be all my sins remember'd.<sup>6</sup>

*Oph.* Good my lord,

How does your honour for this many a day ?

*Ham.* I humbly thank you ; well.

*Oph.* My lord, I have remembrances of yours,  
That I have longed long to re-deliver ;

I pray you, now receive them.

*Ham.* No, not I ;

I never gave you aught.

*Oph.* My honour'd lord, you know right well, you did ;  
And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd  
As made the things more rich : their perfume lost,  
Take these again ; for to the noble mind,  
Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.  
There, my lord.

*Ham.* Ha, ha ! are you honest ?

*Oph.* My lord ?

*Ham.* Are you fair ?

*Oph.* What means your lordship ?

*Ham.* That if you be honest, and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty.<sup>7</sup>

*Oph.* Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty ?

*Ham.* Ay, truly ; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness ; this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

*Oph.* Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

[6] This is a touch of nature. Hamlet, at the sight of Ophelia, does not immediately recollect, that he is to personate madness, but makes her an address grave and solemn, such as the foregoing meditation excited in his thoughts. JOHNSON.

[7] The true reading seems to be this, " If you be honest and fair, you should admit your honesty to no discourse with your beauty." This is the sense evidently required by the process of the conversation. JOHNSON.

*Ham.* You should not have believed me : for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it : I loved you not.

*Oph.* I was the more deceived.

*Ham.* Get thee to a nunnery ; Why would'st thou be a breeder of sinners ? I am myself indifferent honest ; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better, my mother had not borne me : I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious ; with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in : What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven ? We are arrant knaves, all ; believe none of us : Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father ?

*Oph.* At home, my lord.

*Ham.* Let the doors be shut upon him ; that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

*Oph.* O, help him, you sweet heavens !

*Ham.* If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry ; Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery ; farewell : Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool ; for wise men know well enough, what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go ; and quickly too. Farewell.

*Oph.* Heavenly powers, restore him !

*Ham.* I have heard of your paintings too, well enough ; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another : You jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance :<sup>8</sup> Go to ; I'll no more of't ; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages : those that are married already, all but one, shall live ; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [Exit.

*Oph.* O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown !  
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword ;  
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,<sup>9</sup>  
The observ'd of all observers ! quite, quite down !  
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,  
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,  
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,  
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh ;  
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth,

[8] You mistake by *wanton* affectation, and pretend to mistake by *ignorance*. JOHNSON.

[9] The model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves. JOHNSON.



Blasted with ecstasy :<sup>1</sup> O, woe is me !  
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see !

*Re-enter King and POLONIUS.*

*King.* Love ! his affections do not that way tend ;  
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,  
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,  
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood ;  
And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the disclose,  
Will be some danger : Which for to prevent,  
I have, in quick determination,  
Thus set it down ; He shall with speed to England,  
For the demand of our neglected tribute :  
Haply, the seas, and countries different,  
With variable objects, shall expel  
This something-settled matter in his heart ;  
Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus  
From fashion of himself. What think you on't ?

*Pol.* It shall do well. But yet I do believe,  
The origin and commencement of his grief  
Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia ?  
You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said ;  
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please ;  
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,  
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him  
To show his griefs ; let her be round with him ;  
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear  
Of all their conference : If she find him not,  
To England send him ; or confine him, where  
Your wisdom best shall think.

*King.* It shall be so :  
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II.

*A Hall in the same. Enter HAMLET, and certain Players.*

*Ham.* Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it  
to you, trippingly on the tongue : but if you mouth it, as  
many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier  
spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with  
your hand, thus ; but use all gently : for in the very  
torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your  
passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that

[1] The word *ecstasy* was anciently used to signify some degree of alienation of mind. STEEVENS.

may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings ;<sup>1</sup> who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise : I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant ; it out-herods Herod :<sup>3</sup> Pray you, avoid it.

1 *Play*. I warrant your honour.

*Ham*. Be not too tame neither ; but let your own discretion be your tutor : suit the action to the word, the word to the action ; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature : for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature ; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure.<sup>4</sup> Now this, overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve ; the censure of which one, must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players, that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely,<sup>5</sup> that, neither having the accent of christians, nor the gait of christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 *Play*. I hope, we have reformed that indifferently with us.

*Ham*. O, reform it altogether. And let those, that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them :<sup>6</sup> for there be of them, that will themselves

[2] *The groundlings*.—The meaner people then seem to have sat below, as they now sit in the upper gallery, who, not well understanding poetical language, were sometimes gratified by a mimical and mute representation of the drama, previous to the dialogue. JOHNSON.

In our early playhouses, the pit had neither floor nor benches. Hence the term of *groundlings* for those who frequented it STEEVENS.

[3] *Termagant* was a Saracen deity, very clamorous and violent, in the old moralities. PERCY.—The character of *Herod*, in the ancient mysteries, was always a violent one. STEEVENS.

[4] *Resemblance*, as in a print. JOHNSON.

[5] *Profanely* seems to relate, not to the praise which he has mentioned, but to the censure which he is about to utter. Any gross or indelicate language was called *profane*. JOHNSON.

[6] The clown very often addressed the audience, in the middle of the play, and entered into a contest of raillery and sarcasm with such of the audience as chose to engage with him. MALONE.

laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous; and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. [*Exeunt Players.*]

*Enter* POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord? will the king hear this piece of work?

*Pol.* And the queen too, and that presently.

*Ham.* Bid the players make haste.— [*Exit* POLON.

Will you two help to hasten them?

*Both.* Ay, my lord. [*Exeunt* ROS. and GUIL.

*Ham.* What, ho; Horatio!

*Enter* HORATIO.

*Hor.* Here, sweet lord, at your service.

*Ham.* Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man  
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

*Hor.* O, my dear lord,—

*Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter:

For what advancement may I hope from thee,  
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,  
To feed, and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?  
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp;  
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee,<sup>7</sup>  
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?  
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,  
And could of men distinguish her election,  
She hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast been  
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;  
A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards  
Has ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those,  
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,<sup>8</sup>  
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger  
To sound what stop she please: Give me that man  
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him  
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,  
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—  
There is a play to-night before the king;  
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,  
Which I have told thee of my father's death.  
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act a-foot,  
Even with the very comment of thy soul

[7] I believe the sense of *pregnant* in this place is, *quick, ready.* JOHNS.

[8] According to the doctrine of the four humours, *desire* and *confidence* were seated in the blood, and *judgment* in the phlegm, and the due mixture of the humours made a perfect character. JOHNSON.

Observe my uncle : if his occulted guilt  
 Do not itself unkennel in one speech,  
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen ;  
 And my imaginations are as foul  
 As Vulcan's stithy.<sup>9</sup> Give him heedful note :  
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face ;  
 And, after, we will both our judgments join  
 In censure of his seeming.

*Hor.* Well, my lord :

If he steal aught, the whilst this play is playing,  
 And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

*Ham.* They are coming to the play ; I must be idle :  
 Get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS,  
 OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and others.*

*King.* How fares our cousin Hamlet ?

*Ham.* Excellent, i'faith ; of the camelion's dish : I eat  
 the air, promise-crammed : You cannot feed capons so.

*King.* I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet ; these  
 words are not mine.

*Ham.* No, nor mine now.<sup>2</sup> My lord,—you play'd once  
 in the university, you say ? [To POLONIUS.]

*Pol.* That did I, my lord ; and was accounted a good  
 actor.

*Ham.* And what did you enact ?

*Pol.* I did enact Julius Cæsar : I was killed i'the cap-  
 itol ; Brutus killed me.

*Ham.* It was a brute part of him, to kill so capital a  
 calf there.—Be the players ready ?

*Ros.* Ay, my lord ; they stay upon your patience.

*Queen.* Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

*Ham.* No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

*Pol.* O ho ! do you mark that ? [To the King.]

*Ham.* Lady, shall I lie in your lap ?

[Lying down at OPHELIA's feet.]

*Oph.* No, my lord.

*Ham.* I mean, my head upon your lap ?

*Oph.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Do you think, I meant country matters ?

*Oph.* I think nothing, my lord.

*Ham.* That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

*Oph.* What is, my lord ?

[9] *Stithy* is a smith's anvil. JOHNSON.

[1] A man's words, says the proverb, are his own no longer than he keeps  
 them unspoken. JOHNSON.

*Ham.* Nothing.

*Oph.* You are merry, my lord.

*Ham.* Who, I?

*Oph.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* O! your only jig-maker. What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

*Oph.* Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

*Ham.* So long? Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables.<sup>2</sup> O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by'r-lady, he must build churches then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse; whose epitaph is, *For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*<sup>3</sup>

*Trumpets sound. The dumb Show follows.*<sup>4</sup>

*Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers; she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner woos the Queen with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but, in the end, accepts his love. [Exeunt.*

*Oph.* What means this, my lord?

*Ham.* Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.<sup>5</sup>

*Oph.* Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

[2] A suit trimmed with sables was in Shakspeare's time the richest dress worn by men in England; and wherever his scene might happen to be, the customs of his own country were still in his thoughts. By the statute of apparel, 24 Henry VIII. it is ordained, that none under the degree of an earl may use sables. It is well known this fur is not black. MALONE.

[3] Among the country May-games there was an hobby-horse, which when the puritanical humour of those times opposed and discredited the games, was brought by the poets and ballad-makers as an instance of the ridiculous zeal of the sectaries: from these ballads Hamlet quotes a line or two. WARBURTON.

[4] See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

[5] *Miching*—secret, sneaking, lying hid. *Michers* are lurking vagabonds. Our author himself says, of prince Henry, "Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a *micher*? Shall the son of England prove a thief?" WARBURTON.

*Enter PROLOGUE.*

*Ham.* We shall know by this fellow : the players cannot keep counsel ; they'll tell all.

*Oph.* Will he tell us what this show meant ?

*Ham.* Ay, or any show that you'll show him : Be not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.<sup>6</sup>

*Oph.* You are naught, you are naught ; I'll mark the play.

*Pro.* *For us, and for our tragedy,  
Here stooping to your clemency,  
We beg your hearing patiently.*

*Ham.* Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring ?

*Oph.* 'Tis brief, my lord.

*Ham.* As woman's love.

*Enter a King, and a Queen.*

*P. King.* Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round  
Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orb'd ground ;  
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen,  
About the world have times twelve thirties been ;  
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,  
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

*P. Queen.* So many journeys may the sun and moon  
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done !  
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,  
So far from cheer, and from your former state,  
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,  
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must :  
For women fear too much, even as they love ;  
And women's fear and love hold quantity ;  
In neither ought, or in extremity.  
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know ;  
And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so.  
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear ;  
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

*P. King.* 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too ;  
My operant powers their functions leave to do :  
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,  
Honour'd, belov'd ; and, haply, one as kind

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[6] The conversation of Hamlet with Ophelia, which cannot fail to disgust every modern reader, is probably such as was peculiar to the young and fashionable of the age of Shakspeare, which was, by no means, an age of delicacy. The poet is, however, blameable ; for extravagance of thought, not indecency of expression, is the characteristic of madness, at least, of such madness as should be represented on the scene. STEEVENS.

For husband shalt thou——

*P. Queen.* O, confound the rest !  
Such love must needs be treason in my breast :  
In second husband let me be accurst !  
None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

*Ham.* That's wormwood.

*P. Queen.* The instances, that second marriage move,  
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love ;  
A second time I kill my husband dead,  
When second husband kisses me in bed.

*P. King.* I do believe, you think what now you speak ;  
But, what we do determine, oft we break.  
Purpose is but the slave to memory ;  
Of violent birth, but poor validity :  
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree ;  
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.  
Most necessary 'tis, that we forget  
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt :<sup>7</sup>  
What to ourselves in passion we propose,  
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.  
The violence of either grief or joy  
Their own enactures with themselves destroy :<sup>8</sup>  
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament ;  
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.  
This world is not for aye ; nor 'tis not strange,  
That even our loves should with our fortunes change ;  
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,  
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.  
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies ;  
The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies.  
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend :  
For who not needs, shall never lack a friend ;  
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,  
Directly seasons him his enemy.  
But, orderly to end where I begun,—  
Our wills, and fates, do so contrary run,  
That our devices still are overthrown ;  
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own :  
So think thou wilt no second husband wed ;  
But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

*P. Queen.* Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light !

[7] The performance of a resolution, in which only the resolver is interested, is a debt only to himself, which he may therefore remit at pleasure.

[8] What grief or joy enact or determine in their violence, is revoked in their abatement. JOHNSON.

Sport and repose lock from me, day, and night !  
 To desperation turn my trust and hope !  
 An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope !<sup>6</sup>  
 Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,  
 Meet what I would have well, and it destroy !  
 Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,  
 If, once a widow, ever I be wife !

*Ham.* If she should break it now, — [To OPHELIA.]

*P. King.* 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here  
 awhile ;

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile  
 The tedious day with sleep. [Sleeps.]

*P. Queen.* Sleep rock thy brain ;

And never come mischance between us twain ! [Exit.]

*Ham.* Madam, how like you this play ?

*Queen.* The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

*Ham.* O, but she'll keep her word.

*King.* Have you heard the argument ? is there no  
 offence in't ?

*Ham.* No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest ; no of-  
 fence i'the world.

*King.* What do you call the play ?

*Ham.* The mouse-trap.<sup>1</sup> Marry, how ? Tropically.  
 This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna :  
 Gonzago is the duke's name ; his wife, Baptista : you  
 shall see anon ; 'tis a knavish piece of work : But what  
 of that ? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it  
 touches us not : Let the galled jade wince, our withers  
 are unprung. —

*Enter LUCIANUS.*

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

*Oph.* You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

*Ham.* I could interpret between you and your love,  
 if I could see the puppets dallying.<sup>2</sup>

*Oph.* You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

*Ham.* It would cost you a groaning, to take off my edge.

*Oph.* Still better, and worse.

*Ham.* So you mistake your husbands. — Begin, mur-  
 derer ; — leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come ;

[9] May my whole liberty and enjoyment be to live on hermit's fare in a  
 prison. *Anchor* is for *anchoret*. JOHNSON.

[1] He calls it the *mouse-trap*, because it is —  
 " — the thing

" In which he'll catch the conscience of the king." STEEVENS.

[2] This refers to the interpreter who formerly sat on the stage at all  
 motions or puppet shows, and interpreted to the audience. STEEVENS.



—The croaking raven  
Doth bellow for revenge.

*Luc.* Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time  
agreeing ;

Confederate season, else no creature seeing ;  
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,  
With Hecat's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,  
Thy natural magic and dire property,  
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.*]

*Ham.* He poisons him i'the garden for his estate.  
His name's Gonzago : the story is extant, and written  
in very choice Italian : You shall see anon, how the  
murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

*Oph.* The king rises.

*Ham.* What ! frightened with false fire !

*Queen.* How fares my lord ?

*Pol.* Give o'er the play.

*King.* Give me some light :—Away !

*Pol.* Lights, lights, lights !

[*Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO.*]

*Ham.* Why, let the stricken deer go weep,  
The hart ungalled play :  
For some must watch, while some must sleep ;  
Thus runs the world away.—

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers,<sup>4</sup> (if the  
rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me,) with two  
Provincial roses on my razed shoes,<sup>5</sup> get me a fellow-  
ship in a cry of players, sir !<sup>6</sup>

*Hor.* Half a share.<sup>7</sup>

*Ham.* A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,  
This realm dismantled was  
Of Jove himself ; and now reigns here  
A very, very—peacock.<sup>8</sup>

[4] Feathers were much worn on the stage in Shakspeare's time. MAL.

[5] When shoe strings were worn, they were covered where they met in  
the middle, by a ribband, gathered into the form of a rose. So in an old song,  
"Gil-de-roy was a bonny boy,  
Had roses tull his shoos."  
JOHNSON.

Provincial roses—roses of Provence, a beautiful species, much cultivated.  
WARTON.

[6] A troop or company of players. MALONE.

[7] The actors in our author's time had not salaries as at present. The  
whole receipts of each theatre were divided into shares, of which the prop-  
rietors or *house-keepers*, as they were called, had some ; and each actor had  
one or more shares, or part of a share, according to his merit. MALONE.

[8] This word, I take to be of Hamlet's own substituting. The verses  
repeated, seem to be from some old ballad ; in which, rhyme being necessary,  
I doubt not but the last verse ran thus ; *A very, very—jackass.* THEOB.

*Hor.* You might have rhym'd.

*Ham.* O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

*Hor.* Very well, my lord.

*Ham.* Upon the talk of the poisoning,—

*Hor.* I did very well note him.

*Ham.* Ah, ha!—Come, some music; come, the recorders.—

For if the king like not the comedy,

Why then, belike,—he likes it not, perdy.<sup>9</sup>—

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

Come, some music.

*Guil.* Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

*Ham.* Sir, a whole history.

*Guil.* The king, sir,—

*Ham.* Ay, sir, what of him?

*Guil.* Is, in his retirement, marvellous distempered.

*Ham.* With drink, sir?

*Guil.* No, my lord, with choler.

*Ham.* Your wisdom should show itself more richer, to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more choler.

*Guil.* Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

*Ham.* I am tame, sir:—pronounce.

*Guil.* The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

*Ham.* You are welcome.

*Guil.* Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon, and my return, shall be the end of my business.

*Ham.* Sir, I cannot.

*Guil.* What, my lord?

*Ham.* Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: My mother, you say,—

*Ros.* Then thus she says; Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

*Ham.* O wonderful son, that can so astonish a moth-

[9] Hamlet was going on to draw the consequence, when the courtiers entered. JOHNSON.

er !—But there is no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration ; impart.

*Ros.* She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

*Ham.* We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us ?

*Ros.* My lord, you once did love me.

*Ham.* And do still, by these pickers and stealers.<sup>1</sup>

*Ros.* Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper ? You do, surely, but bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

*Ham.* Sir, I lack advancement.

*Ros.* How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark ?

*Ham.* Ay, sir, but, *While the grass grows*,<sup>2</sup>—the proverb is something musty.

*Enter the Players with Recorders.*<sup>3</sup>

O, the recorders :—let me see one.—To withdraw with you :—Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil ?

*Guil.* O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

*Ham.* I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe ?

*Guil.* My lord, I cannot.

*Ham.* I pray you.

*Guil.* Believe me, I cannot.

*Ham.* I do beseech you.

*Guil.* I know no touch of it, my lord.

*Ham.* 'Tis as easy as lying : govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

*Guil.* But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony ; I have not the skill.

*Ham.* Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me ? You would play upon me ; you would seem to know my stops ; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery ; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass : and there is much music, ex-

[1] By these hands. The phrase is taken from our church catechism, where the catechumen in his duty to his neighbour is taught to keep his hands from *picking and stealing*. WHALLEY.

[2] While the grass grows the horse starves.

[3] A large kind of flute. STEEVENS.

cellent voice, in this little organ ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think, I am easier to be played on than a pipe ? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir !

*Pol.* My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

*Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel ?

*Pol.* By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

*Ham.* Methinks, it is like a weasel.

*Pol.* It is backed like a weasel.

*Ham.* Or, like a whale ?

*Pol.* Very like a whale.

*Ham.* Then will I come to my mother by and by.— They fool me to the top of my bent.<sup>4</sup>—I will come by and by.

*Pol.* I will say so.

[*Exit Pol.*]

*Ham.* By and by is easily said.—Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt Ros. Guil. Hor. &c.*]

'Tis now the very witching time of night ;  
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out  
Contagion to this world : Now could I drink hot blood,  
And do such business as the bitter day<sup>5</sup>  
Would quake to look on. Soft ; now to my mother.—  
O, heart, lose not thy nature ; let not ever  
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom :  
Let me be cruel, not unnatural :  
I will speak daggers to her, but use none :  
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites :  
How in my words soever she be shent,<sup>6</sup>  
'To give them seals<sup>7</sup> never, my soul, consent ! [*Exit.*]

### SCENE III.

*A Room in the same. Enter King, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.*

*King.* I like him not ; nor stands it safe with us,  
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you ;

[4] Perhaps a term in archery ; as far as the bow will admit of being bent without breaking. DOUCE.

[5] The day rendered hateful or bitter by the commission of some act of mischief. STEEVENS.

[6] To reprove harshly, to treat with rough language. STEEVENS.

[7] Give them seals—put them in execution. WARBURTON.

I your commission will forthwith despatch,  
 And he to England shall along with you :  
 The terms of our estate may not endure  
 Hazard so near us, as doth hourly grow  
 Out of his lunes.

*Guil.* We will ourselves provide :  
 Most holy and religious fear it is,  
 To keep those many many bodies safe,  
 That live, and feed, upon your majesty.

*Ros.* The single and peculiar life is bound,  
 With all the strength and armour of the mind,  
 To keep itself from 'noyance ; but much more  
 That spirit, upon whose weal depend and rest  
 The lives of many. The cease of majesty  
 Dies not alone ; but, like a gulf, doth draw  
 What's near it, with it : it is a massy wheel,  
 Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,  
 To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things  
 Are mortis'd and adjoin'd ; which, when it falls,  
 Each small annexment, petty consequence,  
 Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone  
 Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

*King.* Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage ;  
 For we will fetters put upon this fear,  
 Which now goes too free-footed.

*Ros. Guil.* We will haste us. [*Exeunt Ros. and GUIL.*]

*Enter POLONIUS.*

*Pol.* My lord, he's going to his mother's closet :  
 Behind the arras I'll convey myself,  
 To hear the process ; I'll warrant, she'll tax him home :  
 And, as you said, and wisely was it said,  
 'Tis meet, that some more audience, than a mother,  
 Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear  
 The speech, of vantage.\* Fare you well, my liege :  
 I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,  
 And tell you what I know.

*King.* Thanks, dear my lord. [*Exit POL.*]  
 O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven ;  
 It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,  
 A brother's murder !—Pray can I not,  
 Though inclination be as sharp as will ;  
 My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent ;  
 And, like a man to double business bound,  
 I stand in pause where I shall first begin,

[8] By some opportunity of secret observation. JOHNSON.

And both neglect. What if this cursed hand  
 Were thicker than itself with brother's blood ?  
 Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens,  
 To wash it white as snow ? Whereto serves mercy,  
 But to confront the visage of offence ?  
 And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force,—  
 To be forestalled, ere we come to fall,  
 Or pardon'd being down ? Then I'll look up ;  
 My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer  
 Can serve my turn ? Forgive me my foul murder !—  
 That cannot be ; since I am still possess'd  
 Of those effects for which I did the murder,  
 My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.  
 May one be pardon'd, and retain the offence ?<sup>2</sup>  
 In the corrupted currents of this world,  
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice ;  
 And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself  
 Buys out the law : But 'tis not so above :  
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies  
 In his true nature ; and we ourselves compell'd,  
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,  
 To give in evidence. What then ? what rests ?  
 Try what repentance can : What can it not ?  
 Yet what can it, when one cannot repent ?<sup>2</sup>  
 O wretched state ! O bosom, black as death !  
 O limed soul ; that struggling to be free,  
 Art more engag'd ! Help, angels, make assay !  
 Bow, stubborn knees ! and, heart, with strings of steel,  
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe ;  
 All may be well ! [Retires and kneels.]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying ;  
 And now I'll do't ;—and so he goes to heaven :  
 And so am I reveng'd ? That would be scann'd :  
 A villain kills my father ; and, for that,  
 I, his sole son, do this same villain send  
 'To heaven.  
 Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.  
 He took my father grossly, full of bread ;  
 With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May ;

[9] He that does not amend what can be amended, retains his offence. The king kept the crown from the right heir. JOHNSON.

[1] What can repentance do for a man that cannot be penitent, for a man who has only a part of penitence, distress of conscience, without the other part, resolution of amendment ? JOHNSON.

And, how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven ?  
 But, in our circumstance and course of thought,  
 'Tis heavy with him : And am I then reveng'd,  
 To take him in the purging of his soul,  
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage ?  
 No.

Up, sword ; and know thou a more horrid hent :<sup>2</sup>  
 When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage ;  
 Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed ;  
 At gaming, swearing ; or about some act  
 That has no relish of salvation in't :  
 Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven :  
 And that his soul may be as damn'd, and black ;  
 As hell, whereto it goes.<sup>3</sup> My mother stays :  
 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [Exit.

*The King rises, and advances.*

*King.* My words fly up, my thoughts remain below :  
 Words, without thoughts, never to heaven go. [Exit.

#### SCENE IV.

*Another Room in the same. Enter Queen and POLONIUS.*

*Pol.* He will come straight. Look, you lay home to  
 him :

Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear with ;  
 And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between  
 Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here :  
 Pray you, be round with him.

*Queen.* I'll warrant you ;  
 Fear me not :—withdraw, I hear him coming.  
 [POLONIUS hides himself.

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Now, mother ; what's the matter ?

*Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

*Ham.* Mother, you have my father much offended.

*Queen.* Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

*Ham.* Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

[2] To *hent* is used by Shakspeare for to *seize*, to *catch*, to *lay hold on*. *Hent* is, therefore, *hold*, *seizure*. *Lay hold on him*, sword, at a more horrid time.

[3] This speech, in which Hamlet, represented as a virtuous character, is not content with taking blood for blood, but contrives damnation for the man that he would punish, is too horrible to be read or to be uttered. JOHNSON.

This speech of Hamlet, as Dr. Johnson observes, is horrible indeed ; yet some moral may be extracted from it, as all his subsequent calamities were owing to this savage refinement of revenge. M. MASON.

*Queen.* Why, how now, Hamlet?

*Ham.* What's the matter now?

*Queen.* Have you forgot me?

*Ham.* No, by the rood, not so:

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;  
And,—would it were not so!—you are my mother.

*Queen.* Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

*Ham.* Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not  
budge;

You go not, till I set you up a glass  
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

*Queen.* What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?  
Help, help, ho!

*Pol.* [*behind.*] What, ho! help!

*Ham.* How now! a rat? [*Draws.*] Dead, for a  
ducat, a dead.

[HAMLET makes a pass through the arras.

*Pol.* [*behind.*] O, I am slain. [*Falls and dies.*

*Queen.* O me, what hast thou done?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not:

Is it the king?

[*Lifts up the arras, and draws forth POLONIUS.*

*Queen.* O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

*Ham.* A bloody deed;—almost as bad, good mother,  
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

*Queen.* As kill a king!

*Ham.* Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

[*To POLONIUS.*

I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune:  
Thou find'st, to be too busy, is some danger.—  
Leave wringing of your hands: Peace; sit you down,  
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,  
If it be made of penetrable stuff;  
If damned custom have not braz'd it so,  
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

*Queen.* What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy  
tongue

In noise so rude against me?

*Ham.* Such an act,

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;  
Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose  
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,  
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows  
As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed  
As from the body of contraction plucks



The very soul ;<sup>4</sup> and sweet religion makes  
 A rhapsody of words : Heaven's face doth glow ;  
 Yea, this solidity and compound mass,  
 With tristful visage, as against the doom,  
 Is thought-sick at the act.

*Queen.* Ah me, what act,  
 That roars so loud, and thunders in the index ?<sup>5</sup>

*Ham.* Look here, upon this picture, and on this ;  
 The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.  
 See, what a grace was seated on this brow :  
 Hyperion's curls ; the front of Jove himself ;  
 An eye like Mars, to threaten and command ;  
 A station like the herald Mercury,<sup>6</sup>  
 New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ;  
 A combination, and a form, indeed,  
 Where every god did seem to set his seal,  
 To give the world assurance of a man :  
 This was your husband.—Look you now, what follows :  
 Here is your husband ; like a mildew'd ear,  
 Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ?  
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,  
 And batten on this moor ? Ha ! have you eyes ?  
 You cannot call it, love ; for, at your age,  
 The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,  
 And waits upon the judgment ; And what judgment  
 Would step from this to this ? Sense, sure, you have,  
 Else, could you not have motion : But, sure, that sense  
 Is apoplex'd : for madness would not err ;  
 Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,  
 But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,  
 To serve in such a difference. What devil was't,  
 That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind ?<sup>7</sup>  
 Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,  
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,  
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense  
 Could not so mope.  
 O shame ! where is thy blush ? Rebellious hell,  
 If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,  
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,  
 And melt in her own fire : proclaim no shame,

[4] *Contraction* for marriage-contract.      **WARBURTON.**

[5] The meaning is, *What is this act, of which the discovery or mention, cannot be made, but with this violence of clamour ?*      **JOHNSON.**

[6] *Station*, in this instance, does not mean the spot where any one is placed but the act of standing.      **STEEVENS.**

[7] That is, I suppose, the same as *Blindman's buff.*      **STEEVENS.**

When the compulsive ardour gives the charge ;  
 Since frost itself as actively doth burn,  
 And reason panders will.

*Queen.* O Hamlet, speak no more :  
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul ;  
 And there I see such black and grained spots,<sup>8</sup>  
 As will not leave their tinct.

*Ham.* Nay, but to live  
 In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed ;<sup>9</sup>  
 Stew'd in corruption ; honeying, and making love  
 Over the nasty stye ;—

*Queen.* O, speak to me no more ;  
 These words, like daggers enter in mine ears ;  
 No more, sweet Hamlet.

*Ham.* A murderer, and a villain :  
 A slave, that is not twentieth part the tythe  
 Of your precedent lord :—a vice of kings :<sup>1</sup>  
 A cutpurse of the empire and the rule ;  
 That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,  
 And put it in his pocket !<sup>2</sup>

*Queen.* No more.

*Enter Ghost.*

*Ham.* A king  
 Of shreds and patches :<sup>3</sup>—  
 Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,  
 You heavenly guards !—What would your gracious  
 figure ?

*Queen.* Alas, he's mad.

*Ham.* Do you not come your tardy son to chide,  
 That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by  
 The important acting of your dread command ?<sup>4</sup>  
 O, say !

*Ghost.* Do not forget : This visitation  
 Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.  
 But, look ! amazement on thy mother sits :  
 O, step between her and her fighting soul ;

[8] *Grained*—dyed in grain. [9] *Enseamed*—greasy. JOHNSON.

[1] *Vice of kings*—a low mimic of kings. The vice is the fool of a face ;  
 from whence the modern *Punch* is descended. JOHNSON.

[2] The usurper came not to the crown by any glorious villainy that carried  
 danger with it, but by the low cowardly theft of a common pillar. WARBURTON.

[3] This is said, pursuing the idea of the *vice of kings*. The vice was dressed  
 as a fool, in a coat of party-coloured patches. JOHNSON.

[4] That, having suffered time to slip, and passion to cool, lets go, &c. JOHNSON.

Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works ;  
 Speak to her, Hamlet :

*Ham.* How is it with you, lady ?

*Queen.* Alas, how is't with you ?  
 That you do bend your eye on vacancy,  
 And with the incorporal air do hold discourse ?  
 Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep ;  
 And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,  
 Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,<sup>5</sup>  
 Starts up and stands on end. O gentle son,  
 Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper  
 Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look ?

*Ham.* On him ! on him !—Look you, how pale he glazes !  
 His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,  
 Would make them capable.—Do not look upon me ;  
 Lest, with this piteous action, you convert  
 My stern effects : then what I have to do  
 Will want true colour ; tears, perchance, for blood.

*Queen.* To whom do you speak this ?

*Ham.* Do you see nothing there ?

*Queen.* Nothing at all ; yet all, that is, I see.

*Ham.* Nor did you nothing hear ?

*Queen.* No, nothing, but ourselves.

*Ham.* Why, look you there ! look, how it steals away !  
 My father, in his habit as he liv'd !  
 Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal !

[*Exit Ghost.*]

*Queen.* This is the very coinage of your brain :  
 This bodiless creation ecstasy<sup>6</sup>  
 Is very cunning in.

*Ham.* Ecstasy !

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,  
 And makes as healthful music : It is not madness,  
 That I have utter'd : bring me to the test,  
 And I the matter will re-word ; which madness  
 Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,  
 Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,  
 That not your trespass, but my madness speaks :  
 It will but skin and film the ulcerous place ;  
 Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,  
 Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven ;  
 Repent what's past ; avoid what is to come ;

[5] The hair are excrementitious, that is, without life or sensation ; yet those very hairs, as if they had life, start up, &c. POPE.

[6] Ecstasy in this place, and many others, means a temporary alienation of mind, a fit. STEEVENS.

And do not spread the compost on the weeds,  
 To make them ranker.<sup>7</sup> Forgive me this my virtue:  
 For in the fatness of these pursy times,  
 Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg ;  
 Yea, curb and woo, for leave to do him good.

*Queen.* O Hamlet ! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

*Ham.* O, throw away the worsèr part of it,  
 And live the purer with the other half.  
 Good night : but go not to my uncle's bed ;  
 Assume a virtue, if you have it not.  
 That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat  
 Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this ;  
 That to the use of actions fair and good  
 He likewise gives a frock, or livery,  
 That aptly is put on : Refrain to-night ;  
 And that shall lend a kind of easiness  
 To the next abstinence : the next more easy ;  
 For use almost can change the stamp of nature,  
 And either curb the devil, or throw him out  
 With wondrous potency. Once more, good night !  
 And when you are desirous to be bless'd,  
 I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,

[*Pointing to POLONIUS*

¶ do repent : But heaven hath pleas'd it so,—  
 To punish me with this, and this with me,  
 That I must be their scourge and minister.  
 I will bestow him, and will answer well  
 The death I gave him. So, again, good night !—  
 I must be cruel, only to be kind :  
 Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—  
 But one word more, good lady.

*Queen.* What shall I do ?

*Ham.* Not this, by no means, that I bid you do :  
 Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed ;  
 Pinch wanton on your cheek ; call you, his mouse ;  
 And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,  
 Or padding in your neck with his damn'd fingers,  
 Make you to ravel all this matter out,  
 That I essentially am not in madness,  
 But mad in craft. 'Twere good, you let him know :  
 For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,  
 Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,<sup>8</sup>  
 Such dear concernings hide ? who would do so ?

[7] Do not, by any new indulgence, heighten your former offences. JOHN.

[8] Gib was a common name for a cat. STEEVENS.

No, in despite of sense, and secrecy,  
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,  
Let the birds fly ; and, like the famous ape,  
To try conclusions, in the basket creep,  
And break your own neck down.

*Queen.* Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,  
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe  
What thou hast said to me.

*Ham.* I must to England ; you know that ?

*Queen.* Alack,  
I had forgot ; 'tis so concluded on.

*Ham.* There's letters seal'd : and my two school-  
fellows,—

Whom I will trust, as I will adders fang'd,<sup>3</sup>—  
They bear the mandate ; they must sweep my way,  
And marshal me to knavery : Let it work ;  
For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer  
Hoist with his own petar : and it shall go hard,  
But I will delve one yard below their mines,  
And blow them at the moon : O, 'tis most sweet,  
When in one line two crafts directly meet.\*—  
This man shall set me packing.

I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room :—  
Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor  
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,  
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.  
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you :—  
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally ; HAMLET dragging in POLONIUS.*]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.<sup>5</sup>—*The same. Enter King, Queen, ROZENCANTZ,  
and GUILDENSTERN.*

*King.* There's matter in these sighs ; these profound  
heaves ;  
You must translate : 'tis fit we understand them :

[3] That is, adders with their *fangs*, or *poisonous teeth* undrawn. It has been the practice of mountebanks to boast the efficacy of their antidotes by playing with vipers, but they first disabled their fangs. JOHNSON.

[4] Still alluding to a *countermines*. MALONE.

[5] This play is printed in the old editions without any separation of the acts. The division is modern and arbitrary ; and is here not very happy, for the pause is made at a time when there is more continuity of action than in almost any other of the scenes: JOHNSON.

Where is your son ?

*Queen.* Bestow this place on us a little while.—

*[To Ros. and GUIL. who go out.]*  
Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night !

*King.* What, Gertrude ? How does Hamlet ?

*Queen.* Mad as the sea, and wind, when both contend  
Which is the mightier : In his lawless fit,  
Behind the arras hearing something stir,  
Whips out his rapier, cries, *A rat ! a rat !*  
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills  
The unseen good old man.

*King.* O heavy deed !

It had been so with us, had we been there :  
His liberty is full of threats to all ;  
To you yourself, to us, to every one.  
Alas ! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd ?  
It will be laid to us, whose providence  
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt,  
This mad young man : but, so much was our love,  
We would not understand what was most fit ;  
But, like the owner of a foul disease,  
To keep it from divulging, let it feed  
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone ?

*Queen.* To draw apart the body he hath kill'd :  
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore,  
Among a mineral of metals base,  
Shows itself pure ; he weeps for what is done.

*King.* O, Gertrude, come away !  
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,  
But we will ship him hence : and this vile deed  
We must, with all our majesty and skill,  
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho ! Guildenstern !

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

Friends both, go join you with some further aid :  
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,  
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him.  
Go, seek him out ; speak fair, and bring the body  
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

*[Exeunt Ros. and GUIL.]*

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends ;  
And let them know, both what we mean to do,  
And what's untimely done : so, haply, slander,—  
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,  
As level as the cannon to his blank,  
Transports his poison'd shot,—may miss our name,

And hit the woundless air.—O come away !  
My soul is full of discord and dismay. [Exeunt.

## SCENE II.

*Another Room in the same. Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.*—Safely stowed,—[*Ros. &c. within.* Hamlet ! lord Hamlet !] But soft,—what noise ? who calls on Hamlet ? O, here they come.

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Ros.* What have you done, my lord, with the dead body ?

*Ham.* Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

*Ros.* Tell us where 'tis ; that we may take it thence, And bear it to the chapel.

*Ham.* Do not believe it.

*Ros.* Believe what ?

*Ham.* That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge !—what replication should be made by the son of a king ?

*Ros.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord ?

*Ham.* Ay, sir ; that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end : he keeps them, like an ape,<sup>6</sup> in the corner of his jaw ; first mouthed, to be last swallowed : When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

*Ros.* I understand you not, my lord.

*Ham.* I am glad of it : A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

*Ros.* My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

*Ham.* The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing—

*Guil.* A thing, my lord ?

*Ham.* Of nothing : bring me to him. Hide, fox, and all after.<sup>7</sup> [Exeunt.

[6] The quarto has *apple*, which is generally followed. The folio has *ape*, which Sir T. Hanmer has thus illustrated :

“ It is the way of monkeys in eating, to throw that part of their food, which they take up first, into a pouch they are provided with on each side of their jaw, and there they keep it till they have done with the rest.” JOHN.

*Apple* in the quarto is a mere typographical error. The meaning is clearly “ as an *ape* does an *apple*.” RITSON.

[7] There is a play among children called, “ Hide, fox, and all after.” HANMER.

## SCENE III.

*Another Room in the same. Enter King, attended.*

*King.* I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.  
How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose ?  
Yet must not we put the strong law on him :  
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,  
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes ;  
And, where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,  
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,  
This sudden sending him away must seem  
Deliberate pause : Diseases, desperate grown,  
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ.*

Or not at all.—How now ? what hath befallen ?

*Ros.* Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,  
We cannot get from him.

*King.* But where is he ?

*Ros.* Without, my lord ; guarded, to know your  
pleasure.

*King.* Bring him before us.

*Ros.* Ho, Guildenstern ! bring in my lord.

*Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.*

*King.* Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius ?

*Ham.* At supper.

*King.* At supper ? Where ?

*Ham.* Not where he eats, but where he is eaten : a  
certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him.  
Your worm is your only emperor for diet : we fat all  
creatures else, to fat us ; and we fat ourselves for mag-  
gots : Your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but varia-  
ble service ; two dishes, but to one table ; that's the end.

*King.* Alas, alas !

*Ham.* A man may fish with the worm that hath eat  
of a king ; and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

*King.* What dost thou mean by this ?

*Ham.* Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a  
progress through the guts of a beggar.

*King.* Where is Polonius ?

*Ham.* In heaven ; send thither to see : if your mes-  
senger find him not there, seek him i'the other place  
yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this  
month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into  
the lobby.



*King.* Go seek him there. [*To some Attendants.*

*Ham.* He will stay till you come. [*Exeunt Attendants.*

*King.* Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—  
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve  
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence  
With fiery quickness : Therefore, prepare thyself ;  
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,  
The associates tend, and every thing is bent  
For England.

*Ham.* For England ?

*King.* Ay, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good.

*King.* So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

*Ham.* I see a cherub, that sees them.—But, come ; for  
England !—Farewell, dear mother.

*King.* Thy loving father, Hamlet.

*Ham.* My mother : Father and mother is man and  
wife ; man and wife is one flesh ; and so, my mother.  
Come, for England. [*Exit.*

*King.* Follow him at foot ; tempt him with speed aboard ;  
Delay it not ; I'll have him hence to-night :  
Away ; for every thing is seal'd and done  
That else leans on the affair : Pray you, make haste.

[*Exeunt ROS. and GUIL.*

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,  
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense ;  
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red  
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe  
Pays homage to us,) thou may'st not coldly set<sup>8</sup>  
Our sovereign process ; which imports at full,  
By letters conjuring to that effect,  
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England ;  
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,  
And thou must cure me : Till I know 'tis done,  
Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin. [*Exit.*

#### SCENE IV.

*A Plain in Denmark. Enter FORTINBRAS, and Forces, marching.*

*For.* Go, captain, for me greet the Danish king ;  
Tell him, that, by his licence, Fortinbras

[8] Our poet has here, I think, used an elliptical expression : " thou mayest not coldly set by our sovereign process ;" thou mayest not set little by it, or estimate it lightly. See many other instances of similar ellipses in *Cymbeline*, act v. sc. 5. MALONE.

Craves the conveyance of a promis'd march  
 Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.  
 If that his majesty would aught with us,  
 We shall express our duty in his eye,  
 And let him know so.

*Cap.* I will do't, my lord.

*For.* Go softly on. [*Ex. FORTINBRAS, and Forces.*]

*Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, &c.*

*Ham.* Good sir, whose powers are these ?

*Cap.* They are of Norway, sir.

*Ham.* How purpos'd, sir,

I pray you ?

*Cap.* Against some part of Poland.

*Ham.* Who

Commands them, sir ?

*Cap.* The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

*Ham.* Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,

Or for some frontier ?

*Cap.* Truly to speak, sir, and with no addition,

We go to gain a little patch of ground,

That hath in it no profit but the name.

To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it ;

Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,

A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

*Ham.* Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

*Cap.* Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

*Ham.* Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand ducats,  
 Will not debate the question of this straw :

This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace ;

That inward breaks, and shows no cause without

Wehy the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.

*Cap.* God be wi' you, sir.

[*Exit Captain.*]

*Ros.* Will't please you go, my lord ?

*Ham.* I will be with you straight. Go a little before.

[*Exeunt Ros. and GUIL.*]

How all occasions do inform against me,

And spur my dull revenge ! What is a man,

If his chief good, and market of his time,

Be but to sleep, and feed ? a beast, no more.

Sure, he, that made us with such large discourse,\*

Looking before, and after, gave us not

That capability and godlike reason

To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be

[9] Large discourse—such latitude of comprehension, such power of reviewing the past, and anticipating the future. JOHNSON.

Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple  
 Of thinking too precisely on the event,—  
 A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,  
 And, ever, three parts coward,—I do not know  
 Why yet I live to say, *This thing's to do* ;  
 Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,  
 To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me :  
 Witness, this army of such mass, and charge,  
 Led by a delicate and tender prince ;  
 Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,  
 Makes mouths at the invisible event ;  
 Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,  
 To all that fortune, death, and danger, dare,  
 Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great,  
 Is, not to stir without great argument ;  
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,  
 When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,  
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,  
 Excitements of my reason, and my blood,<sup>1</sup>  
 And let all sleep ? while, to my shame, I see  
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,  
 That, for a fantasy, and trick of fame,  
 Go to their graves like beds ; fight for a plot<sup>2</sup>  
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,  
 Which is not tomb enough, and continent,  
 To hide the slain ?—O, from this time forth,  
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth !

[Exit.

## SCENE V.

*Elsinore. A Room in the Castle. Enter Queen and HORATIO.*

*Queen.* —I will not speak with her.

*Hor.* She is importunate ; indeed, distract ;  
 Her mood will needs be pitied.

*Queen.* What would she have ?

*Hor.* She speaks much of her father ; says, she hears,  
 There's tricksi'the world ; and hems, and beats her heart ;  
 Spurns enviously at straws ;<sup>3</sup> speaks things in doubt,  
 That carry but half sense : her speech is nothing,  
 Yet the unshaped use of it doth move

[1] Provocations which excite both my reason and my passions to vengeance. JOHNSON.

[2] A piece or portion. REED.

[3] Envy is much oftener put by our poet, and those of his time, for direct aversion, than for malignity conceived at the sight of others' excellence. So in K. Henry VIII. "—you turn the good we offer into envy." STEEVENS.

The hearers to collection ;<sup>4</sup> they aim at it,  
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts ;  
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,  
Indeed would make one think, there might be thought,  
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.<sup>5</sup>

*Queen.* 'Twere good, she were spoken with ; for she  
may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds :

Let her come in.

[*Exit* HORATIO.

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,

Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss :

So full of artless jealousy is guilt,

It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

*Re-enter* HORATIO *with* OPHELIA.

*Oph.* Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark ?

*Queen.* How now, Ophelia ?

*Oph.* How should I your true love know<sup>6</sup>  
From another one ?

*By his cockle hat and staff,*

*And his sandal shoon.<sup>7</sup>*

[*Sings.*

*Queen.* Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song ?

*Oph.* Say you ? nay, pray you, mark.

*He is dead and gone, lady,*

[*Sings.*

*He is dead and gone ;*

*At his head a grass-green turf,*

*At his heels a stone.*

O, ho !

*Queen.* Nay, but Ophelia,——

*Oph.* Pray you, mark.

*White his shroud as the mountain snow,*

[*Sings.*

[4] As Mr. Mason observes, "endeavour to collect some meaning from them." So in *Cymbeline*, last scene,

"——— whose containing

" is so from sense to hardness, that I can

" Make no collection of it." STEEVENS.

[5] Though her meaning cannot be certainly collected, yet there is enough to put a mischievous interpretation to it. WARBURTON.

[6] There is no part of this play in its representation on the stage, more pathetic than this scene, which I suppose proceeds from the utter insensibility Ophelia has to her own misfortunes. A great sensibility, or none at all, seems to produce the same effect. In the latter the audience supply what she wants, and with the former they sympathise. Sir J. REYNOLDS.

[7] This is the description of a pilgrim. While this kind of devotion was in favour, love intrigues were carried on under that mask. Hence the old ballads and novels made pilgrimages the subjects of their plots. The cockle-shell hat was one of the essential badges of this vocation : for the chief places of devotion being beyond sea, or on the coasts, the pilgrims were accustomed to put cockle-shells upon their hats, to denote the intention or performance of their devotion. WARBURTON.

*Enter King.*

*Queen.* Alas, look here, my lord.

*Oph.* Larded all with sweet flowers ;  
Which bewept to the grave did go,  
With true-love showers.

*King.* How do you, pretty lady ?

*Oph.* Well, God 'ield you !<sup>8</sup> They say, the owl was a baker's daughter.<sup>9</sup> Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table !

*King.* Conceit upon her father.

*Oph.* Pray, let us have no words of this ; but when they ask you, what it means, say you this :

*Good morrow, 'tis Saint Valentine's day,  
All in the morning betime,  
And I a maid at your window,  
To be your Valentine :*

*Then up he rose, and don'd his clothes,  
And dupp'd the chamber-door ;<sup>2</sup>  
Let in the maid, that out a maid  
Never departed more.*

*King.* Pretty Ophelia !

*Oph.* Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an end on't :

*By Gis,<sup>3</sup> and by Saint Charity,<sup>3</sup>  
Alack, and fye for shame !  
Young men will do't, if they come to't ;  
By cock,<sup>4</sup> they are to blame.  
Quoth she, before you tumbled me,  
You promis'd me to wed :*

[He answers.]

*So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,  
An thou hadst not come to my bed.*

*King.* How long hath she been thus ?

*Oph.* I hope, all will be well. We must be patient :

[8] Heaven reward you. So in *Antony and Cleopatra*.  
"Tend me to-night two hours, I ask no more,  
"And the gods yield you for't !"

THEO BALD.

[9] See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

[1] To *don* is to *do on*, to put on ; *doff* is to *do off*. To *dup* is to *do up*, to lift up the latch. JOHNSON.

[2] I believe this word to be a corrupted abbreviation of *Jesus*, the letters I. H. S. being anciently all that was set down to denote that sacred name, on altars, the covers of books, &c. RIDLEY.

[3] *St. Charity* is a known saint among the Roman Catholics. STEEV.

[4] This is likewise a corruption of the sacred name. Many instances are given in a note at the beginning of the fifth act of the *Second part of Henry IV.* STEEVENS.

but I cannot choose but weep, to think, they should lay him i'the cold ground : My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach ! Good night, ladies ; good night, sweet ladies : good night, good night. *[Exit.*

*King.* Follow her close ; give her good watch, I pray you. *[Exit HORATIO.*

O ! this is the poison of deep grief ; it springs  
All from her father's death : And now behold,  
O Gertrude, Gertrude,  
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,  
But in battalions ! First, her father slain ;  
Next, your son gone ; and he most violent author  
Of his own just remove : The people muddied,  
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,  
For good Polonius' death ; and we have done but greenly,  
In hugger-mugger to inter him : Poor Ophelia,  
Divided from herself, and her fair judgment ;  
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts.  
Last, and as much containing as all these,  
Her brother is in secret come from France :  
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,  
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear  
With pestilent speeches of his father's death ;  
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,  
Will nothing stick our person to arraign  
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,  
Like to a murdering piece, in many places  
Give me superfluous death !<sup>5</sup> *[A noise within.*

*Queen.* Alack ! what noise is this ?

*Enter a Gentleman.*

*King.* Attend.

Where are my Switzers ? Let them guard the door :  
What is the matter ?

*Gent.* Save yourself, my lord ;  
The ocean, overpeering of his list,<sup>6</sup>  
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,  
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,  
O'erbears your officers ! The rabble call him, lord ;  
And, as the world were now but to begin,  
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,

[5] Such a piece as assassins use, with many barrels. It is necessary to apprehend this, to see the justness of the similitude. **WARBURTON.**  
See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

[6] The lists are the barriers which the spectators of a tournament must not pass. See note on Othello, act. IV. sc. 1. **JOHNSON.**

The ratifiers and props of every word,  
They cry, *Choose we: Laertes shall be king!*  
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,  
*Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!*

*Queen.* How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!  
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.<sup>7</sup>

*King.* The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*]

*Enter LAERTES, armed: Danes following.*

*Laer.* Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.

*Dan.* No, let's come in.

*Laer.* I pray you, give me leave.

*Dan.* We will, we will. [*They retire without the door.*]

*Laer.* I thank you:—keep the door.—O thou vile king,  
Give me my father.

*Queen.* Calmly, good Laertes.

*Laer.* That drop of blood, that's calm, proclaims me  
bastard;

Cries, cuckold, to my father; brands the harlot  
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow<sup>8</sup>  
Of my true mother.

*King.* What is the cause, Laertes,  
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—  
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person;  
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,  
That treason can but peep to what it would,  
Acts little of his will.—Tell me, Laertes,  
Why thou art thus incens'd;—Let him go, Gertrude;—  
Speak, man.

*Laer.* Where is my father?

*King.* Dead.

*Queen.* But not by him.

*King.* Let him demand his fill.

*Laer.* How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:  
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!  
Conscience, and grace, to the profoundest pit!  
I dare damnation: To this point I stand,—  
That both the worlds I give to negligence,  
Let come what comes; only I'll be reveng'd  
Most thoroughly for my father.

*King.* Who shall stay you?

*Laer.* My will, not all the world's:  
And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,

[7] Hounds run counter when they trace the trail backwards. JOHNSON.

[8] Unsmirched brow, i. e. clean, not defiled. STEEVENS.

They shall go far with little.

*King.* Good Laertes!

If you desire to know the certainty  
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge,  
That, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and foe,  
Winner and loser?

*Laer.* None but his enemies.

*King.* Will you know them then?

*Laer.* To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;  
And, like the kind life-rend'ring pelican,  
Repast them with my blood.

*King.* Why, now you speak

Like a good child, and a true gentleman.  
That I am guiltless of your father's death,  
And am most sensibly in grief for it,  
It shall as level to your judgment 'pear,  
As day does to your eye.

*Danes.* [*within.*] Let her come in.

*Laer.* How now! what noise is that?

*Enter OPHELIA, fantastically dressed with straws and  
flowers.*

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,  
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—  
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,  
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!  
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—  
O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits  
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?  
Nature is fine in love: and, where 'tis fine,  
It sends some precious instance of itself  
After the thing it loves.

*Oph.* They bore him barefac'd on the bier;

*Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny:*

*And in his grave rain'd many a tear;—*

Fare you well, my dove!

*Laer.* Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,  
It could not move thus.

*Oph.* You must sing, *Down a-down, an you call him  
a-down-a.* O how the wheel becomes it! it is the  
false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

*Laer.* This nothing's more than matter.

*Oph.* There's the rosemary, that's for remembrance;<sup>1</sup>

[9] By the *wheel*, she means the burden of the song. STEEVENS.

[1] See Illustrations, Vol. IX.



Pray you, love, remember : And there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

*Laer.* A document in madness ; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

*Oph.* There's fennel for you, and columbines :—there's rue for you ; and here's some for me :—we may call it, herb of grace o'Sundays :—you may wear your rue with a difference.—There's a daisy :—I would give you some violets ; but they withered all, when my father died :—They say, he made a good end,—

*For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,—* [Sings.

*Laer.* Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself, She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

*Oph.* *And will he not come again ?* [Sings.  
*And will he not come again ?*

*No, no, he's dead,  
Go to thy death-bed,  
He never will come again.*

*His beard was as white as snow,  
All flaxen was his poll :  
He is gone, he is gone,  
And we cast away moan ;  
God 'a mercy on his soul !*

And of all christian souls !<sup>2</sup> I pray God. God be wi'you!  
[Exit OPHELIA.

*Laer.* Do you see this, O God ?

*King.* Laertes, I must commune with your grief, Or you deny me right. Go but apart, Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will, And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me : If by direct or by collateral hand They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give, Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours, To you in satisfaction ; but, if not, Be you content to lend your patience to us, And we shall jointly labour with your soul To give it due content.

*Laer.* Let this be so ;

His means of death, his obscure funeral,—  
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,<sup>3</sup>

[2] *God 'a mercy on his soul !*

*And of all christian souls !* This is the common conclusion to many of the ancient monumental inscriptions. STEEVENS.

[3] The practice is uniformly kept up to this day of hanging the sword, helmet, gauntlet, spurs and tabard (i. e. coat whereon the armorial ensigns were anciently depicted, from whence the term *coat of armour*) over the grave of every knight. HAWKINS.

No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,—  
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,  
That I must call't in question.

*King.* So you shall ;  
And, where the offence is, let the great axe fall.  
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE VI.

*Another Room in the same. Enter HORATIO, and a Servant.*

*Hor.* What are they, that would speak with me ?

*Serv.* Sailors, sir ;

They say, they have letters for you.

*Hor.* Let them come in.— [*Exit Servant.*]

I do not know from what part of the world  
I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

*Enter Sailors.*

*1 Sail.* God bless you, sir.

*Hor.* Let him bless thee too.

*1 Sail.* He shall sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir ; it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England ; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

*Hor.* [*reads.*] *Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king ; they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase : Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour ; and in the grapple I boarded them : on the instant, they got clear of our ship ; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me, like thieves of mercy ; but they knew what they did ; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent ; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou would'st fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb ; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter.<sup>4</sup> These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England : Of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.*

*He that thou knowest thine,*

HAMLET.

[4] The bore is the caliber of a gun, or the capacity of the barrel. The matter, says Hamlet, would carry heavier words. JOHNSON.

Come, I will give you way for these your letters ;  
 And do't the speedier that you may direct me  
 To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE VII.

*Another Room in the same. Enter King and LAERTES.*

*King.* Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,  
 And you must put me in your heart for friend ;  
 Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,  
 That he, which hath your noble father slain,  
 Pursu'd my life.

*Laer.* It well appears.—But tell me,  
 Why you proceeded not against these feats,  
 So crimeful and so capital in nature,  
 As by your safety, greatness, wisdom, all things else,  
 You mainly were stirr'd up ?

*King.* O, for two special reasons ;  
 Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,  
 But yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother,  
 Lives almost by his looks ; and for myself,  
 (My virtue, or my plague, be it either which,)  
 She is so conjunctive to my life and soul,  
 That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,  
 I could not but by her. The other motive,  
 Why to a public count I might not go,  
 Is, the great love the general gender bear him :<sup>5</sup>  
 Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,  
 Work like the spring that turneth wood to stone,  
 Convert his gyves to graces ; so that my arrows,  
 Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,  
 Would have reverted to my bow again,  
 And not where I had aim'd them.

*Laer.* And so have I a noble father lost ;  
 A sister driven into desperate terms ;  
 Whose worth, if praises may go back again,<sup>6</sup>  
 Stood challenger on mount of all the age  
 For her perfections :—But my revenge will come.

*King.* Break not your sleeps for that : You must not  
 think,  
 That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,  
 That we can let our beard be shook with danger,  
 And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more :

[5] The common race of the people. JOHNSON.

[6] If I may praise what has been, but is now to be found no more. JOHN.

I loved your father, and we love ourself ;  
 And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,—  
 How now ? what news ?

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* Letters, my lord, from Hamlet :  
 This to your majesty ; this to the queen.

*King.* From Hamlet ! who brought them ?

*Mess.* Sailors, my lord, they say : I saw them not ;  
 They were given me by Claudio, he receiv'd them  
 Of him that brought them.

*King.* Laertes, you shall hear them :—  
 Leave us.

*[Exit Messenger.]*

*[Reads.]* *High and mighty, you shall know, I am set  
 naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave  
 to see your kingly eyes : when I shall, first asking your  
 pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden  
 and more strange return.*

HAMLET.

What should this mean ! Are all the rest come back ?  
 Or is it some abuse, and no such thing ?

*Laer.* Know you the hand ?

*King.* 'Tis Hamlet's character. *Naked,—*  
 And, in a postscript here, he says, *alone :*  
 Can you advise me ?

*Laer.* I am lost in it, my lord. But let him come :  
 It warms the very sickness in my heart,  
 That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,  
*Thus diddest thou.*

*King.* If it be so, Laertes,  
 As how should it be so ? how otherwise ?—  
 Will you be rul'd by me ?

*Laer.* Ay, my lord ;  
 So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace.

*King.* To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,—  
 As checking at his voyage, and that he means  
 No more to undertake it,—I will work him  
 To an exploit, now ripe in my device,  
 Under the which he shall not choose but fall :  
 And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe ;  
 But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,  
 And call it, accident.

*Laer.* My lord, I will be rul'd ;  
 The rather, if you could devise is so,  
 That I might be the organ.

*King.* It falls right.

You have been talk'd of since your travel much,  
 And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality  
 Wherein, they say, you shine : your sum of parts  
 Did not together pluck such envy from him,  
 As did that one ; and that, in my regard,  
 Of the unworthiest siege.<sup>7</sup>

*Laer.* What part is that, my lord ?

*King.* A very ribband in the cap of youth,  
 Yet needful too ; for youth no less becomes  
 The light and careless livery that it wears,  
 Than settled age his sables, and his weeds,  
 Importing health and graveness.<sup>8</sup>—Two months since,  
 Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—  
 I have seen myself, and serv'd against, the French,  
 And they can well on horseback : but this gallant  
 Had witchcraft in't ; he grew unto his seat ;  
 And to such wond'rous doing brought his horse,  
 As he had been incorp'd and demi-natur'd  
 With the brave beast : So far he topp'd my thought,  
 That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,  
 Come short of what he did.<sup>9</sup>

*Laer.* A Norman, was't ?

*King.* A Norman.

*Laer.* Upon my life, Lamord.

*King.* The very same.

*Laer.* I know him well : He is the brooch, indeed,  
 And gem of all the nation.

*King.* He made confession of you ;  
 And gave you such a masterly report,  
 For art and exercise in your defence,  
 And for your rapier most especial,  
 That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,  
 If one could match you : the scrimers of their nation,<sup>1</sup>  
 He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,  
 If you oppos'd them : Sir, this report of his  
 Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,  
 That he could nothing do, but wish and beg  
 Your sudden coming o'er, to play with you.

[7] Of the lowest rank. *Siege* for seat, place. JOHNSON. So in  
*Othello*, "——— I fetch my birth  
 " From men of royal *siege*." STEEVENS.

[8] *Importing*, here may be, not inferring by logical consequence, but *pro-*  
*ducing* by physical effect. A young man regards show in his dress, an old  
 man health. JOHNSON.

[9] I could not contrive so many proofs of dexterity as he could perform.  
 JOHNSON.

[1] Scrimers—fencers. From *escrimeur*, Fr. a *fencer*. JOHNSON.

Now, out of this, —

*Laer.* What out of this, my lord?

*King.* Laertes, was your father dear to you?  
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,  
A face without a heart?

*Laer.* Why ask you this?

*King.* Not that I think, you did not love your father;  
But that I know, love is begun by time;<sup>2</sup>  
And that I see, in passages of proof,<sup>3</sup>  
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.  
There lives within the very flame of love  
A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it;  
And nothing is at a like goodness still;  
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,<sup>4</sup>  
Dies in his own too-much. That we would do,  
We should do when we would; for this *would* changes,  
And hath abatements and delays as many,  
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;  
And then this *should* is like a spendthrift sigh,  
That hurts by easing.<sup>5</sup> But, to the quick o'the ulcer:  
Hamlet comes back; What would you undertake,  
To show yourself in deed your father's son  
More than in words?

*Laer.* To cut his throat i'the church.

*King.* No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;  
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,  
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber:  
Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home:  
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,  
And set a double varnish on the fame  
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, together,  
And wager o'er your heads; he, being remiss,<sup>6</sup>  
Most generous, and free from all contriving,  
Will not peruse the foils; so that, with ease,  
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose  
A sword unbated,<sup>6</sup> and, in a pass of practice,

[2] This is obscure. The meaning may be, love is not innate in us, and consensual to our nature, but begins at a certain time from some external cause, and being always subject to the operations of time, suffers change and diminution. JOHNSON.

[3] In transactions of daily experience. JOHNSON.

[4] I would believe, for the honour of Shakspeare, that he wrote *plethory*. But I observe that the dramatic writers of that time frequently call a fullness of blood a *plurisy*. WARBURTON.

[5] A sigh that makes an unnecessary waste of the vital flame. It is a notion very prevalent, that sighs impair the strength, and wear out the animal powers. JOHNSON.

[6] Unbated, i. e. not blunted as foils are by a button fixed at the end.

Requite him for your father.

*Laer.* I will do't: [www.libtool.com.cn](http://www.libtool.com.cn)

And, for the purpose, I'll anoint my sword.  
I bought an unction of a mountebank,  
So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,  
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,  
Collected from all simples that have virtue  
Under the moon, can save the thing from death,  
That is but scratch'd withal : I'll touch my point  
With this contagion ; that, if I gall him slightly,  
It may be death.<sup>7</sup>

*King.* Let's further think of this ;  
Weigh, what convenience, both of time and means,  
May fit us to our shape : if this should fail,  
And that our drift look through our bad performance,  
'Twere better not assay'd ; therefore this project  
Should have a back, or second, that might hold,  
If this should blast in proof. Soft ;—let me see :—  
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunning, —  
I ha't :  
When in your motion you are hot and dry,  
(As make your bouts more violent to that end,)  
And that he calls for drink, I'll have preferr'd him  
A chalice for the nonce ; whereon but sipping,  
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,  
Our purpose may hold here. But stay, what noise ?

*Enter Queen.*

How now, sweet queen ?

*Queen.* One woe doth tread upon another's heel,  
So fast they follow :—Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

*Laer.* Drown'd ! O, where ?

*Queen.* There is a willow grows ascaunt the brook,  
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream ;  
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make  
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,  
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,  
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them :  
There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds  
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke ;  
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,

---

[7] It is a matter of surprise, that no one of Shakspeare's numerous and able commentators has remarked, with proper warmth and detestation, the villainous assassin-like treachery of Laertes in this horrid plot. There is the more occasion that he should be here pointed out an object of abhorrence, as he is a character we are, in some preceding parts of the play, led to respect and admire. . . . BITSON.

Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide ;  
 And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up :  
 Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes ;  
 As one incapable of her own distress,  
 Or like a creature native and indu'd  
 Unto that element : but long it could not be,  
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay  
 To muddy death.

*Laer.* Alas then, she is drown'd ?

*Queen.* Drown'd, drown'd.

*Laer.* Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,  
 And therefore I forbid my tears : But yet  
 It is our trick ; nature her custom holds,  
 Let shame say what it will : when these are gone,  
 The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord !  
 I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,  
 But that this folly drowns it. [*Exit.*

*King.* Let's follow, Gertrude :  
 How much I had to do to calm his rage !  
 Now fear I, this will give it start again ;  
 Therefore, let's follow. [*Exeunt.*

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Churchyard. Enter two Clowns, with Spades, &c.*

*1 Clo.* Is she to be buried in christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation ?

*2 Clo.* I tell thee, she is ; therefore make her grave straight : the crowner hath set on her, and finds it christian burial.

*1 Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence ?

*2 Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

*1 Clo.* It must be *se offendendo* ; it cannot be else. For here lies the point : If I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act : and an act hath three branches ; it is, to act, to do, and to perform :<sup>s</sup> Argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

*2 Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

*1 Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water ; good : here stands the man ; good : If the man go to this wa-

[6] Ridicule on scholastic divisions without distinction ; and of distinctions without difference. WARBURTON.



ter, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes ; mark you that : but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself : Argal, he, that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 Clo. But is this law ?

1 Clo. Ay, marry is't ; crowner's-quest law.

2 Clo. Will you ha' the truth on't ? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of christian burial.

1 Clo. Why, there thou say'st : And the more pity ; that great folks shall have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even christian.<sup>9</sup> Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers ; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 Clo. Was he a gentleman ?

1 Clo. He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 Clo. Why, he had none.

1 Clo. What, art a heathen ? How dost thou understand the scripture ? The scripture says, Adam digged : could he dig without arms ? I'll put another question to thee : if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2 Clo. Go to.

1 Clo. What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter ?

2 Clo. The gallows-maker ; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 Clo. I like thy wit well, in good faith ; the gallows does well : But how does it well ? it does well to those that do ill : now thou dost ill, to say, the gallows is built stronger than the church ; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again ; come.

2 Clo. Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter ?

1 Clo. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2 Clo. Marry, now I can tell.

1 Clo. To't.

2 Clo. Mass, I cannot tell.

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.*

1 Clo. Cudgel thy brains no more about it ; for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating ; and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave—

[9] An old English expression for fellow-christian. THIRLBY.

maker ; the houses that he makes, last till doomsday.  
Go, get thee to *Yaughan*, and fetch me a stoup of liquor.  
[Exit 2 Clown.]

1 Clown digs, and sings.

*In youth, when I did love, did love,  
Methought, it was very sweet,  
To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove  
O, methought, there was nothing meet.*

*Ham.* Has this fellow no feeling of his business ? he sings at grave-making.

*Hor.* Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

*Ham.* 'Tis e'en so : the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1 Clo. *But age, with his stealing steps,  
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,  
And hath shipped me into the land,  
As if I had never been such.* [Throws up a scull.]

*Ham.* That scull had a tongue in it, and could sing once : How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder ! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches ; one that would circumvent God, might it not ?

*Hor.* It might, my lord.

*Ham.* Or of a courtier ; which could say, *Good-morrow, sweet lord ! How dost thou, good lord ?* This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it ; might it not ?

*Hor.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, e'en so : and now my lady *Worm's* ;<sup>1</sup> chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade : Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with them ?<sup>2</sup> mine ache to think on't.

1 Clo. *A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,  
For—and a shrouding-sheet :  
O, a pit of clay for to be made  
For such a guest is meet.* [Throws up a scull.]

*Ham.* There's another : Why may not that be the scull of a lawyer ? Where be his quiddits now, his quilletts, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks ? why does he suffer this

[1] The scull that was my lord *Such-a-one's*, is now my lady *Worm's*. JOH  
[2] See illustrations.

rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery ? Humph ! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries : Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt ? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures ? the very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box ; and must the inheritor himself have no more ? ha ?

*Hor.* Not a jot more, my lord.

*Ham.* Is not parchment made of sheep-skins ?

*Hor.* Ay, my lord, and of calves-skins too.

*Ham.* They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow :—Whose grave's this, sirrah ?

*1 Clo.* Mine, sir.—

*O, a pit of clay for to be made  
For such a guest is meet.*

[*Sings.*

*Ham.* I think it be thine, indeed ; for thou liest in't.

*1 Clo.* You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours : for my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

*Ham.* Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say it is thine : 'tis for the dead, not for the quick ; therefore thou liest.

*1 Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir ; 'twill away again, from me to you.

*Ham.* What man dost thou dig it for ?

*1 Clo.* For no man, sir.

*Ham.* What woman then ?

*1 Clo.* For none neither.

*Ham.* Who is to be buried in't ?

*1 Clo.* One, that was a woman, sir ; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

*Ham.* How absolute the knave is ! We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us.<sup>3</sup> By the lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it ; the age is grown so picked,<sup>4</sup> that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. —How long hast thou been a grave-maker ?

[3] The *card* is the *sea chart*, still so termed by mariners : and the word is afterwards used by *Æric* in the same sense. RITSON.

We must speak with the same precision and accuracy as is observed in marking the true distances of coasts, the heights, courses, &c, in a *sea-chart*, which in our poet's time was called a *card*. MALONE.

[4] See Illustrations.

**1 Clo.** Of all the days i'the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

**Ham.** How long's that since ?

**1 Clo.** Cannot you tell that ? every fool can tell that : It was that very day that young Hamlet was born :<sup>5</sup> he that is mad, and sent into England.

**Ham.** Ay, marry, why was he sent into England ?

**1 Clo.** Why, because he was mad : he shall recover his wits there ; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

**Ham.** Why ?

**1 Clo.** 'Twill not be seen in him there ; there the men are as mad as he.

**Ham.** How came he mad ?

**1 Clo.** Very strangely, they say.

**Ham.** How strangely ?

**1 Clo.** 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

**Ham.** Upón what ground ?

**1 Clo.** Why, here in Denmark ; I have been sexton here, man, and boy, thirty years.

**Ham.** How long will a man lie i'the earth ere he rot ?

**1 Clo.** 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, (as we have many pocky corsés now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in,) he will last you some eight year, or nine year ; a tanner will last you nine year.

**Ham.** Why he more than another ?

**1 Clo.** Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while ; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body Here's a scull now hath lain you i'the earth three-and-twenty years.

**Ham.** Whose was it ?

**1 Clo.** A whoreson mad fellow's it was ; Whose do you think it was ?

**Ham.** Nay, I know not.

**1 Clo.** A pestilence on him for a mad rogue ! he poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same scull, sir, was Yorick's scull, the king's jester.

**Ham.** This ?

[Takes the scull.]

**1 Clo.** E'en that.

**Ham.** Alas, poor Yorick !—I knew him, Horatio ; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy : he hath borne me on his back a thousand times ; and now, how

[5] By this scene it appears that Hamlet was then thirty years old, and knew Yorick well, who had been dead twenty two years. And yet in the beginning of the play he is spoken of as a *very young man*, one that designed to go back to school, i. e. the University of Wittenberg. The Poet in the fifth act forgot what he wrote in the first. BLACKSTONE.

abhorred in my imagination it is ! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now ? your gambols ? your songs ? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar ? not one now, to mock your own grinning ? quite chap-fallen ? now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come ; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

*Hor.* What's that, my lord ?

*Ham.* Dost thou think, Alexander looked o'this fashion i'the earth ?

*Hor.* E'en so.

*Ham.* And smelt so ? pah ! [*Throws down the scull.*]

*Hor.* E'en so, my lord.

*Ham.* To what base uses we may return, Horatio ! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole ?

*Hor.* 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

*Ham.* No, 'faith, not a jot ; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it : As thus ; Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust ; the dust is earth ; of earth we make loam : And why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel ?

Imperious Cæsar, dead, and turn'd to clay,

Might stop a hole to keep the wind away :

O, that the earth, which kept the world in awe,

Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw !

But soft ! but soft ! aside ;—Here comes the king,

*Enter Priests, &c. in procession ; the Corpse of OPHELIA, LAERTES and Mourners following ; King, Queen, their Trains, &c.*

The queen, the courtiers : Who is this they follow ?

And with such maimed rites !<sup>6</sup> This doth betoken,

The corse, they follow, did with desperate hand

Fordo its own life. 'Twas of some estate :<sup>7</sup>

Couch we a while, and mark. [*Retiring with HOR.*]

*Laer.* What ceremony else ?

*Ham.* That is Laertes,

A very noble youth : Mark.

*Laer.* What ceremony else ?

*1 Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd

[6] Imperfect obsequies. [7] Some person of high rank. JOHNSON.

As we have warranty : Her death was doubtful ;  
 And, but that great command o'ersways the order,  
 She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd  
 Till the last trumpet ; for charitable prayers,  
 Shards,<sup>8</sup> flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her :  
 Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,<sup>9</sup>  
 Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home  
 Of bell and burial.<sup>1</sup>

*Laer.* Must there no more be done ?

*1 Priest.* No more be done !

We should profane the service of the dead,  
 To sing a *requiem*,<sup>2</sup> and such rest to her  
 As to peace-parted souls.

*Laer.* Lay her i'the earth ;—  
 And from her fair and unpolluted flesh  
 May violets spring !—I tell thee, churlish priest,  
 A minist'ring angel shall my sister be,  
 When thou liest howling.

*Ham.* What, the fair Ophelia !

*Queen.* Sweets to the sweet : Farewell !

[*Scattering flowers.*]

I hop'd, thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife ;  
 I thought, thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,  
 And not have strew'd thy grave.

*Laer.* O, treble woe  
 Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,  
 Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense  
 Depriv'd thee of !—Hold off the earth a while,  
 Till I have caught her once more in mine arms :

[*Leaps into the grave.*]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead ;  
 Till of this flat a mountain you have made,  
 To o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head  
 Of blue Olympus.

*Ham.* [*Advancing.*] What is he, whose grief  
 Bears such an emphasis ? whose phrase of sorrow  
 Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand

[8] Broken pots, or tiles, called *pot-sherds*, *tile-sherds*. So, in Job ii. 8. "And he took him a potsherd (i. e. a piece of a broken pot) to scrape himself withal." RITSON.

[9] I have been informed by an anonymous correspondent, that *crants* is the German word for *garlands*, and I suppose it was retained by us from the Saxons. To carry garlands before the bier of a maiden, and to hang them over her grave, is still the practice in rural parishes. JOHNSON.

[1] *Burial*, here signifies interment in consecrated ground. WARE.

[2] A *requiem* is a mass performed in Popish churches for the rest of the soul of a person deceased. STEEVENS.

Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,  
Hamlet the Dane. *[Leaps into the grave.]*

*Laer.* The devil take thy soul! *[Grappling with him.]*

*Ham.* Thou pray'st not well.

I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;  
For, though I am not splenetic and rash,  
Yet have I in me something dangerous,  
Which let thy wisdom fear: Hold off thy hand.

*King.* Pluck them asunder.

*Queen.* Hamlet, Hamlet!

*All.* Gentlemen,—

*Hor.* Good my lord, be quiet.

*[The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.]*

*Ham.* Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,  
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

*Queen.* O my son! what theme?

*Ham.* I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers  
Could not; with all their quantity of love  
Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?

*King.* O, he is mad, Laertes.

*Queen.* For love of God, forbear him.

*Ham.* 'Zounds, show me what thou'lt do:

Woul't weep? woul't fight? woul't fast? woul't tear  
thyself?

Woul't drink up Esil?<sup>3</sup> eat a crocodile?

I'll do't.—Dost thou come here to whine?

To outface me with leaping in her grave?

Be buried quick with her, and so will I:

And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw

Millions of acres on us; till our ground,

Singeing his pate against the burning zone,

Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,

I'll rant as well as thou.

*Queen.* This is mere madness:

And thus a while the fit will work on him;

Anon, as patient as the female dove,

When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,<sup>4</sup>

His silence will sit drooping.

*Ham.* Hear you, sir;

[3] *Weisel* is a considerable river which falls into the Baltic ocean.

STEEVENS.

[4] The young nestlings of the pigeon, when first disclosed, are callow, only covered with a yellow down: and for that reason stand in need of being cherished by the warmth of the hen, to protect them from the chillness of the ambient air, for a considerable time after they are hatched. HEATH.

What is the reason that you use me thus ?  
 I lov'd you ever : | But it is no matter ;  
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,  
 The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*  
*King.* I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.—  
 Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech ;  
 [To LAERTES.  
 We'll put the matter to the present push.—  
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—  
 This grave shall have a living monument :  
 An hour of quiet shortly shall we see ;  
 Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

*A Hall in the Castle. Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.*

*Ham.* So much for this, sir : now shall you see the other ;—

You do remember all the circumstance ?

*Hor.* Remember it, my lord !

*Ham.* Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,  
 That would not let me sleep : methought, I lay  
 Worse than the mutines in the bilboes.<sup>4</sup> Rashly,  
 And prais'd be rashness for it,—Let us know,  
 Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,  
 When our deep plots do pall : and that should teach us,  
 There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
 Rough-hew them how we will.<sup>5</sup>

*Hor.* That is most certain.

*Ham.* Up from my cabin,  
 My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark  
 Grop'd I to find out them : had my desire ;  
 Finger'd their packet ; and, in fine, withdrew  
 T' mine own room again : making so bold,  
 My fears forgetting manners, to unseal

[4] *Mutines*—the French word for seditious or disobedient fellows in the army or fleet. *Bilboes*—the ship's prison. JOHNSON.  
 See Illustrations.

[5] Hamlet, delivering an account of his escape, begins with saying, That he *rashly*—and then is carried into a reflection upon the weakness of human wisdom. I *rashly*—praised be rashness for it—*Let us not think these events casual, but let us know, take notice and remember, that we sometimes succeed by indiscretion, when we fail by deep plots, and infer the perpetual superintendance and agency of the Divinity.* The observation is just, and will be allowed by every human being, who shall reflect on the course of his own life. JOHNSON.



Their grand commission ; where I found, Horatio,  
 A royal knavery ; an exact command,—  
 Larded with many several sorts of reasons,  
 Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,  
 With, ho ! such bugs and goblins in my life, 6—  
 That, on the supervise, no leisure bated, 7  
 No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,  
 My head should be struck off.

*Hor.* Is't possible ?

*Ham.* Here's the commission ; read it at more leisure.  
 But wilt thou hear now how I did proceed ?

*Hor.* Ay, beseech you.

*Ham.* Being thus benetted round with villanies,  
 Or I could make a prologue to my brains,  
 They had begun the play ;—I sat me down ;  
 Devis'd a new commission ; wrote it fair :  
 I once did hold it, as our statist do, 9  
 A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much  
 How to forget that learning ; but, sir, now  
 It did me yeoman's service. 1 Wilt thou know  
 The effect of what I wrote ?

*Hor.* Ay, good my lord.

*Ham.* An earnest conjuration from the king,—  
 As England was his faithful tributary ;  
 As love between them like the palm might flourish ;  
 As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,  
 And stand a comma 'tween their amities ;  
 And many such like as's of great charge, 2—  
 That, on the view and knowing of these contents,  
 Without debatement further, more, or less,

[6] With such causes of terror, rising from my character and designs.

A bug was no less a terrifick being than a goblin. We call it at present a bugbear. STEEVENS. JOHNSON.

[7] Bated, for allowed. WARBURTON.

[8] Or, in old English, signified before. MALONE.

[9] A statist is a statesman. STEEVENS.

Most of the great men of Shakspeare's times, whose autographs have been preserved, wrote very bad hands ; their secretaries very neat ones.

BLACKSTONE.  
 "I have, in my time, (says Montaigne) seene some, who by writing did earnestly get both their titles and living, to disavow their apprenticeship, marre their pen, and affect the ignorance of so vulgar a qualittie." Florio's translation, 1603, p. 125. RITSON.

[1] This yeomanly qualification was a most useful servant, or yeoman to me ; that is, did me eminent service. The ancient yeomen were famous for their military valour. STEEVENS.

[2] Asses heavily loaded. A quibble is intended between *as* the conditional particle, and *ass* the beast of burthen. JOHNSON.

He should the bearers put to sudden death,  
Not shriving-time allow'd.

*Hor.* How was this seal'd ;

*Ham.* Why, even in that was heaven ordinant ;  
I had my father's signet in my purse,  
Which was the model of that Danish seal ;  
Folded the writ up in form of the other ;  
Subscrib'd it ; gave't the impression ; plac'd it safely,  
The changeling never known :<sup>3</sup> Now, the next day  
Was our sea-fight ; and what to this was sequent  
Thou know'st already.

*Hor.* So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

*Ham.* Why, man, they did make love to this employ-  
ment ;

They are not near my conscience ; their defeat  
Does by their own insinuation grow :<sup>4</sup>  
'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes  
Between the pass and fell incensed points  
Of mighty opposites.

*Hor.* Why, what a king is this !

*Ham.* Does it not, think thee, stand me now upon ?  
He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother ;  
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes ;  
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,  
And with such cozenage ; is't not perfect conscience,  
To quit him with this arm ?<sup>5</sup> and is't not to be damn'd,  
To let this canker of our nature come  
In further evil ?

*Hor.* It must be shortly known to him from England,  
What is the issue of the business there.

*Ham.* It will be short : the interim is mine ;  
And a man's life's no more than to say, one.  
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,  
That to Laertes I forgot myself ;  
For by the image of my cause, I see  
The portraiture of his : I'll count his favours ;  
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me  
Into a towering passion.

*Hor.* Peace ; who comes here ?

[3] A *changeling* is a *child* which the fairies are supposed to leave in the room of that which they steal. JOHNSON.

[4] *Insinuation*, for corruptly obtruding themselves into his service. WARBURTON.

[5] To requite him, to pay him his due. JOHNSON.

*Enter OSRIC.*

*Osr.* Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

*Ham.* I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly?<sup>6</sup>

*Hor.* No, my good lord.

*Ham.* Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him: He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'Tis a chough;<sup>7</sup> but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

*Osr.* Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

*Ham.* I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit: Your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

*Osr.* I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

*Ham.* No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

*Osr.* It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

*Ham.* But yet, methinks it is very sultry and hot; or my complexion—

*Osr.* Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 'twere,—I cannot tell how.—My lord, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head: Sir, this is the matter,—

*Ham.* I beseech you remember—

[HAMLET moves him to put on his hat.]

*Osr.* Nay, good my lord; for my ease, in good faith, Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes: believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences,<sup>8</sup> of very soft society, and great showing: Indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry,<sup>9</sup> for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.<sup>1</sup>

*Ham.* Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you;—though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy

[6] A water-fly skips up and down upon the surface of the water, without any apparent purpose or reason, and is thence the proper emblem of a busy trifler. JOHNSON. [7] A kind of jackdaw. JOHNSON.

[8] Full of distinguishing excellencies. JOHNSON.

[9] The general preceptor of elegance; the card by which a gentleman is to direct his course, the calendar by which he is to choose his time, that what he does may be both excellent and seasonable. JOHNSON.

[1] You shall find him containing and comprising every quality which a gentleman would desire to contemplate for imitation. JOHNSON.

[2] This is designed as a specimen, and ridicule of the court jargon amongst the précieux of that time. The sense in english is, "Sir, he suffers nothing in your account of him, though to enumerate his good qualities particularly would be endless; yet when we had done our best, it would still come short."

the arithmetic of memory ; and yet but raw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article ; and his infusion of such dearth<sup>3</sup> and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror ; and, who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

*Osr.* Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

*Ham.* The concernancy, sir ? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath ?

*Osr.* Sir ?

*Hor.* Is't not possible to understand in another tongue ? You will do't, sir, really.

*Ham.* What imports the nomination of this gentleman ?

*Osr.* Of Laertes ?

*Hor.* His purse is empty already ; all his golden words are spent.

*Ham.* Of him, sir.

*Osr.* I know, you are not ignorant——

*Ham.* I would, you did, sir ; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me ;—Well, sir.

*Osr.* You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is——

*Ham.* I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence ;<sup>4</sup> but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

*Osr.* I mean, sir, for his weapon ; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.<sup>5</sup>

*Ham.* What's his weapon ?

*Osr.* Rapier and dagger.

*Ham.* That's two of his weapons ; but, well.

*Osr.* The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses : against the which he has impawned, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers,<sup>6</sup> and so : Three of the carriages, in

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of him. However, in strictness of truth, he is a great genius, and of a character so rarely to be met with, that to find any thing like him we must look into his mirror, and his imitators will appear no more than his shadows."

WARBURTON.

[3] *Dearth* is *dearness*, value, price. JOHNSON.

[4] I dare not pretend to know him, lest I should pretend to an equality : no man can completely know another, but by knowing himself, which is the utmost extent of human wisdom. JOHNSON.

[5] *In his meed*—in his excellence. JOHNSON.

[6] Under this term were comprehended four graduated straps, &c. that hung down in a belt on each side of its receptacle for the sword. I write this with a most gorgeous belt, at least as ancient as the time of James I. before me. It is of crimson velvet, embroidered with gold, and had belonged to the Somerset family. STEEVENS.

faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

*Ham.* What call you the carriages?

*Hor.* I knew you must be edified by the margent, ere you had done.<sup>7</sup>

*Osr.* The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

*Ham.* The phrase would be more german<sup>8</sup> to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides; I would, it might be hangers till then. But, on: Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish: Why is this impawned, as you call it?

*Osr.* The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid, on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

*Ham.* How, if I answer, no?

*Osr.* I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

*Ham.* Sir, I will walk here in the hall: If it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me: let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

*Osr.* Shall I deliver you so?

*Ham.* To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

*Osr.* I commend my duty to your lordship. [*Exit.*]

*Ham.* Yours, yours.—He does well, to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

*Hor.* This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.<sup>9</sup>

*Ham.* He did comply with his dug,<sup>1</sup> before he sucked it. Thus has he (and many more of the same breed, that, I know, the drossy age dotes on,) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter;

[7] Dr. Warburton very properly observes, that in the old books the gloss or comment was usually printed on the margent of the leaf. STEEV.

[8] *Mors german*—more akin. JOHNS.

[9] I see no peculiar propriety in the image of the lapwing. Osr. did not run till he had done his business. We may read—*This lapwing ran away.*—That is, *this fellow was full of unimportant bustle from his birth.* JOHNS.

[1] Shakspeare seems to have used *comply* in the sense in which we use the verb *compliment*. See before, Act II. sc. ii; “—let me *comply* with you in this garb.” TYEWHITT.

a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions ; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

*Enter a Lord.*

*Lord.* My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall : He sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time ?

*Ham.* I am constant to my purposes, they follow the king's pleasure : if his fitness speaks, mine is ready ; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

*Lord.* The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

*Ham.* In happy time.

*Lord.* The queen desires you, to use some gentle entertainment<sup>2</sup> to Laertes, before you fall to play.

*Ham.* She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

*Hor.* You will lose this wager, my lord.

*Ham.* I do not think so ; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice ; I shall win at the odds.<sup>3</sup> But thou would'st not think, how ill all's here about my heart : but it is no matter.

*Hor.* Nay, good my lord,——

*Ham.* It is but foolery ; but it is such a kind of gain-giving,<sup>4</sup> as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

*Hor.* If your mind dislike any thing, obey it : I will forestal their repair hither, and say, you are not fit.

*Ham.* Not a whit, we defy augury ; there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come ; if it be not to come, it will be now ; if it be not now, yet it will come : the readiness is all : Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows, what is't to leave betimes ? Let be.

*Enter King, Queen, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, and Attendants with foils, &c.*

*King.* Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.  
[*The King puts the hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET.*]

*Ham.* Give me your pardon, sir : I have done you wrong ;  
But pardon it, as you are a gentleman.

[2] Mild and temperate conversation. JOHNSON.

[3] I shall succeed with the advantage that I am allowed. MALONE.

[4] Gain-giving is the same as *misgiving*. STEEVENS.

This presence knows, and you must needs have heard,  
How I am punish'd with a sore distraction.

What I have done,

That might your nature, honour, and exception,  
Roughly awake, I hear proclaim was madness.<sup>5</sup>

Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never, Hamlet:

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,

And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,

Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.

Who does it then? His madness: If't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

Sir, in this audience,

Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,

That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,

And hurt my brother.

*Laer.* I am satisfied in nature,<sup>6</sup>

Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most

'To my revenge: but in my terms of honour,

I stand aloof; and will no reconciliation,

Till by some elder masters, of known honour,

I have a voice and precedent of peace,

To keep my name ungor'd: But till that time,

I do receive your offer'd love like love,

And will not wrong it.

*Ham.* I embrace it freely;

And will this brother's wager frankly play.—

Give us the foils; come on.

*Laer.* Come, one for me.

*Ham.* I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance

Your skill shall, like a star i'the darkest night,

Stick fiery off indeed.

*Laer.* You mock me, sir.

*Ham.* No, by this hand.

*King.* Give them the foils, young Osric.—Cousin  
Hamlet,

You know the wager?

*Ham.* Very well, my lord;

Your grace hath laid the odds o'the weaker side.

*King.* I do not fear it: I have seen you both:—

[5] I wish Hamlet had made some other defence; it is unsuitable to the character of a good or a brave man to shelter himself in falsehood. JOHNS.

[6] This was a piece of satire on fantastical honour. Though nature is satisfied, yet he will ask advice of older men of the sword, whether artificial honour ought to be contented with Hamlet's submission. STEEV.

But, since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

*Laer.* This is too heavy, let me see another.

*Ham.* This likes me well: These foils have all a length? [*They prepare to play.*]

*Osr.* Ay, my good lord.

*King.* Set me the stoups of wine upon that table<sup>7</sup>:—  
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,  
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,  
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;  
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;  
And in the cup an union shall he throw,<sup>8</sup>  
Richer than that which four successive kings  
In Denmark's crown have worn; Give me the cups;  
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,  
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,  
The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth,  
*Now the king drinks to Hamlet.*—Come, begin;—  
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

*Ham.* Come on, sir.

*Laer.* Come, my lord.

[*They play.*]

*Ham.* One.

*Laer.* No.

*Ham.* Judgment.

*Osr.* A hit, a very palpable hit.

*Laer.* Well,—again.

*King.* Stay, give me drink: Hamlet, this pearl is thine;<sup>9</sup>

Here's to thy health.—Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound; and cannon shot off within.*]

*Ham.* I'll play this bout first, set it by a while.

Come.—Another hit; What say you? [*They play.*]

*Laer.* A touch, a touch, I do confess.

*King.* Our son shall win.

*Queen.* He's fat, and scant of breath.—

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:

[7] *Stoup* is a common word in Scotland at this day, and denotes a pewter vessel, resembling our wine measure; but of no determinate quantity, that being ascertained by an adjunct, as *gallon-stoup*, *pint-stoup*, *nutchkin-stoup*, &c. The vessel in which they fetch or keep water is also called the *water-stoup*. A *stoup of wine* is therefore equivalent to a pitcher of wine. RITSON.

[8] An *union* is the finest sort of pearl, and has its place in all crowns and coronets. THEO.—To swallow a *pearl* in a draught seems to have been equally common to royal and mercantile prodigality. It may be observed, likewise, that *pearls* were supposed to possess an exhilarating quality. STEEVENS.

[9] Under pretence of throwing a *pearl* into the cup, the King may be supposed to drop some poisonous drug into the wine. Hamlet seems to suspect this, when he afterwards discovers the effects of the poison, and tauntingly asks him,—“Is the union here?” STEEVENS.



The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good madam,——

*King.* Gertrude, do not drink.

*Queen.* I will, my lord ;—I pray you, pardon me.

*King.* It is the poison'd cup ; it is too late. [*Aside.*]

*Ham.* I dare not drink yet, madam ; by and by.

*Queen.* Come, let me wipe thy face.

*Laer.* My lord, I'll hit him now.

*King.* I do not think it.

*Laer.* And yet it is almost against my conscience.

[*Aside.*]

*Ham.* Come, for the third, Laertes : You do but dally ;  
I pray you, pass with your best violence ;  
I am afraid, you make a wanton of me.

*Laer.* Say you so ? come on.

[*They flay.*]

*Osr.* Nothing neither way.

*Laer.* Have at you now.

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET ; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES.*]

*King.* Part them, they are incens'd.

*Ham.* Nay, come again. [*The Queen falls.*]

*Osr.* Look to the queen there, ho !

*Hor.* They bleed on both sides :—How is it, my lord ?

*Osr.* How is't, Laertes ?

*Laer.* Why, as a woodcock to my own springe, Osrice ;  
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

*Ham.* How does the queen ?

*King.* She swoons to see them bleed.

*Queen.* No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear  
Hamlet !—

The drink, the drink ;—I am poison'd ! [*Dies.*]

*Ham.* O villainy !—Ho ! let the door be lock'd :

Treachery ! seek it out. [*LAERTES falls.*]

*Laer.* It is here, Hamlet : Hamlet, thou art slain ;

No medicine in the world can do thee good,

In thee there is not half an hour's life ;

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,  
Unbated, and envenom'd : The foul practice

Hath turn'd itself on me ; lo, here I lie,

Never to rise again : Thy mother's poison'd ;

I can no more ; the king, the king's to blame.

*Ham.* The point

Envenom'd too !—

Then, venom, to thy work.

[*Stabs the King.*]

*Osr. & Lords.* Treason ! treason !

*King.* O, yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt.

*Ham.* Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane,  
Drink off this potion :—Is the union here ?  
Follow my mother. [*King dies.*

*Lacr.* He is justly serv'd ;  
It is a poison temper'd by himself.—  
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet ;  
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee ;  
Nor thine on me ! [*Dies.*

*Ham.* Heaven make thee free of it ! I follow thee.  
I am dead, Horatio :—Wretched queen, adieu !—  
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,  
That are but mutes or audience to this act,  
Had I but time, (as this fell sergeant, death,  
Is strict in his arrest,) O, I could tell you,—  
But let it be :—Horatio, I am dead ;  
Thou liv'st ; report me and my cause aright  
To the unsatisfied.

*Hor.* Never believe it ;  
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane,  
Here's yet some liquor left.

*Ham.* As thou'rt a man,—  
Give me the cup ; let go ; by heaven I'll have it.—  
O God !—Horatio, what a wounded name,  
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me ?  
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,  
Absent thee from felicity a while,  
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,  
To tell my story.— [*March afar off, and shot within.*  
What warlike noise is this ?

*Osr.* Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,  
To the ambassadors of England gives  
This warlike volley.

*Ham.* O, I die, Horatio ;  
The potent poison quite o'ercrows my spirit ;  
I cannot live to hear the news from England :  
But I do prophecy the election lights  
On Fortinbras ; he has my dying voice ;  
So tell him, with the occurrents, more or less,  
Which have solicited,—The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

*Hor.* Now cracks a noble heart ;—Good night, sweet prince ;

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest !<sup>1</sup>  
 Why does the drum come hither ? [March within.]

*Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors, and others.*

*Fort.* Where is this sight ?

*Hor.* What is it, you would see ?

If aught of woe, or wonder, cease your search.

*Fort.* This quarry cries on havoc !<sup>2</sup>—O proud death !  
 What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,  
 That thou so many princes, at a shot,  
 So bloodily hast struck ?

*1 Amb.* The sight is dismal ;  
 And our affairs from England come too late :  
 The ears are senseless, that should give us hearing,  
 To tell him, his commandment is fulfill'd,  
 That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead :  
 Where should we have our thanks ?

*Hor.* Not from his mouth,  
 Had it the ability of life to thank you ;  
 He never gave commandment for their death.  
 But since, so jump upon this bloody question,  
 You from the Polack wars, and you from England,  
 Are here arriv'd ; give order, that these bodies  
 High on a stage be placed to the view ;  
 And let me speak, to the yet unknowing world,  
 How these things come about : so shall you hear  
 Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts ;  
 Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters ;  
 Of deaths put on by cunning, and forc'd cause ;  
 And, in this upshot, purposes mistook  
 Fall'n on the inventors' heads : all this can I  
 Truly deliver.

*Fort.* Let us haste to hear it,  
 And call the noblest to the audience.  
 For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune ;  
 I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,  
 Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

*Hor.* Of that I shall have also cause to speak,  
 And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more :  
 But let this same be presently perform'd,  
 Even while men's minds are wild ; lest more mischance,  
 On plots, and errors, happen.

[1] See Illustrations.

[2] To cry on was to exclaim against. I suppose, when unfair sportsmen destroyed more quarry or game than was reasonable, the censure was to cry, *Havock.* JOHNSON.

*Fort.* Let four captains  
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage ;  
For he was likely, had he been put on,  
To have prov'd most royally : and, for his passage,  
The soldiers' music, and the rites of war,  
Speak loudly for him.—

Take up the bodies :—Such a sight as this  
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.

Go, bid the soldiers shoot. [*A dead march.*]

[*Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies ; after  
which, a peal of ordnance is shot off.*]

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**OTHELLO,  
THE MOOR OF VENICE.**

27

**VOL. VIII.**



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*ACT IV. Scene II.*

*Othello.* Heaven truly knows, that thou art false as hell.

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## OBSERVATIONS.

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THE beauties of this play impress themselves so strongly upon the attention of the reader, that they can draw no aid from critical illustration. The fiery openness of Othello, magnanimous, artless, and credulous, boundless in his confidence, ardent in his affection, inflexible in his resolution, and obdurate in his revenge ; the cool malignity of Iago, silent in his resentment, subtle in his designs, and studious at once of his interest and his vengeance ; the soft simplicity of Desdemona, confident of merit, and conscious of innocence, her artless perseverance on her suit, and her slowness to suspect that she can be suspected, are such proofs of Shakspeare's skill in human nature, as, I suppose, it is vain to seek in any modern writer. The gradual progress which Iago makes in the Moor's conviction, and the circumstances which he employs to inflame him, are so artfully natural, that, though it will perhaps not be said of him as he says of himself, that he is *a man not easily jealous*, yet we cannot but pity him, when at last we find him *perplexed in the extreme*.

There is always danger, lest wickedness, conjoined with abilities, should steal upon esteem, though it misses of approbation ; but the character of Iago is so conducted, that he is, from the first scene to the last, hated and despised.

Even the inferior characters of this play would be very conspicuous in any other piece, not only for their justness, but their strength. Cassio is brave, benevolent, and honest, ruined only by his want of stubbornness to resist an insidious invitation. Roderigo's suspicious credulity, and impatient submission to the cheats which he sees practised upon him, and which by persuasion he suffers to be repeated, exhibit a strong picture of a weak mind, betrayed by unlawful desires to a false friend ; and the virtue of Emilia is such as we often find, worn loosely, but not cast off, easy to commit small crimes, but quickened and alarmed at atrocious villainies.

The scenes from the beginning to the end are busy, varied by happy interchanges, and regularly promoting the progression of the story ; and the narrative in the end, though it tells but what is known already, yet is necessary to produce the death of Othello.

Had the scene opened in Cyprus, and the preceding incident been occasionally related, there had been little wanting to a drama of the most exact and scrupulous regularity.

JOHNSON.

**PERSONS REPRESENTED.**

*Duke of Venice.*

**BRABANTIO**, *a senator.*

*Two other Senators.*

**GRATIANO**, *brother to Brabantio.*

**LODOVICO**, *kinsman to Brabantio.*

**OTHELLO**, *the Moor :*

**CASSIO**, *his lieutenant ;*

**IAGO**, *his ancient.*

**RODERIGO**, *a Venetian gentleman.*

**MONTANO**, *Othello's predecessor in the government of  
Cyprus.*

*Clown, servant to Othello.*

*Herald.*

**DESDEMONA**, *daughter to Brabantio, and wife to  
Othello.*

**EMILIA**, *wife to Iago.*

**BIANCA**, *a courtesan, mistress to Cassio.*

*Officers, Gentlemen, Messengers, Musicians, Sailors,  
Attendants, &c.*

**SCENE**, *for the first act, in Venice ; during the rest  
of the play, at a seaport in Cyprus.*

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# OTHELLO.

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## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Venice. A Street. Enter RODERIGO and IAGO.*

*Roderigo.*

TUSH, never tell me, I take it much unkindly,  
That thou, Iago,—who hast had my purse,  
As if the strings were thine,—should'st know of this.

*Iago.* 'Sblood, but you will not hear me :—  
If ever I did dream of such a matter,  
Abhor me.

*Rod.* Thou told'st me, thou didst hold him in thy hate.  
*Iago.* Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones of  
the city,

In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,  
Oft capp'd to him ;<sup>1</sup>—and, by the faith of man,  
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place :  
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,  
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance,<sup>2</sup>  
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war ;  
And, in conclusion, nonsuits  
My mediators ; *for, certes*, says he,  
*I have already chose my officer.*

And what was he ?  
Forsooth, a great arithmetician,  
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,  
A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife ;<sup>3</sup>  
That never yet a squadron in the field,  
Nor the division of a battle knows  
More than a spinster ; unless the bookish theoretic,  
Wherein the toged consuls<sup>4</sup> can propose  
As masterly as he : mere prattle, without practice,

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[1] To *cap* is to salute by taking off the cap. It is still an academic phrase. M. MASON.

[2] *Circumstance* here signifies *circumlocution*. REED.

[3] See Illustrations.

[4] Venice was originally governed by *consuls* ; and consuls seems to have been commonly used for *counsellors*, as afterwards in this play. By *toged* perhaps is meant *peaceable*, in opposition to the *warlike* qualifications, which he had been speaking. MALONE.

Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election :  
 And I,—of whom his eyes had seen the proof,  
 At Rhodes, at Cyprus ; and on other grounds  
 Christian and heathen,—must be be-lee'd and calm'd  
 By debtor and creditor, this counter-caster ;<sup>5</sup>  
 He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,  
 And I, (God bless the mark !) his Moor-ship's ancient.

*Rod.* By heaven, I rather would have been his hang-  
 man.

*Iago.* But there's no remedy, 'tis the curse of service ;  
 Preferment goes by letter,<sup>6</sup> and affection,  
 Not by the old gradation, where each second  
 Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,  
 Whether I in any just term am affin'd  
 To love the Moor ?<sup>7</sup>

*Rod.* I would not follow him then.

*Iago.* O, sir, content you ;

I follow him to serve my turn upon him :  
 We cannot all be masters, nor all masters  
 Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark  
 Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,  
 That, doating on his own obsequious bondage,  
 Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,  
 For nought but provender ; and, when he's old, cashier'd ;  
 Whip me such honest knaves : Others there are,  
 Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,  
 Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves ;  
 And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,  
 Do well thrive by them, and, when they have lin'd their  
 coats,

Do themselves homage : these fellows have some soul ;  
 And such a one do I profess myself.

For, sir,

It is as sure as you are Roderigo,  
 Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago :  
 In following him, I follow but myself ;  
 Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,  
 But seeming so, for my peculiar end :  
 For when my outward action doth demonstrate  
 The native act and figure of my heart

[5] It was anciently the practice to reckon up sums with *counters*. So in *The Winter's Tale*, "Fifteen hundred shorn—What comes the wool to?—I cannot do't without *counters*." MALONE.

[6] By recommendation from powerful friends. JOHNSON.

[7] The meaning is, Do I stand within any such terms of propinquity or relation to the Moor, as that it is my duty to love him? JOHNSON.

In compliment extern,<sup>s</sup> 'tis not long after  
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve  
For daws to peck at : I am not what I am.

*Rod.* What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe,  
If he can carry't thus !

*Iago.* Call up her father,  
Rouse him : make after him, poison his delight,  
Proclaim him in the streets ; incense her kinsmen,  
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,  
Plague him with flies : though that his joy be joy,  
Yet throw such changes of vexation on't,  
As it may lose some colour.

*Rod.* Here is her father's house ; I'll call aloud.

*Iago.* Do ; with like timorous accent, and dire yell,  
As when, by night and negligence, the fire  
Is spied in populous cities.

*Rod.* What ho ! Brabantio ! signior Brabantio, ho !

*Iago.* Awake ! what, ho ! Brabantio ! thieves ! thieves !  
thieves !

Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags !  
Thieves ! thieves !

*BRABANTIO above, at a window.*

*Bra.* What is the reason of this terrible summons ?  
What is the matter there ?

*Rod.* Signior, is all your family within ?

*Iago.* Are your doors lock'd ?

*Bra.* Why ? Wherefore ask you this ?

*Iago.* Zounds, sir, you are robb'd ; for shame, put on  
your gown ;

Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul ;

Even now, very now, an old black ram

Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise ;

Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,

Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you :

Arise, I say.

*Bra.* What, have you lost your wits ?

*Rod.* Most reverend signior, do you know my voice

*Bra.* Not I ; What are you ?

*Rod.* My name is Roderigo.

*Bra.* The worse welcome :

I have charg'd thee, not to haunt about my doors.

In honest plainness thou hast heard me say,

My daughter is not for thee ; and now, in madness,

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[B]. In that which I do only for an outward show of civility. JOHNSON

Being full of supper, and distemp'ring draughts,  
Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come  
To start my quiet.

*Rod.* Sir, sir, sir,—

*Bra.* But thou must needs be sure,  
My spirit, and my place, have in them power  
To make this bitter to thee.

*Rod.* Patience, good sir.

*Bra.* What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is Venice;  
My house is not a grange.<sup>9</sup>

*Rod.* Most grave Brabantio,  
In simple and pure soul I come to you.

*Iago.* 'Zounds, sir, you are one of those, that will not  
serve God, if the devil bid you. Because we come to  
do you service, you think we are ruffians: You'll have  
your daughter covered with a Barbary horse; you'll  
have your nephews neigh to you: you'll have coursers  
for cousins, and gennets for Germans.<sup>10</sup>

*Bra.* What profane wretch art thou?

*Iago.* I am one, sir, that comes to tell you, your  
daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with  
two backs.

*Bra.* Thou art a villain.

*Iago.* You are—a senator.

*Bra.* This thou shalt answer; I know thee, Roderigo.

*Rod.* Sir, I will answer any thing. But I beseech you,  
If't be your pleasure, and most wise consent,  
(At partly, I find it is,) that your fair daughter,  
At this odd-even<sup>2</sup> and dull watch o'the night,  
Transported—with no worse nor better guard,  
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,—  
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor,—  
If this be known to you, and your allowance,  
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;  
But, if you know not this, my manners tell me,  
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe,  
That, from the sense of all civility,  
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence:  
Your daughter,—if you have not given her leave,—  
I say again, hath made a gross revolt;

[9] In Lincolnshire, and in other northern counties, they call every *loaf* house, or farm which stands solitary a *grange*. So in *Measure for Measure*:  
"—at the moated *grange* resides this dejected Mariana." T. WARTON.

[1] *Nephew*, in this instance has the power of the Latin word *nepos*, and signifies a grandson, or any lineal descendant. The alliteration in this passage caused Shakspeare to have recourse to it. A *jennet* is a Spanish horse.

[2] This *odd-even* is the interval between twelve at night, and, one in the morning. HENLEY.

Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes,  
 In an extravagant and wheeling stranger,  
 Of here and every where : Straight satisfy yourself :  
 If she be in her chamber, or your house,  
 Let loose on me the justice of the state  
 For thus deluding you.

*Bra.* Strike on the tinder, ho !  
 Give me a taper ;—call up all my people :—  
 This accident is not unlike my dream,  
 Belief of it oppresses me already :—  
 Light, I say ! light ! [Exit, from above.]

*Iago.* Farewell ; for I must leave you :  
 It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,  
 To be produc'd (as, if I stay, I shall,)  
 Against the Moor : For, I do know, the state,—  
 However this may gall him with some check,—  
 Cannot with safety cast him ; for he's embark'd  
 With such loud reason to the Cyprus' wars,  
 (Which even now stand in act,) that, for their souls,  
 Another of his fathom they have not,  
 To lead their business : In which regard,  
 Though I do hate him as I do hell pains,  
 Yet, for necessity of present life,  
 I must show out a flag and sign of love,  
 Which is indeed but sign. That you may surely find him,  
 Lead to the Sagittary the rais'd search ;  
 And there will I be with him. So, farewell. [Exit.]

*Enter, below, BRABANTIO and Servants with torches.*

*Bra.* It is too true an evil : gone she is ;  
 And what's to come of my despised time,<sup>3</sup>  
 Is naught but bitterness.—Now, Roderigo,  
 Where didst thou see her ?—O, unhappy girl !—  
 With the Moor, say'st thou ?—Who would be a father ?—  
 How didst thou know 'twas she ?—O, thou deceiv'st me  
 Past thought !—What said she to you ?—Get more tapers ;  
 Raise all my kindred.—Are they married, think you ?

*Rod.* Truly, I think, they are.

*Bra.* O heaven !—how got she out !—O treason of the  
 blood !—

Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds  
 By what you see them act.—Are there not charms,

[3] *Despised time*, is, time of no value : time in which

“ There's nothing serious in mortality,

“ The wine of life is drawn, and the mere dregs

“ Are left this vault to brag of.” *Macbeth.*

By which the property of youth and maidhood  
May be abus'd.<sup>4</sup> Have you not read, Roderigo,  
Of some such thing ?

*Rod.* Yes, sir ; I have indeed.

*Bra.* Call up my brother.—O, that you had had her !—  
Some one way, some another.—Do you know  
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor ?

*Rod.* I think, I can discover him ; if you please  
To get good guard, and go along with me.

*Bra.* Pray you, lead on. At every house I'll call ;  
I may command at most ;—Get weapons, ho !  
And raise some special officers of night.—  
On, good Roderigo ;—I'll deserve your pains. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II.

*The same. Another Street. Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Attendants.*

*Iago.* Though in the trade of war I have slain men,  
Yet do I hold it very stuff o' the conscience,<sup>5</sup>  
To do no contriv'd murder ; I lack iniquity  
Sometimes, to do me service : Nine or ten times  
I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the ribs.

*Oth.* 'Tis better as it is.

*Iago.* Nay, but he prated,  
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms  
Against your honour,  
That, with the little godliness I have,  
I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray, sir,  
Are you fast married ? for, be sure of this,—  
That the magnifico is much beloved ;  
And hath, in his effect, a voice potential  
As double as the duke's ;<sup>6</sup> he will divorce you ;  
Or put upon you what restraint and grievance  
The law (with all his might, to enforce it on,)  
Will give him cable.

*Oth.* Let him do his spite :  
My services, which I have done the signiory,  
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know,

[4] By which the faculties of a young virgin may be infatuated, and made subject to illusions and false imagination :

“ wicked dreams abuse

“ The curtain'd sleep.” *Macbeth.*

JOHNSON.

[5] This expression to common readers appears harsh. *Stuff* of the conscience is, substance, or essence of the conscience. *Stuff* is a word of great force in the Teutonic languages. The elements are called in Dutch *Hoofd stoffen*, or head stuffs. JOHNSON.

[6] See Illustrations.



(Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,  
I shall promulgate,) I fetch my life and being  
From men of royal siege;<sup>7</sup> and my demerits<sup>8</sup>  
May speak, unbonneted,<sup>9</sup> to as proud a fortune  
As this that I have reach'd: For know, Iago,  
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,  
I would not my unhoused free condition  
Put into circumscription and confine  
For the sea's worth. But, look! what lights come  
yonder?

*Enter CASSIO, at a distance, and certain Officers with  
torches.*

*Iago.* These are the raised father, and his friends:  
You were best go in.

*Oth.* Not I: I must be found;  
My parts, my title, and my perfect soul,  
Shall manifest it rightly. Is it they?

*Iago.* By Janus, I think no.

*Oth.* The servants of the duke, and my lieutenant.  
The goodness of the night upon you, friends!  
What is the news?

*Cas.* The duke does greet you, general;  
And he requires your haste-post-haste appearance,  
Even on the instant.

*Oth.* What is the matter, think you?

*Cas.* Something from Cyprus, as I may divine;  
It is a business of some heat: the galleys  
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers  
This very night at one another's heels;  
And many of the consuls, rais'd, and met,  
Are at the duke's already: You have been hotly call'd for;  
When, being not at your lodging to be found,  
The senate hath sent about three several quests,  
To search you out.

*Oth.* 'Tis well I am found by you.  
I will but spend a word here in the house,

[7] Men who have sat upon royal thrones. Siege is used for seat by other authors. STEEVENS.

[8] *Demerits* has the same meaning in our author, and many others of that age, as *merits*. STEEVENS.

[9] Mr. Fuseli explains the passage as follows: "I am his equal or superior in rank; and were it not so, such are my demerits, that, *unbonneted*, without the addition of patrician or senatorial dignity, they may speak to as proud a fortune, &c. At Venice the *bonnet*, as well as the *toge*, is a badge of aristocratic honours to this day." STEEVENS.

[1] Free from domestic cares. A thought natural to an adventurer. JOHN.

And go with you.

[*Exit.*]

*Cas.* Ancient, what makes he here ?

*Iago.* 'Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land carack;<sup>2</sup>  
If it prove lawful prize, he's made forever.

*Cas.* I do not understand.

*Iago.* He's married.

*Cas.* To who ?

*Re-enter OTHELLO.*

*Iago.* Marry, to—Come, captain, will you go ?

*Oth.* Have with you.

*Cas.* Here comes another troop to seek for you.

*Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, and Officers of night,  
with torches and weapons.*

*Iago.* It is Brabantio :—general, be advis'd ;<sup>3</sup>  
He comes to bad intent.

*Oth.* Hola ! stand there !

*Rod.* Signior, it is the Moor.

*Bra.* Down with him, thief ! [*They draw on both sides.*]

*Iago.* You, Roderigo ! come, sir, I am for you.

*Oth.* Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will  
rust them.—

Good signior, you shall more command with years,  
Than with your weapons.

*Bra.* O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd my  
daughter ?

Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her ;

For I'll refer me to all things of sense,

If she in chains of magic were not bound,

Whether a maid—so tender, fair, and happy :

So opposite to marriage, that she shunn'd

The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,

Would ever have, to incur a general mock,

Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom

Of such a thing as thou ; to fear, not to delight.

Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense,

That thou hast practis'd on her with foul charms ;

Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,

That waken motion :—I'll have it disputed on ;

'Tis probable, and palpable to thinking.

I therefore apprehend and do attach thee,

For an abuser of the world, a practiser

[2] A *carack* is a ship of great bulk, and commonly of great value ; perhaps what we now call a *galloon*. JOHNSON.

[3] That is, be *cool* ; be *cautious* ; be *discreet*. JOHNSON.

Of arts inhibited and out of warrant :—  
Lay hold upon him ; if he do resist,  
Subdue him at his peril.

*Oth.* Hold your hands,  
Both you of my inclining, and the rest :  
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it  
Without a prompter.—Where will you that I go  
To answer this your charge ?

*Bra.* To prison : till fit time  
Of law, and course of direct session,  
Call thee to answer.

*Oth.* What if I do obey ?  
How may the duke be therewith satisfied ;  
Whose messengers are here about my side,  
Upon some present business of the state,  
To bring me to him ?

*Off.* 'Tis true, most worthy signior,  
The duke's in council ; and your noble self,  
I am sure, is sent for.

*Bra.* How ! the duke in council !  
In this time of the night !—Bring him away :  
Mine's not an idle cause : the duke himself,  
Or any of my brothers of the state,  
Cannot but feel this wrong, as 'twere their own :  
For if such actions may have passage free,  
Bond-slaves, and pagans, shall our statesmen be.

[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III.

*The same.* A Council-Chamber. The Duke, and Senators, sitting  
at a table ; Officers attending.

*Duke.* There is no composition in these news,<sup>4</sup>  
That gives them credit.

*1 Sen.* Indeed, they are disproportion'd ;  
My letters say, a hundred and seven galleys.

*Duke.* And mine, a hundred and forty.

*2 Sen.* And mine, two hundred :

But though they jump not on a just account,  
(As in these cases where they aim reports,<sup>5</sup>  
'Tis oft with difference,) yet do they all confirm  
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.

[4] Composition, for consistency concordancy. WARBURTON.

[5] Where men report not by certain knowledge, but by aim and conjecture. JOHNSON.

*Duke.* Nay, it is possible enough to judgment ;  
I do not so secure me in the error,  
But the main article I do approve  
In fearful sense.

*Sailor.* [*within.*] What ho ! what ho ! what ho !

*Enter an Officer with a Sailor.*

*Off.* A messenger from the gallies.

*Duke.* Now ? the business ?

*Sail.* The Turkish preparation makes for Rhodes :  
So was I bid report here to the state,  
By signior Angelo.

*Duke.* How say you by this change ?

*1 Sen.* This cannot be,  
By no assay of reason ;<sup>6</sup> 'tis a pageant,  
To keep us in false gaze : When we consider  
The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk ;  
And let ourselves again but understand,  
That, as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes,  
So may he with more facile question bear it,<sup>7</sup>  
For that it stands not in such warlike brace,  
But altogether lacks the abilities  
That Rhodes is dress'd in :—if we make thought of this,  
We must not think, the Turk is so unskilful,  
To leave that latest which concerns him first ;  
Neglecting an attempt of ease, and gain,  
To wake, and wage, a danger profitless.

*Duke.* Nay, in all confidence, he's not for Rhodes.

*Off.* Here is more news.

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,  
Steering with due course toward the isle of Rhodes,  
Have there inointed them with an after fleet.

*1 Sen.* Ay, so I thought :—How many, as you guess ?

*Mess.* Of thirty sail : and now do they re-stem  
Their backward course, bearing with frank appearance  
Their purposes toward Cyprus.—Signior Montano,  
Your trusty and most valiant servitor,  
With his free duty recommends you thus,  
And prays you to believe him.

*Duke.* 'Tis certain then for Cyprus.—  
Marcus Lucchesé, is he not in town ?

[6] Bring it to the test, examine it by reason as we examine metals by the assay, it will be found counterfeit by all trials. JOHNSON.

[7] He may carry it with less dispute, with less opposition. MALONE.

1 *Sen.* He's now in Florence.

*Duke.* Write from us; wish him post-post-haste :  
despatch.

1 *Sen.* Here comes Brabantio, and the valiant Moor.

*Enter BRABANTIO, OTHELLO, IAGO, RODERIGO, and  
Officers.*

*Duke.* Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you  
Against the general enemy Ottoman.<sup>8</sup>

—I did not see you; welcome, gentle signior; [*To BRA.*  
We lack'd your counsel and your help to night.

*Bra.* So did I yours: Good your grace, pardon me;  
Neither my place, nor aught I heard of business,  
Hath rais'd me from my bed; nor doth the general care  
Take hold on me; for my particular grief  
Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature,  
That it engults and swallows other sorrows,  
And it is still itself.

*Duke.* Why, what's the matter?

*Bra.* My daughter! O, my daughter!

*Sen.* Dead?

*Bra.* Ay, to me;

She is abus'd, stol'n from me, and corrupted  
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks:<sup>9</sup>  
For nature so preposterously to err,  
Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,  
Sans witchcraft could not—

*Duke.* Whoe'er he be, that, in this foul proceeding,  
Hath thus beguil'd your daughter of herself,  
And you of her, the bloody book of law  
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter,  
After your own sense; yea, though our proper son  
Stood in your action.

*Bra.* Humbly I thank your grace.

[8] It was usual for the Venetians to employ strangers, and even moors, in their wars. REED.—It is part of the policy of the Venetian state never to entrust the command of an army to a native. MALONE.

[9] Rymer has ridiculed this circumstance as unbecoming, both for its weakness and superstition, the gravity of the accuser, and the dignity of the tribunal: but his criticism only exposes his own ignorance. The circumstance was not only exactly in character, but urged with the greatest address, as the thing chiefly to be insisted on. For by the Venetian law, the giving love-potions was very criminal, as Shakspeare without question well understood. And therefore in the preceding scene, Brabantio calls them

“—arts inhibited and out of warrant.” WARBURTON.

Though I believe Shakspeare knew no more of this Venetian law than I do, yet he was well acquainted with the edicts of that sapient prince king James the first, “against practisers of arts inhibited and out of warrant.”

STEEVEN.

Here is the man, this Moor ; whom now, it seems,  
Your special mandate, for the state affairs,  
Hath hither brought.

*Duke & Sen.* We are very sorry for it.

*Duke.* What, in your own part, can you say to this?  
[To OTHELLO.]

*Bra.* Nothing, but this is so.

*Oth.* Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,  
My very noble and approv'd good masters,—  
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,  
It is most true ; true, I have married her ;  
The very head and front of my offending  
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,  
And little bless'd with the set phrase of peace ;  
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,  
Till now some nine moons wasted, they have us'd  
Their dearest action in the tented field ;  
And little of this great world can I speak,  
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle ;  
And therefore little shall I grace my cause,  
In speaking for myself : Yet, by your gracious patience,  
I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver  
Of my whole course of love ; what drugs, what charms,  
What conjuration, and what mighty magic  
(For such proceeding I am charg'd withal,)  
I won his daughter with.

*Bra.* A maiden never bold ;  
Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion  
Blush'd at herself ; And she,—in spite of nature,  
Of years, of country, credit, every thing,—  
To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on ?  
It is a judgment maim'd, and most imperfect,  
That will confess—perfection so could err  
Against all rules of nature ; and must be driven  
To find out practiees of cunning hell,  
Why this should be. I therefore vouch again,  
That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,  
Or with some dram conjur'd to this effect,  
He wrought upon her.

*Duke.* To vouch this, is no proof ;  
Without more certain and more overt test,  
Than these thin habits, and poor likelihoods.  
Of modern seeming, do prefer against him.

1 *Sen.* But, Othello, speak ;—

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[1] Weak show of slight appearances. JOHNSON.—So modern is generally used by Shakspeare. MALONE.

Did you by indirect and forced courses  
 Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?  
 Or came it by request, and such fair question  
 As soul to soul affordeth?

*Oth.* I beseech you,  
 Send for the lady to the Sagittary,  
 And let her speak of me before her father:  
 If you do find me foul in her report,  
 The trust, the office, I do hold of you,  
 Not only take away, but let your sentence  
 Even fall upon my life.

*Duke.* Fetch Desdemona hither.

*Oth.* Ancient, conduct them; you best know the place.

[*Exc. IAGO and Attendants.*]

And, till she come, as truly as to heaven  
 I do confess the vices of my blood,  
 So justly to your grave ears I'll present  
 How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,  
 And she in mine.

*Duke.* Say it, Othello.

*Oth.* Her father lov'd me; oft invited me;  
 Still question'd me the story of my life,  
 From year to year; the battles, sieges, fortunes,  
 That I have pass'd.  
 I ran it through, even from my boyish days,  
 To the very moment that he bade me tell it.  
 Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances,  
 Of moving accidents, by flood, and field;  
 Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach;  
 Of being taken by the insolent foe,  
 And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,  
 And portance in my travel's history:  
 Wherein of antres vast,<sup>2</sup> and desarts idle,<sup>3</sup>  
 Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch  
 heaven,

It was my hint to speak, such was the process;  
 And of the Cannibals that each other eat,  
 The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads  
 Do grow beneath their shoulders.<sup>4</sup> These things to hear,  
 Would Desdemona seriously incline:  
 But still the house affairs would draw her thence;  
 Which ever as she could with haste despatch,

[2] *Antres*, French, *caves* and *dens*. See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

[3] This word is used in another passage in this act. "—either to have it steril with *idleness*, or manured with industry." MALONE.

[4] See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

She'd come again, and with a greedy ear  
 Devour up my discourse : Which I observing,  
 Took once a pliant hour ; and found good means  
 To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,  
 That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,  
 Whereof by parcel she had something heard,  
 But not intentively : I did consent ;  
 And often did beguile her of her tears,  
 When I did speak of some distressful stroke,  
 That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,  
 She gave me for my pains a world of sighs ;  
 She swore,—In faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange ;  
 'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful :  
 She wish'd, she had not heard it ; yet she wish'd  
 That heaven had made her such a man : she thank'd me ;  
 And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,  
 I should but teach him how to tell my story,  
 And that would woo her. Upon this hint, I spake :  
 She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd ;  
 And I lov'd her, that she did pity them.  
 This only is the witchcraft I have us'd ;  
 Here comes the lady, let her witness it.

*Enter DESDEMONA, IAGO, and Attendants.*

*Duke.* I think, this tale would win my daughter too.—  
 Good Brabantio,  
 Take up this mangled matter at the best :  
 Men do their broken weapons rather use,  
 Than their bare hands.

*Bra.* I pray you, hear her speak ;  
 If she confess, that she was half the wooer,  
 Destruction on my head, if my bad blame  
 Light on the man !—Come hither, gentle mistress ;  
 Do you perceive in all this noble company,  
 Where most you owe obedience ?

*Des.* My noble father,  
 I do perceive here a divided duty :  
 To you, I am bound for life, and education ;  
 My life, and education, both do learn me  
 How to respect you ; you are the lord of duty,  
 I am hitherto your daughter : But here's my husband ;  
 And so much duty as my mother show'd  
 To you, preferring you before her father,  
 So much I challenge that I may profess  
 Due to the Moor, my lord.



*Bra.* God be with you !—I have done :—  
Please it your grace, | on to the state affairs ;  
I had rather to adopt a child, than get it.—  
Come hither, Moor :

I here do give thee that with all my heart,  
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart  
I would keep from thee.—For your sake, jewel,  
I am glad at soul I have no other child ;  
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,  
To hang clogs on them.—I have done, my lord.

*Duke.* Let me speak like yourself ;<sup>5</sup> and lay a sentence,  
Which, as a grise,<sup>6</sup> or step, may help these lovers  
Into your favour.

When remedies are past, the griefs are ended,  
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.  
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone,  
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.  
What cannot be preserv'd when fortune takes,  
Patience her injury a mockery makes.  
The robb'd, that smiles, steals something from the thief ;  
He robs himself, that spends a bootless grief.

*Bra.* So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile ;  
We lose it not, so long as we can smile.  
He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears  
But the free comfort which from thence he hears :<sup>7</sup>  
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow,  
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.  
These sentences, to sugar, or to gall,  
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal :  
But words are words ; I never yet did hear,  
That the bruis'd heart was pierced through the ear.<sup>8</sup>  
I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of state.

*Duke.* The Turk with a most mighty preparation  
makes for Cyprus :—Othello, the fortitude of the place  
is best known to you : And though we have there a  
substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet opinion, a  
sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer voice

[5] i. e. Let me speak as yourself would speak, were you not too much heated with passion. Sir J. REYNOLDS.

[6] *Grise* from degree. A *grise* is a step. So in *Timon*,  
“—for every *grise* of fortune  
“ Is smooth'd by that below.”

STEEVENS.

[7] But the moral precepts of consolation, which are liberally bestowed on occasion of the sentence. JOHNSON.

[8] *A heart pierced through the ear*, is a heart which (to use our poet's words elsewhere) has granted a penetrable entrance to the language of consolation. MALONE.—See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

on you : you must therefore be content to slubber<sup>9</sup> the gloss of your new fortunes, with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

*Oth.* The tyrant custom, most grave senators,  
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war  
My thrice-driven bed of down.<sup>1</sup> I do agnize<sup>2</sup>  
A natural and prompt alacrity,  
I find in hardness ; and do undertake  
These present wars against the Ottomites.  
Most humbly therefore bending to your state,  
I crave fit disposition for my wife ;  
Due reference of place, and exhibition ;<sup>3</sup>  
With such accommodation, and besort,  
As levels with her breeding.

*Duke.* If you please,  
Be't at her father's.

*Bra.* I'll not have it so.

*Oth.* Nor I.

*Des.* Nor I ; I would not there reside,  
To put my father in impatient thoughts,  
By being in his eye. Most gracious duke,  
To my unfolding lend a gracious ear ;  
And let me find a charter in your voice,  
To assist my simpleness.

*Duke.* What would you, Desdemona ?

*Des.* That I did love the Moor to live with him,  
My downright violence and storm of fortunes<sup>4</sup>  
May trumpet to the world ; my heart's subdued  
Even to the very quality of my lord :<sup>5</sup>  
I saw Othello's visage in his mind ;<sup>6</sup>  
And to his honours and his valiant parts,  
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.  
So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,  
A moth of peace, and he go to the war,  
The rites, for which I love him, are bereft me,

[9] To *slubber* is to *obscure*. STEEVENS.

[1] A *driven* bed, is a bed for which the feathers are selected, by *driving* with a fan, which separates the light from the heavy. JOHNSON.

[2] *Agnize*, acknowledge, confess, avow. STEEVENS.

[3] *Exhibition*'s allowance. The word is at present used only at the universities. STEEVENS.

[4] Breach of common rules and obligations. JOHNSON.

[5] *Quality* here means *profession*. MALONE.

[6] It must raise no wonder, that I loved a man of an appearance so little engaging ; I saw his face only in his mind ; the greatness of his character reconciled me to his form. JOHNSON.

And I a heavy interim shall support  
By his dear absence : Let me go with him.

*Oth.* Your voices, lords :—'beseech you, let her will  
Have a free way.

Vouch with me, heaven ; I therefore beg it not,  
To please the palate of my appetite ;  
Nor to comply with heat, the young affects,  
In my distinct and proper satisfaction ;  
But to be free and bounteous to her mind :  
And heaven defend your good souls,<sup>7</sup> that you think  
I will your serious and great business scant,  
For she is with me : No, when light-wing'd toys  
Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dulness  
My speculative and active instruments,  
That my disports corrupt and taint my business,  
Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,  
And all indign and base adversities  
Make head against my estimation !

*Duke.* Be it as you shall privately determine,  
Either for her stay, or going : the affair cries—haste,  
And speed must answer it ; you must hence to-night.

*Des.* To-night, my lord ?

*Duke.* This night.

*Oth.* With all my heart.

*Duke.* At nine i' the morning here we'll meet again.  
—Othello, leave some officer behind,  
And he shall our commission bring to you ;  
With such things else of quality and respect,  
As doth import you.

*Oth.* Please your grace, my ancient ;  
A man he is of honesty, and trust ;  
To his conveyance I assign my wife,  
With what else needful your good grace shall think  
To be sent after me.

*Duke.* Let it be so.—

Good-night to every one.—And, noble signior, [*To BRA.*  
If virtue no delighted beauty lack,<sup>8</sup>  
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

*I Sen.* Adieu, brave Moor ! use Desdemona well.

*Bra.* Look to her, Moor ; have a quick eye to see ;  
She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.

[*Exeunt Duke, Senators, Officers, &c.*]

[7] To defend is to forbid. From *defendre*, Fr. STEVENS.

[8] *Delighted* is used by Shakspeare in the sense of *delighting* or *delightful*. See *Cymbolins*, act v.

"Whom best I love, I cross, to make my gift,

"The more delayed, *delighted*."

*Oth.* My life upon her faith.—Honest Iago,  
My Desdemona must I leave to thee ;  
I pr'ythee, let thy wife attend on her ;  
And bring them after in the best advantage.—  
Come, Desdemona ; I have but an hour  
Of love, of worldly matters and direction,  
To spend with thee : we must obey the time.

[*Exc.* OTHELLO and DESDEMONA.]

*Rod.* Iago.

*Iago.* What say'st thou, noble heart ?

*Rod.* What will I do, thinkest thou ?

*Iago.* Why, go to bed, and sleep.

*Rod.* I will incontinently drown myself.

*Iago.* Well, if thou dost, I shall never love thee after it.  
Why, thou silly gentleman !

*Rod.* It is silliness to live, when to live is a torment ;  
and then have we a prescription to die, when death is  
our physician.

*Iago.* O villainous ! I have looked upon the world for  
four times seven years ! and since I could distinguish  
between a benefit and an injury, I never found a man  
that knew how to love himself. Ere I would say, I  
would drown myself for the love of a Guinea-hen,<sup>9</sup> I  
would change my humanity with a baboon.

*Rod.* What should I do ? I confess it is my shame to  
be so fond ; but it is not in virtue to amend it.

*Iago.* Virtue ? a fig ! 'tis in ourselves, that we are thus,  
or thus. Our bodies are our gardens ; to the which, our  
wills are gardeners : so that if we will plant nettles, or  
sow lettuce ; set hyssop, and weed up thyme ; supply it  
with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many ; ei-  
ther to have it steril with idleness, or manured with indus-  
try ; why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies  
in our wills. If the balance of our lives had not one scale  
of reason to poise another of sensuality, the blood and  
baseness of our natures would conduct us to most pre-  
posterous conclusions : But we have reason to cool our ra-  
ging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts ; where-  
of I take this, that you call—love, to be a sect, or scion.

*Rod.* It cannot be.

*Iago.* It is merely a lust of the blood, and a permission  
of the will. Come, be a man. Drown thyself ? drown  
cats, and blind puppies. I have professed me thy friend,  
and I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of per-

[9] A *guinea-hen* was anciently the cant term for a prostitute. STEEV.

durable toughness. I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse; follow these wars; defeat thy favour with an usurped beard;<sup>1</sup> I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be, that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor,—put money in thy purse;—nor he his to her: it was a violent commencement, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration;<sup>2</sup>—put but money in thy purse.—These Moors are changeable in their wills;—fill thy purse with money: the food that to him now is as luscious as locusts,<sup>3</sup> shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida. She must change for youth: when she is sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice.—She must have change, she must: therefore put money in thy purse.—If thou wilt needs damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning. Make all the money thou canst: If sanctimony and a frail vow, betwixt an erring Barbarian<sup>4</sup> and a supersubtle Venetian, be not too hard for my wits, and all the tribe of hell, thou shalt enjoy her; therefore make money. A pox of drowning thyself! It is clean out of the way: seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy, than to be drowned and go without her.

*Rod.* Wilt thou be fast to my hopes, if I depend on the issue?

*Iago.* Thou art sure of me;—Go, make money:—I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor: My cause is hearted; thine hath no less reason: Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him: if thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, and me a sport. There are many events in the womb of time, which will be delivered. Traverse; go; provide thy money. We will have more of this to-morrow. Adieu.

*Rod.* Where shall we meet i'the morning?

*Iago.* At my lodging.

*Rod.* I'll be with thee betimes.

*Iago.* Go to; farewell. Doyou hear, Roderigo?

[1] Thus, in Don Quixote, Cardenio defeated his favour by cutting off his beard, and the Barber his, by putting one on. HENLEY.

[2] We may read, *It was a violent commencement*, and thou shalt see an answerable sequel. An opposition of terms seems intended. JOHNSON.

[3] That viscous substance which the pod of the locust contains, is, perhaps, of all others, the most luscious. From its likeness to honey, in consistency and flavour, the locust is called the honey-tree also. Its seeds, enclosed in a long pod, lie buried in the juice. HENLEY.

[4] *Erring*, for *errant*. So in *Hamlet*:

"Th' extravagant and *erring* spirit hies to his confine." STEEVENS.

*Rod.* What say you ?

*Iago.* No more of drowning, do you hear.

*Rod.* I am changed. I'll sell all my land.

*Iago.* Go to ; farewell : put money enough in your purse.

[*Exit* RODERIGO.]

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse :

For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,

If I would time expend with such a snipe,

But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor ;

And it is thought abroad, that 'twixt my sheets

He has done my office : I know not if't be true ;

But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,

Will do, as if for surety. He holds me well ;

The better shall my purpose work on him.

Cassio's a proper man : Let me see now ;

To get his place, and to plume up my will ;

A double knavery,—How ? how ?—Let me see :—

After some time, to abuse Othello's ear,

That he is too familiar with his wife :—

He hath a person, and a smooth dispose,

To be suspected ; fram'd to make women false.

The Moor is of a free and open nature,

That thinks men honest, that but seem to be so ;

And will as tenderly be led by the nose,

As asses are.

I have't ;—it is engender'd :—Hell and night

Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.

[*Exit.*]

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Seaport Town in Cyprus. A Platform. Enter MONTANO and two Gentlemen.*

*Mon.* What from the cape can you discern at sea ?

*1 Gent.* Nothing at all : it is a high-wrought flood ;  
I cannot, 'twixt the heaven and the main,  
Descry a sail.

*Mon.* Methinks, the wind hath spokę aloud at land ;  
A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements :

If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,

What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,  
Can hold the mortise ? what shall we hear of this ?

*2 Gent.* A segregation of the Turkish fleet :  
For dobut stand upon the foaming shore,

The chiding billow seems to pelt the clouds ;  
 The wind-shak'd surge, with high and monstrous main,  
 Seems to cast water on the burning bear,  
 And quench the guards, of the ever-fixed pole.<sup>5</sup>  
 I never did like molestation view  
 On th' enchafed flood.

*Mon.* If that the Turkish fleet  
 Be not inshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd ;  
 It is impossible they bear it out.

*Enter a third Gentleman.*

*3 Gent.* News, lords ! our wars are done ;  
 The desperate tempest hath so bang'd the Turks,  
 That their designment halts : A noble ship of Venice  
 Hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance  
 On most part of their fleet.

*Mon.* How ! is this true ?

*3 Gent.* The ship is here put in,  
 A Veronesé ; Michael Cassio,  
 Lieutenant to the warlike Moor, Othello,  
 Is come on shore : the Moor himself's at sea,  
 And is in full commission here for Cyprus.

*Mon.* I am glad on't ; 'tis a worthy governor.

*3 Gent.* But this same Cassio,—though he speak of  
 comfort,  
 Touching the Turkish loss,—yet he looks sadly,  
 And prays the Moor be safe ; for they were parted  
 With foul and violent tempest.

*Mon.* 'Pray heaven he be ;  
 For I have serv'd him, and the man commands  
 Like a full soldier. Let's to the sea-side, ho !  
 As well to see the vessel that's come in,  
 As throw out our eyes for brave Othello ;  
 Even till we make the main, and the aerial blue,  
 An indistinct regard.

*3 Gent.* Come, let's do so ;  
 For every minute is expectancy  
 Of more arrivance.

*Enter CASSIO.*

*Cas.* Thanks to the valiant of this warlike isle  
 That so approve the Moor ; O, let the heavens  
 Give him defence against the elements,  
 For I have lost him on a dangerous sea !

*Mon.* Is he well shipp'd ?

[5] Alluding to the star Arctophylax, which literally signifies the guard  
 of the bear. STEEVENS.

*Cas.* His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot  
Of very expert and approv'd allowance ;  
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,  
Stand in bold cure.

[*Within.*] A sail, a sail, a sail !

*Enter another Gentleman.*

*Cas.* What noise ?

*4 Gent.* The town is empty ; on the brow o'the sea  
Stand ranks of people, and they cry--a sail.

*Cas.* My hopes do shape him for the governor.

*2 Gent.* They do discharge their shot of courtesy ;  
Our friends, at least. [*Guns heard.*]

*Cas.* I pray you, sir, go forth,  
And give us truth who 'tis that is arriv'd.

*2 Gent.* I shall. [*Exit.*]

*Mon.* But, good lieutenant, is your general wiv'd ?

*Cas.* Most fortunately : he hath achiev'd a maid  
That paragon's description, and wild fame ;  
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,  
And in the essential vesture of creation,  
Does bear all excellency.—How now ? who has put in ?

*Re-enter second Gentleman.*

*2 Gent.* 'Tis one Iago, ancient to the general.

*Cas.* He has had most favourable and happy speed :  
Tempests themselves, high seas, and howling winds,  
The gutter'd rocks, and congregated sands,—  
Traitors ensteep'd to clog the guiltless keel,  
As having sense of beauty, do omit  
Their mortal natures, letting go safely by  
The divine Desdemona.

*Mon.* What is she ?

*Cas.* She that I spake of, our great captain's captain,  
Left in the conduct of the bold Iago ;  
Whose footing here anticipates our thoughts,  
A se'nnight's speed.—Great Jove, Othello guard,  
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath ;  
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,  
Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,  
Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,  
And bring all Cyprus comfort !—O, behold,

*Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, IAGO, RODERIGO, and Attendants.*

The riches of the ship is come on shore !  
Ye men of Cyprus, let her have your knees :—  
Hail to thee, lady ! and the grace of heaven,



Before, behind thee, and on every hand,  
Enwheel thee round!

*Des.* I thank you, valiant Cassio.

What tidings can you tell me of my lord ?

*Cas.* He is not yet arriv'd ; nor know I aught  
But that he's well, and will be shortly here.

*Des.* O, but I fear ;—How lost you company ?

*Cas.* The great contention of the sea and skies  
Parted our fellowship : But, hark ! a sail.

[*Cry within, A sail, a sail ! Then guns heard.*

*2 Gent.* They give their greeting to the citadel ;  
This likewise is a friend.

*Cas.* See for the news.— [Exit Gentleman.  
Good ancient, you are welcome ;—Welcome, mistress :—  
[To EMILIA.

Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,  
That I extend my manners ; 'tis my breeding  
That gives me this bold show of courtesy. [*Kissing her.*

*Iago.* Sir, would she give you so much of her lips,  
As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,  
You'd have enough.

*Des.* Alas, she has no speech.

*Iago.* In faith, too much ;

I find it still, when I have list to sleep :  
Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,  
She puts her tongue a little in her heart,  
And chides with thinking.

*Emil.* You have little cause to say so.

*Iago.* Come on, come on ; you are pictures out of doors,  
Bells in your parlours, wild cats in your kitchens,  
Saints in your injuries,<sup>6</sup> devils being offended,  
Players in your housewifery, and housewives in your beds.

*Des.* O, fye upon thee, slanderer !

*Iago.* Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk ;  
You rise to play, and go to bed to work.

*Emil.* You shall not write my praise.

*Iago.* No, let me not.

*Des.* What would'st thou write of me, if thou should'st  
praise me ?

*Iago.* O gentle lady, do not put me to't ;  
For I am nothing, if not critical.<sup>7</sup>

*Des.* Come on, assay :—There's one gone to the har-  
bour ?

[6] When you have a mind to do injuries, you put on an air of sanctity.

[7] *Critical*, that is, censorious. JOHNSON.

JOHNSON.

*Iago.* Ay, madam.

*Des.* I am not merry; but I do beguile  
The thing I am, by seeming otherwise.—  
Come, how would'st thou praise me?

*Iago.* I am about it; but, indeed, my invention  
Comes from my pate, as bird-lime does from frize,  
It plucks out brains and all: But my muse labours,  
And thus she is delivered.

If she be fair and wise,—fairness, and wit,  
The one's for use, the other useth it.

*Des.* Well prais'd! How if she be black and witty?

*Iago.* If she be black, and thereto have a wit,  
She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

*Des.* Worse and worse.

*Emil.* How, if fair and foolish?

*Iago.* She never yet was foolish that was fair;  
For even her folly help'd her to an heir.

*Des.* These are old fond paradoxes, to make fools  
laugh i'the alehouse. What miserable praise hast thou  
for her that's foul and foolish?

*Iago.* There's none so foul, and foolish thereunto,  
But does foul pranks which fair and wise ones do.

*Des.* O heavy ignorance!—thou praisest the worst best.  
But what praise could'st thou bestow on a deserving wo-  
man indeed? one, that, in the authority of her merit,  
did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?<sup>8</sup>

*Iago.* She that was ever fair, and never proud;  
Had tongue at will, and yet was never loud;  
Never lack'd gold, and yet went never gay;  
Fled from her wish, and yet said,—*no, I may*—  
She that, being anger'd, her revenge being nigh,  
Bade her wrong stay, and her displeasure fly;  
She that in wisdom never was so frail,  
To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail;<sup>9</sup>  
She that could think, and ne'er disclose her mind,  
See suitors following, and not look behind;  
She was a wight,—if ever such wight were,—

*Des.* To do what?

*Iago.* To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer.<sup>1</sup>

[8] To put on the vouch of malice—is, to assume a character vouched by the testimony of malice itself. JOHNSON.

[9] To exchange a delicacy for a coarser fare. See 2. *Elizabeth's Household Book*, &c. "Item, the master cookes have to see all the salmon's tails," &c. STEEVENS.

[1] After enumerating the perfections of a woman, Iago adds, that if ever there was such a one as he had been describing she was at the best of no other use, than to suckle children, and keep the accounts of a household. The expressions, *to suckle fools* and *chronicle small beer*, are only instances of

*Des.* O most lame and impotent conclusion!—Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband.—How say you, Cassio? is he not a most profane and liberal counsellor?<sup>2</sup>

*Cas.* He speaks home, madam; you may relish him more in the soldier, than in the scholar.

*Iago.* [*Aside.*] He takes her by the palm: Ay, well said, whisper: with as little a web as this, will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do; I will gyve thee<sup>3</sup> in thine own courtship. You say true; 'tis so, indeed: if such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kissed your three fingers so oft, which now again you are most apt to play the sir in. Very good; well kissed! an excellent courtesy!<sup>4</sup> 'tis so, indeed. Yet again your fingers to your lips? would, they were clyster-pipes for your sake!—[*Trumpet.*] The Moor, I know his trumpet.

*Cas.* 'Tis truly so.

*Des.* Let's meet him, and receive him.

*Cas.* Lo, where he comes!

*Enter OTHELLO, and Attendants.*

*Oth.* O my fair warrior!

*Des.* My dear Othello?

*Oth.* It gives me wonder great as my content,  
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!  
If after every tempest come such calms,  
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!  
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas  
Olympus-high, and duck again as low  
As hell's from heaven! If it were now to die,  
'T were now to be most happy; for, I fear,  
My soul hath her content so absolute,  
That not another comfort like to this  
Succeeds in unknown fate.

*Des.* The heavens forbid,  
But that our loves and comforts should increase,  
Even as our days do grow!

*Oth.* Amen to that, sweet powers!—  
I cannot speak enough of this content,  
It stops me here; it is too much of joy:

the want of natural affection, and the predominance of a critical censoriousness in Iago, of which he allows himself to be possessed. STEEVENS.

[2] *Profane*—gross of language. *Liberal*, for licentious. JOHNSON.

[3] Gyve—i. e. catch, shackle. POPE.

[4] Spoken when Cassio kisses his hand, and Desdemona courties.<sup>5</sup>

JOHNSON

And this, and this, the greatest discords be, [*Kissing her.*  
That e'er our hearts shall make

*Iago.* O, you are well-tun'd now !  
But I'll set down the pegs that make this music,  
As honest as I am. [*Aside.*

*Oth.* Come, let's to the castle.—  
News, friends; our wars are done, the Turks are drown'd.  
How do our old acquaintance of this isle ?—  
Honey, you shall be well desir'd in Cyprus,  
I have found great love amongst them. O my sweet,  
I prattle out of fashion, and I dote  
In mine own comforts.—I pry'thee, good Iago,  
Go to the bay, and disembark my coffers :  
Bring thou the master to the citadel ;  
He is a good one, and his worthiness  
Does challenge much respect.—Come, Desdemona,  
Once more well met at Cyprus.

[*Exc. OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, and Attendants.*

*Iago.* Do thou meet me presently at the harbour.  
Come thither. If thou be'st valiant as (they say) base  
men, being in love, have then a nobility in their natures  
more than is native to them,—list me: The lieutenant  
to-night watches on the court of guard.—First, I must  
tell thee this—Desdemona is directly in love with him.

*Rod.* With him ! why, 'tis not possible.

*Iago.* Lay thy finger—thus, and let thy soul be instruct-  
ed. Mark me with what violence she first loved the  
Moor, but for bragging, and telling her fantastical lies :  
And will she love him still for prating ? let not thy dis-  
creet heart think it. Her eye must be fed ; and what  
delight shall she have to look on the devil ? When the  
blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should  
be,—again to inflame it, and to give satiety a fresh  
appetite,—loveliness in favour ; sympathy in years,  
manners, and beauties ; all which the Moor is defective  
in. Now, for want of these required conveniences, her  
delicate tenderness will find itself abused, begin to heave  
the gorge, disrelish and abhor the Moor ; very nature  
will instruct her in it, and compel her to some second  
choice. Now, sir, this granted, (as it is a most pregnant  
and unforced position,) who stands so eminently in the  
degree of this fortune, as Cassio does ? a knave very  
voluble ; no further conscionable, than in putting on the

[5] Lay thy finger thus—on thy mouth, to stop it while thou art listening  
to a wiser man. JOHNSON.

mere form of civil and humane seeming, for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden loose affection ? why, none ; why, none ! A slippery and subtle knave ; a finder out of occasions ; that has an eye can stamp and counterfeit advantages, though true advantage never present itself : A devilish knave ! besides, the knave is handsome, young ; and hath all those requisites in him, that folly and green minds look after : A pestilent complete knave ; and the woman hath found him already.

*Rod.* I cannot believe that in her ; she is full of most blessed condition.\*

*Iago.* Blessed fig's end ! the wine she drinks is made of grapes : If she had been blessed, she would never have loved the Moor : Blessed pudding ! Didst thou not see her paddle with the palm of his hand ? didst not mark that ?

*Rod.* Yes, that I did ; but that was but courtesy.

*Iago.* Lechery, by this hand ; an index, and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips, that their breaths embraced together. Villainous thoughts, Roderigo ! when these mutualities so marshal the way, hard at hand comes the master and main exercise, the incorporate conclusion : Pish !—But, sir, be you rul'd by me : I have brought you from Venice. Watch you to-night ; for the command, I'll lay't upon you. Cassio knows you not ;—I'll not be far from you : Do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline ; or from what other course you please, which the time shall more favourably minister.

*Rod.* Well.

*Iago.* Sir, he is rash, and very sudden in choler ; and, haply, with his truncheon may strike at you. Provoke him, that he may ; for, even out of that, will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny ; whose qualification shall come into no true taste again, but by the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires, by the means I shall then have to prefer them ; and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

*Rod.* I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity.

*Iago.* I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel : I must fetch his necessaries ashore. Farewell.

*Rod.* Adieu.

[*Exit.*]

*Iago.* That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it ;

That she loves him, 'tis apt, and of great credit :  
 The Moor—howbeit that I endure him not,—  
 Is of a constant, loving, noble nature ;  
 And, I dare think, he'll prove to Desdemona  
 A most dear husband. Now I do love her too ;  
 Not out of absolute lust, (though, peradventure,  
 I stand accountant for as great a sin,)  
 But partly led to diet my revenge,  
 For that I do suspect the lusty Moor  
 Hath leap'd into my seat : the thought whereof  
 Doth, like a poisonous mineral,<sup>7</sup> gnaw my inwards ;  
 And nothing can or shall content my soul,  
 Till I am even with him, wife for wife ;  
 Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor  
 At least into a jealousy so strong  
 That judgment cannot cure. Which thing to do,—  
 If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trash  
 For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,  
 I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip ;<sup>8</sup>  
 Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb,<sup>9</sup>—  
 For I fear Cassio with my night-cap too ;  
 Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me,  
 For making him egregiously an ass,  
 And practising upon his peace and quiet  
 Even to madness. 'Tis here, but yet confus'd ;  
 Knavery's plain face is never seen,<sup>1</sup> till us'd. [Exit.

## SCENE II.

*A Street. Enter a Herald with a proclamation ; People following.*

*Her.* It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant general, that, upon certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere<sup>2</sup> perdition of the 'Turkish fleet, every man put himself into triumph ; some to dance, some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him ; for, besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptials : So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All offices are open ;<sup>3</sup> and

[7] This is philosophical. Mineral poisons kill by corrosion. JOHNSON.

[8] A phrase from the art of wrestling. JOHNSON.

[9] Rank garb, I believe means, grossly, i. e. without mincing the matter. STEEVENS.

[1] An honest man acts upon a plan, and forecasts his designs ; but a knave depends upon temporary and local opportunities and never knows his own purpose, but at the time of execution. JOHNSON.

[2] *Mere* in this place signifies *entire*. STEEVENS.

[3] All rooms or places in the castle, at which refreshments are prepared, or served out. So in *Macbeth* :

“ Sent forth great largess to your officers.” STEEVENS.

there is full liberty of feasting, from this present hour of five, till the bell hath told eleven. Heaven bless the isle of Cyprus, and our noble general, Othello ! [Exit.]

## SCENE III.

*A Hall in the Castle. Enter OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and Attendants.*

*Oth.* Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night: Let's teach ourselves that honourable stop, Not to out-sport discretion.

*Cas.* Iago hath direction what to do ; But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye Will I look to't.

*Oth.* Iago is most honest. Michael, good-night : To-morrow, with our earliest, Let me have speech with you.—Come, my dear love, The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue ; [*To DES.* That profit's yet to come 'twixt me and you.— Good-night. [*Exeunt OTH. DES. and Attendants.*

*Enter IAGO.*

*Cas.* Welcome, Iago : we must to the watch.

*Iago.* Not this hour, lieutenant ; 'tis not yet ten o'clock : Our general cast us thus early, for the love of his Desdemona ; whom let us not therefore blame ; he hath not yet made wanton the night with her : and she is sport for Jove.

*Cas.* She's a most exquisite lady.

*Iago.* And, I'll warrant her, full of game.

*Cas.* Indeed, she is a most fresh and delicate creature.

*Iago.* What an eye she has ! methinks it sounds a parley of provocation.

*Cas.* An inviting eye ; and yet methinks right modest.

*Iago.* And, when she speaks, is it not an alarm to love ?

*Cas.* She is, indeed, perfection.

*Iago.* Well, happiness to their sheets ! Come, lieutenant, I have a stoup of wine ; and here without are a brace of Cyprus gallants, that would fain have a measure to the health of the black Othello.

*Cas.* Not to-night, good Iago ; I have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking : I could well wish courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

*Iago.* O, they are our friends ; but one cup : I'll drink for you.

*Cas.* I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was craftily qualified too,<sup>4</sup> and, behold, what innovation it makes here! I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

*Iago.* What, man! 'tis a night of revels; the gallants desire it.

*Cas.* Where are they?

*Iago.* Here at the door; I pray you, call them in.

*Cas.* I'll do't; but it dislikes me. [Exit CASSIO.]

*Iago.* If I can fasten but one cup upon him, With that which he hath drunk to-night already, He'll be as full of quarrel and offence As my young mistress' dog. Now, my sick fool, Roderigo, Whom love has turn'd almost the wrong side outward, To Desdemona hath to-night carous'd Potations pottle deep; and he's to watch: Three lads of Cyprus,—noble swelling spirits, That hold their honours in a wary distance, The very elements<sup>5</sup> of this warlike isle,— Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups, And they watch too. Now, 'mongst this flock of drunkards, Am I to put our Cassio in some action That may offend the isle:—But here they come: If consequence do but approve my dream, My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

*Re-enter CASSIO; with him, MONTANO, and Gentlemen.*

*Cas.* Fore heaven, they have given me a rouse already.<sup>6</sup>

*Mon.* Good faith, a little one; not past a pint, as I am a soldier.

*Iago.* Some wine, ho!

*And let me the canakin clink, clink;*

*And let me the canakin clink:*

*A soldier's a man;*

*A life's but a span;*

*Why then, let a soldier drink.*

[Sings.]

Some wine, boys!

[Wine brought in.]

*Cas.* Fore heaven, an excellent song.

*Iago.* I learned it in England, where (indeed) they are most potent in potting: your Dane, your German,

[4] *Craftily qualified*—Slily mixed with water. JOHNSON.

[5] As quarrelsome as the *discordia semina rerum*; as quick in opposition as fire and water. JOHNSON.

[6] A rouse appears to be a quantity of liquor rather too large. STEEV.



and your swag-bellied Hollander,—Drink, ho!—are nothing to your English.

*Cas.* Is your Englishman so expert in his drinking?

*Iago.* Why, he drinks you, with facility, your Dane dead drunk; he sweats not to overthrow your Almain; he gives your Hollander a vomit, ere the next pottle can be fill'd.

*Cas.* To the health of our general.

*Mon.* I am for it, lieutenant; and I'll do you justice.

*Iago.* O sweet England!

*King Stephen was a worthy peer,<sup>7</sup>*

*His breeches cost him but a crown;*

*He held them sixpence all too dear,*

*With that he call'd the tailor—lown.<sup>8</sup>*

*He was a wight of high renown,*

*And thou art but of low degree:*

*'Tis pride, that pulls the country down,*

*Then take thine auld cloak about thee.*

Some wine, ho!

*Cas.* Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other.

*Iago.* Will you hear it again?

*Cas.* No; for I hold him to be unworthy of his place that does those things.—Well,—Heaven's above all; and there be souls that must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.

*Iago.* It's true, good lieutenant.

*Cas.* For mine own part,—no offence to the general, nor any man of quality,—I hope to be saved.

*Iago.* And so do I too, lieutenant.

*Cas.* Ay, but, by your leave, not before me; the lieutenant is to be saved before the ancient. Let's have no more of this; let's to our affairs.—Forgive us our sins!—Gentlemen, let's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk; this is my ancient;—this is my right hand, and this is my left hand:—I am not drunk now; I can stand well enough, and speak well enough.

*All.* Excellent well.

*Cas.* Why, very well, then: you must not think then that I am drunk. [Exit.]

*Mon.* To the platform, masters; come, let's set the watch.

[7] These stanzas are taken from an old song, which the reader will find recovered and preserved in a curious work lately printed, intitled—*Relicks of Ancient Poetry*, consisting of old heroic ballads, songs, &c. JOHNSON.

[8] Lown—sorry fellow, paltry wretch. JOHNSON.

*Iago.* You see this fellow, that is gone before ;—  
 He is a soldier, fit to stand by Cæsar  
 And give direction : and do but see his vice ;  
 'Tis to his virtue a just equinox,  
 The one as long as the other : 'tis pity of him.  
 I fear, the trust Othello puts him in,  
 On some odd time of his infirmity,  
 Will shake this island.

*Mon.* But is he often thus ?

*Iago.* 'Tis evermore the prologue to his sleep :  
 He'll watch the horologe a double set,  
 If drink rock not his cradle.<sup>9</sup>

*Mon.* It were well,  
 The general were put in mind of it.  
 Perhaps, he sees it not ; or his good nature  
 Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio,  
 And looks not on his evils ; Is not this true ?

*Enter RODERIGO.*

*Iago.* How now, Roderigo ? [*Aside.*  
 I pray you, after the lieutenant ; go. [*Exit Rod.*

*Mon.* And 'tis great pity, that the noble Moor  
 Should hazard such a place, as his own second,  
 With one of an ingraft infirmity :<sup>1</sup>  
 It were an honest action, to say  
 So to the Moor.

*Iago.* Not I, for this fair island :  
 I do love Cassio well ; and would do much  
 To cure him of this evil. But hark ! what noise ?  
[*Cry within,—Help ! help !*

*Re-enter CASSIO, driving in RODERIGO.*

*Cas.* You rogue ! you rascal !

*Mon.* What's the matter, lieutenant ?

*Cas.* A knave !—teach me my duty !

I'll beat the knave into a twiggen bottle.<sup>2</sup>

*Rod.* Beat me !

*Cas.* Dost thou prate, rogue ? [*Striking RODERIGO.*

*Mon.* Nay, good lieutenant ; [*Staying him.*

I pray you, sir, hold your hand.

*Cas.* Let me go, sir,

Or I'll knock you o'er the mazzard.

*Mon.* Come, come, you're drunk.

[9] If he have no drink, he'll keep awake while the clock strikes two rounds, or four-and-twenty hours. JOHNSON.

[1] An infirmity rooted, settled in his constitution. JOHNSON.

[2] A twiggen bottle is a wickered bottle. STEEVENS.

*Cas.* Drunk !

[*They fight.*]

*Iago.* Away, I say ! go out, and cry—a mutiny.

[*Aside to ROD. who goes out.*]

Nay, good lieutenant,—alas, gentlemen,—

Help, ho !—Lieutenant,—sir,—Montano,—sir ;—

Help, masters !—Here’s a goodly watch, indeed !

[*Bell rings.*]

Who’s that that rings the bell ?—Diablo, ho !

The town will rise : God’s will, lieutenant ! hold ;

You will be sham’d for ever.

*Enter OTHELLO, and Attendants:*

*Oth.* What is the matter here ?

*Mon.* I bleed still, I am hurt to the death ;—he dies.

*Oth.* Hold, for your lives.

*Iago.* Hold, hold, lieutenant,—sir, Montano,—gentlemen,—

Have you forgot all sense of place and duty ?

Hold, hold ! the general speaks to you ; hold, for shame !

*Oth.* Why, how now, ho ! from whence ariseth this ?

Are we turn’d Turks ; and to ourselves do that,

Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites ?

For christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl :

He that stirs next to carve for his own rage,

Holds his soul light ; he dies upon his motion.—

Silence that dreadful bell, it frights the isle :

From her propriety.—What is the matter, masters ?—

Honest Iago, that look’st dead with grieving,

Speak, who began this ? on thy love, I charge thee.

*Iago.* I do not know ;—friends all but now, even now,

In quarter, and in terms like bride and groom

Devesting them for bed : and then, but now,

(As if some planet had unwitted men)

Swords out, and tilting one at other’s breast,

In opposition bloody. I cannot speak

Any beginning to this peevish odds ;

And ’would in action glorious I had lost

These legs, that brought me to a part of it !

*Oth.* How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot ?

*Cas.* I pray you, pardon me, I cannot speak.

*Oth.* Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil ;

The gravity and stillness of your youth

The world hath noted, and your name is great

In mouths of wisest censure ; What’s the matter,

That you unlace your reputation thus,

And spend your rich opinion, for the name

Of a night-brawler ? give me answer to it.

*Mon.* Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger ;  
 Your officer, Iago, can inform you—  
 While I spare speech, which something now offends me;—  
 Of all that I do know : nor know I aught  
 By me that's said or done amiss this night,  
 Unless self-charity be sometime a vice ;  
 And to defend ourselves it be a sin,  
 When violence assails us.

*Oth.* Now, by heaven,  
 My blood begins my safer guides to rue ;  
 And passion, having my best judgment collid,<sup>3</sup>  
 Assays to lead the way : If I once stir,  
 Or do but lift this arm, the best of you  
 Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know  
 How this foul route began, who set it on ;  
 And he that is approv'd in this offence,<sup>4</sup>  
 Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,  
 Shall lose me.—What ! in a town of war,  
 Yet wild, the people's hearts brimful of fear,  
 To manage private and domestic quarrel,  
 In night, and on the court and guard of safety !  
 'Tis monstrous.—Iago, who began it ?

*Mon.* If partially affin'd, or leagu'd in office,  
 Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,  
 Thou art no soldier.

*Iago.* Touch me not so near :  
 I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth,  
 Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio ;  
 Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth  
 Shall nothing wrong him.—Thus it is, general.  
 Montano and myself being in speech,  
 There comes a fellow, crying out for help ;  
 And Cassio following him with determin'd sword,  
 To execute upon him : Sir, this gentleman  
 Steps in to Cassio, and entreats his pause ;  
 Myself the crying fellow did pursue,  
 Lest, by his clamour, (as it so fell out,)  
 The town might fall in fright : he, swift of foot,  
 Outran my purpose ; and I return'd the rather  
 For that I heard the clink and fall of swords,  
 And Cassio high in oath ; which, till to-night,  
 I ne'er might say before : When I came back,

[3] To colly—anciently signified to besmut, to blacken with coal. Othello means that passion has discoloured his judgment. STEEVENS.

[4] He that is convicted by proof of having been engaged in this offence. STEEVENS.

(For this was brief,) I found them close together,  
 At blow, and thrust; ~~illegible~~ even as again they were,  
 When you yourself did part them.  
 More of this matter can I not report :—  
 But men are men ; the best sometimes forget :—  
 Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,—  
 As men in rage strike those that wish them best,—  
 Yet, surely, Cassio, I believe, receiv'd,  
 From him that fled, some strange indignity,  
 Which patience could not pass.

*Oth.* I know, Iago,  
 Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,  
 Making it light to Cassio :—Cassio, I love thee ;  
 But never more be officer of mine.—

*Enter DESDEMONA, attended.*

Look, if my gentle love be not rais'd up ;—  
 I'll make thee an example.

*Des.* What's the matter, dear ?

*Oth.* All's well now, sweeting : Come away to bed.

—Sir, for your hurts,

Myself will be your surgeon : Lead him off.

[*To MONTANO, who is led off.*

Iago, look with care about the town ;  
 And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted.  
 —Come, Desdemona ; 'tis the soldiers' life,  
 To have their balmy slumbers wak'd with strife.

[*Exeunt all but IAGO and CASSIO.*

*Iago.* What, are you hurt, lieutenant ?

*Cas.* Ay, past all surgery.

*Iago.* Marry, heaven forbid !

*Cas.* Reputation, reputation, reputation ! O, I have  
 lost my reputation ! I have lost the immortal part, sir, of  
 myself, and what remains is bestial.—My reputation,  
 Iago, my reputation.

*Iago.* As I am an honest man, I thought you had re-  
 ceived some bodily wound ; there is more offence in  
 that, than in reputation. Reputation is an idle and most  
 false imposition ; oft got without merit, and lost without  
 deserving : You have lost no reputation at all, unless  
 you repute yourself such a loser. What, man ! there  
 are ways to recover the general again : You are but  
 now cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy than  
 in malice ; even so as one would beat his offenceless  
 dog, to affright an imperious lion : sue to him again,  
 and he's yours.

*Cas.* I will rather sue to be despised, than to deceive so good a commander, with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk ? and speak parrot ?<sup>s</sup> and squabble ? swagger ? swear ? and discourse fustian with one's own shadow ?—O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee—devil !

*Iago.* What was he that you followed with your sword ? What had he done to you ?

*Cas.* I know not.

*Iago.* Is it possible ?

*Cas.* I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly ; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore.—O, that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains ! that we should, with joy, revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts !

*Iago.* Why, but you are now well enough. How came you thus recovered ?

*Cas.* It has pleased the devil, drunkenness, to give place to the devil, wrath : one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

*Iago.* Come, you are too severe a moraler : As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen ; but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

*Cas.* I will ask him for my place again ; he shall tell me, I am a drunkard ! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast ! O strange !—Every inordinate cup is unblest, and the ingredient is a devil.

*Iago.* Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used ; exclaim no more against it. And, good lieutenant, I think, you think I love you.

*Cas.* I have well approved it, sir.—I drunk !

*Iago.* You, or any man living, may be drunk at some time, man. I'll tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general ;—I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement of her parts and graces :—confess yourself freely to her ; importune her ; she'll help to put you in your place again : She is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, that she holds it a vice in her goodness, not to do more than she is requested : This broken joint between you and her

[5] A phrase signifying to act foolishly and childishly. WARBURTON.

husband, entreat her to splinter ; and, my fortunes against any lay worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

*Cas.* You advise me well.

*Iago.* I protest, in the sincerity of love, and honest kindness.

*Cas.* I think it freely ; and, betimes in the morning, I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me: I am desperate of my fortunes, if they check me here.

*Iago.* You are in the right. Good-night, lieutenant ; I must to the watch.

*Cas.* Good-night, honest Iago. [Exit CASSIO.]

*Iago.* And what's he then, that says,—I play the villain ?  
When this advice is free, I give, and honest,  
Probal<sup>6</sup> to thinking, and (indeed) the course  
To win the Moor again ? For 'tis most easy  
The inclining<sup>7</sup> Desdemona to subdue  
In any honest suit ; she's fram'd as fruitful  
As the free elements.<sup>8</sup> And then for her  
To win the Moor,—were't to renounce his baptism,  
All seals and symbols of redeemed sin,—  
His soul is so enfetter'd to her love,  
That she may make, unmake, do what she list,  
Even as her appetite shall play the god  
With his weak function. How am I then a villain,  
To counsel Cassio to this parallel course.<sup>9</sup>  
Directly to his good ? Divinity of hell !  
When devils will their blackest sins put on,  
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,  
As I do now : For while this honest fool  
Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes,  
And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,  
I'll pour this pestilence into his ear,—  
That she repeals him for her body's lust ;  
And, by how much she strives to do him good,  
She shall undo her credit with the Moor.  
So will I turn her virtue into pitch ;  
And out of her own goodness make the net,  
That shall enmesh them all.—How now, Roderigo ?

*Enter RODERIGO.*

*Rod.* I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound

[6] Thus the old editions. There may be such a contraction of the word *probable*, but I have not met with it. STEEVENS.

[7] Inclining here signifies *compliant*. MALONE.

[8] Liberal, bountiful as the elements, out of which all things are produced.

[9] A course level, and even with his design.

JOHNSON

that hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is almost spent; ~~with what~~ I have been to-night exceedingly well cudgelled; and, I think, the issue will be—I shall have so much experience for my pains: and so, with no money at all, and a little more wit, return to Venice.

*Iago.* How poor are they, that have not patience!—  
What wound did ever heal, but by degrees?  
Thou know'st, we work by wit, and not by witchcraft;  
And wit depends on dilatory time.  
Does't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee,  
And thou, by that small hurt, hast cashier'd Cassio:  
Though other things grow fair against the sun,  
Yet fruits, that blossom first, will first be ripe.<sup>1</sup>  
Content thyself a while.—By the mass, 'tis morning;  
Pleasure, and action, make the hours seem short.—  
Retire thee; go where thou art billeted:  
Away, I say; thou shalt know more hereafter:  
Nay, get thee gone. [*Ex. ROD.*] Two things are to  
be done,—

My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress;  
I'll set her on;  
Myself, the while, to draw the Moor apart,  
And bring him jump when he may Cassio find  
Soliciting his wife:—Ay, that's the way;  
Dull not device by coldness and delay. [*Exit.*]

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Before the Castle. Enter CASSIO, and some Musicians.*

*Cas.* Masters, play here, I will content your pains,  
Something that's brief; and bid—good-morrow, general.  
[*Music.*]

*Enter Clown.*

*Clo.* Why, masters, have your instruments been at  
Naples, that they speak i'the nose thus?

1 *Mus.* How, sir, how!

*Clo.* Are these, I pray you, called wind instruments?

1 *Mus.* Ay, marry, are they, sir.

[1] Of many different things, all planned with the same art, and promoted with the same diligence, some must succeed sooner than others, by the order of nature. Every thing cannot be done at once; we must proceed by the necessary gradation. We are not to despair of slow events any more than of tardy fruits, while the causes are in regular progress, and the fruits grow fair against the sun. JOHNSON.



*Clo.* O, thereby hangs a tail.

*1 Mus.* Whereby hangs a tale, sir?

*Clo.* Marry, sir, by many a wind instrument that I know. But, masters, here's money for you: and the general so likes your music, that he desires you, of all loves, to make no more noise with it.

*1 Mus.* Well, sir, we will not.

*Clo.* If you have any music that may not 'be heard, to't again: but, as they say, to hear music, the general does not greatly care.

*1 Mus.* We have none such, sir.

*Clo.* Then put up your pipes in your bag, for I'll away: Go; vanish into air; away. [*Exe. Musicians.*]

*Cas.* Dost thou hear, my honest friend?

*Clo.* No, I hear not your honest friend; I hear you.

*Cas.* Pr'ythee, keep up thy quillts. There's a poor piece of gold for thee: if the gentlewoman, that attends the general's wife, be stirring, tell her, there's one Cassio entreats her a little favour of speech: Wilt thou do this?

*Clo.* She is stirring, sir; if she will stir hither, I shall seem to notify unto her. [*Exit.*]

*Enter IAGO.*

*Cas.* Do, good my friend.—In happy time, Iago.

*Iago.* You have not been a-bed then?

*Cas.* Why, no; the day had broke  
Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,  
To send in to your wife: my suit to her  
Is, that she will to virtuous Desdemona  
Procure me some access.

*Iago.* I'll send her to you presently;  
And I'll devise a mean to draw the Moor  
Out of the way, that your converse and business  
May be more free. [*Exit.*]

*Cas.* I humbly thank you for't. I never knew  
A Florentine more kind and honest.<sup>2</sup>

*Enter EMILIA.*

*Emil.* Good-morrow, good lieutenant: I am sorry  
For your displeasure; but all will soon be well.  
The general, and his wife, are talking of it;  
And she speaks for you stoutly: The Moor replies,  
That he, you hurt, is of great fame in Cyprus,  
And great affinity; and that, in wholesome wisdom,  
He might not but refuse you: but, he protests, he loves  
you;

[2] See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

And needs no other suitor, but his likings,  
To take ~~the saf'st occasion by the~~ front,  
To bring you in again.

*Cas.* Yet, I beseech you,—  
If you think fit, or that it may be done,—  
Give me advantage of some brief discourse  
With Desdemona alone.

*Emil.* Pray you, come in ;  
I will bestow you where you shall have time  
To speak your bosom freely.

*Cas.* I am much bound to you. [Exeunt.

### SCENE II.

*A Room in the Castle. Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Gentlemen.*

*Oth.* These letters give, Iago, to the pilot ;  
And, by him, do my duties to the state :  
That done, I will be walking on the works,  
Repair there to me.

*Iago.* Well, my good lord, I'll do't.

*Oth.* This fortification, gentlemen,—shall we see't ?

*Gent.* We'll wait upon your lordship. [Exeunt.

### SCENE III.

*Before the Castle. Enter DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and EMILIA.*

*Des.* Be thou assur'd, good Cassio, I will do  
All my abilities in thy behalf.

*Emil.* Good madam, do. I know it grieves my husband,  
As if the case were his.

*Des.* O, that's an honest fellow.—do not doubt, Cassio,  
But I will have my lord and you again  
As friendly as you were.

*Cas.* Bounteous madam,  
Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,  
He's never any thing but your true servant.

*Des.* O, sir, I thank you : You do love my lord :  
You have known him long ; and be you well assur'd,  
He shall in strangeness stand no further off  
Than in a politic distance.

*Cas.* Ay, but, lady,  
That policy may either last so long,  
Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,  
Or breed itself so out of circumstance,  
That, I being absent, and my place supplied,

My general will forget my love and service.<sup>3</sup>

*Des.* Do not doubt that ; before Emilia here,  
I give thee warrant of thy place : assure thee,  
If I do vow a friendship, I'll perform it  
To the last article : my lord shall never rest ;  
I'll watch him tame,<sup>4</sup> and talk him out of patience ;  
His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift ;  
I'll intermingle every thing he does  
With Cassio's suit : Therefore be merry, Cassio ;  
For thy solicitor shall rather die,  
Than give thy cause away.

*Enter OTHELLO and IAGO, at distance.*

*Emil.* Madam, here comes

My lord.

*Cas.* Madam, I'll take my leave.

*Des.* Why, stay,  
And hear me speak.

*Cas.* Madam, not now ; I am very ill at ease,  
Unfit for mine own purposes.

*Des.* Well, well,  
Do your discretion.

[*Exit CASSIO.*]

*Iago.* Ha ! I like not that.

*Oth.* What dost thou say ?

*Iago.* Nothing, my lord : or if—I know not what.

*Oth.* Was not that Cassio, parted from my wife ?

*Iago.* Cassio, my lord ? No, sure, I cannot think it,  
That he would steal away so guilty-like,  
Seeing you coming.

*Oth.* I do believe 'twas he.

*Des.* How now, my lord ?

I have been talking with a suitor here,  
A man that languishes in your displeasure.

*Oth.* Who is't, you mean ?

*Des.* Why, your lieutenant Cassio. Good my lord,  
If I have any grace, or power to move you,  
His present reconciliation take ;  
For, if he be not one that truly loves you,  
That errs in ignorance, and not in cunning,  
I have no judgment in an honest face :  
I prythee, call him back.

[3] He may either of himself think it politic to keep me out of office so long, or he may be satisfied with such slight reasons, or so many accidents may make him think my re-admission at that time improper, that I may be quite forgotten. JOHNSON

[4] It is said that the ferocity of beasts, insuperable and irremediable by any other means, is subdued by keeping them from sleep. JOHNSON.

*Oth.* Went he hence now ?

*Des.* Ay, sooth ; so humbled,

That he hath left part of his grief with me ;  
I suffer with him. Good love, call him back.

*Oth.* Not now, sweet Desdemona ; some other time.

*Des.* But shall't be shortly ?

*Oth.* The sooner, sweet, for you.

*Des.* Shall't be to-night at supper ?

*Oth.* No, not to-night.

*Des.* To-morrow dinner then ?

*Oth.* I shall not dine at home ;

I meet the captains at the citadel.

*Des.* Why then, to-morrow night ; or Tuesday morn ;  
Or Tuesday noon, or night ; or Wednesday morn ;—

I pray thee, name the time ; but let it not  
Exceed three days : in faith, he's penitent ;

And yet his trespass, in our common reason,  
(Save that, they say, the wars must make examples<sup>s</sup>  
Out of their best,) is not almost a fault

To incur a private check : When shall he come ?

Tell me, Othello. I wonder in my soul,

What you could ask me that I should deny,

Or stand so mammering on. What ! Michael Cassio,

That came a wooing with you ; and many a time,

When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,

Hath ta'en your part ; to have so much to do

To bring him in ! Trust me, I could do much,—

*Oth.* Pr'ythee, no more : let him come when he will ;  
I will deny thee nothing.

*Des.* Why, this is not a boon ;

'Tis as I should intreat you wear your gloves,

Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm ;

Or sue to you to do peculiar profit

To your own person : Nay, when I have a suit,

Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,

It shall be full of poise and difficulty,

And fearful to be granted.

*Oth.* I will deny thee nothing ;

Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this,

To leave me but a little to myself.

*Des.* Shall I deny you ? No : Farewell, my lord.

*Oth.* Farewell, my Desdemona : I will come to thee  
straight.

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<sup>s</sup> The severity of military discipline must not spare the best men of the army, when their punishment may afford a wholesome example. JOHNSON.

*Des.* Emilia, come :—Be it as your fancies teach you ;  
Whate'er you be, I am obedient. (*Exit, with EMILIA.*)

*Oth.* Excellent wretch !<sup>6</sup> Perdition catch my soul,  
But I do love thee ! and when I love thee not,  
Chaos is come again.<sup>7</sup>

*Iago.* My noble lord,—

*Oth.* What dost thou say, Iago ?

*Iago.* Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,  
Know of your love ?

*Oth.* He did, from first to last. Why dost thou ask ?

*Iago.* But for a satisfaction of my thought ;  
No further harm.

*Oth.* Why of thy thought, Iago ;

*Iago.* I did not think, he had been acquainted with her.

*Oth.* O, yes ; and went between us very oft.

*Iago.* Indeed ?

*Oth.* Indeed ! ay, indeed :—Discern'st thou aught in  
that ?

Is he not honest ?

*Iago.* Honest, my lord ?

*Oth.* Ay, honest.

*Iago.* My lord, for aught I know.

*Oth.* What dost thou think ?

*Iago.* Think, my lord ?

*Oth.* Think, my lord !

By heaven, he echoes me,

As if there were some monster in his thought  
Too hideous to be shown.—Thou dost mean something :  
I heard thee say but now,—Thou lik'st not that,  
When Cassio left my wife ; What didst not like ?  
And, when I told thee—he was of my counsel  
In my whole course of wooing, thou cry'dst, *Indeed ?*  
And didst contract and purse thy brow together,  
As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain  
Some horrible conceit : If thou dost love me,

[6] The meaning of the word *wretch* is not generally understood. It is now, in some parts of England, a term of the softest and fondest tenderness. It expresses the utmost degree of amiableness, joined with an idea, which perhaps all tenderness includes, of feebleness, softness, and want of protection. Othello considering Desdemona as excelling in beauty and virtue, soft and timorous by her sex, and by her situation absolutely in his power, calls her, *excellent wretch!* It may be expressed.

*Dear, harmless, helpless excellence.* JOHNSON.

[7] When my love is for a moment suspended by suspicion, I have nothing in my mind but discord, tumult, perturbation and confusion. JOHNSON.

There is another meaning possible : *When I cease to love thee, the world is at an end ;* i. e. there remains nothing valuable or important. STEEVENS.

He means. I think, to say, *and ere I cease to love thee, the world itself shall be reduced to its primitive chaos.* MALONE.

Show me thy thought.

*Iago.* My lord, you know I love you.

*Oth.* I think, thou dost ;

And,—for I know thou art full of love and honesty,  
And weigh'st thy words before thou giv'st them breath,—  
Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more :  
For such things, in a false disloyal knave,  
Are tricks of custom ; but, in a man that's just,  
They are close denotements, working from the heart,  
That passion cannot rule.

*Iago.* For Michael Cassio,—

I dare be sworn, I think that he is honest.

*Oth.* I think so too.

*Iago.* Men should be what they seem ;

Or, those that be not, 'would they might seem none !

*Oth.* Certain, men should be what they seem.

*Iago.* Why then,

I think that Cassio is an honest man.

*Oth.* Nay, yet there's more in this :

I pray thee, speak to me as to thy thinkings,  
As thou dost ruminate ; and give thy worst of thoughts  
The worst of words.

*Iago.* Good my lord, pardon me ;

Though I am bound to every act of duty,  
I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.  
Utter my thoughts? Why, say, they are vile and false,—  
As where's that palace, whereinto foul things  
Sometimes intrude not ? who has a breast so pure,  
But some uncleanly apprehensions  
Keep leets, and law-days, and in session sit  
With meditations lawful.<sup>8</sup>

*Oth.* Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago,  
If thou but think'st him wrong'd, and mak'st his ear  
A stranger to thy thoughts.

*Iago.* I do beseech you,—

Though I, perchance, am vicious in my guess,  
As, I confess, it is my nature's plague  
To spy into abuses ; and, oft, my jealousy  
Shapes faults that are not,—I entreat you then,  
From one that so imperfectly coniects,  
You'd take no notice ; nor build yourself a trouble  
Out of his scattering and unsure observance :—

[8] *Leet* (says Jacob, in his Law Dictionary) is otherwise called a *law-day*. The poet's meaning appears plainly to be: Who has a breast so little apt to form ill opinions of others, but that foul suspicion will sometimes mix with his fairest and most candid thoughts, and erect in his mind, to enquire of the offences apprehended. STEEVENS.

It were not for your quiet, nor your good,  
Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,  
To let you know my thoughts.

*Oth.* What dost thou mean ?

*Iago.* Good name, in man, and woman, dear my lord,  
Is the immediate jewel of their souls :  
Who steals my purse, steals trash ; 'tis something, nothing ;  
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands ;  
But he, that filches from me my good name,  
Robs me of that, which not enriches him,  
And makes me poor indeed.

*Oth.* By heaven, I'll know thy thought.

*Iago.* You cannot, if my heart were in your hand ;  
Nor shall not, whilst 'tis in my custody.

*Oth.* Ha !

*Iago.* O, beware, my lord, of jealousy ;  
It is the green-ey'd monster, which doth mock  
The meat it feeds on. That cuckold lives in bliss,  
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger ;  
But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er,  
Who dotes, yet doubts ; suspects, yet strongly loves !

*Oth.* O misery !

*Iago.* Poor, and content, is rich, and rich enough ;  
But riches, fineless,<sup>1</sup> is as poor as winter,<sup>2</sup>  
To him that ever fears he shall be poor :—  
Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend  
From jealousy !

*Oth.* Why ? why is this ?

Think'st thou, I'd make a life of jealousy,  
To follow still the changes of the moon  
With fresh suspicions ? No : to be once in doubt,  
Is—once to be resolv'd : Exchange me for a goat,  
When I shall turn the business of my soul  
To such exsufficate and blown surmises,<sup>3</sup>  
Matching thy inference. 'Tis not to make me jealous,  
To say—my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,  
Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well ;  
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous :  
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw  
The smallest fear, or doubt of her revolt ;  
For she had eyes, and chose me : No, Iago ;  
I'll see, before I doubt ; when I doubt, prove ;

[1] Unbounded, endless, unnumbered treasures. JOHNSON.

[2] Finely expressed : *winter* producing no fruits. WARBURTON.

[3] *Exsufficate* I think is used in the sense of *swollen*, and appears to have been formed from *sufflatus*. MALONE.

And, on the proof, there is no more but this,—  
Away at once with love, or jealousy.

*Iago.* I am glad of this ; for now I shall have reason  
To show the love and duty that I bear you  
With franker spirit : therefore, as I am bound,  
Receive it from me :—I speak not yet of proof.  
Look to your wife ; observe her well with Cassio ;  
Wear your eye—thus, not jealous, nor secure :  
I would not have your free and noble nature,  
Out of self-bounty, be abus'd ; look to't :  
I know our country disposition well ;  
In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks  
They dare not show their husbands ; their best conscience  
Is—not to leave undone, but keep unknown.

*Oth.* Dost thou say so ?

*Iago.* She did deceive her father, marrying you ;  
And, hen she seem'd to shake, and fear your looks,<sup>3</sup>  
She lov'd them most.

*Oth.* And so she did.

*Iago.* Why, go to, then ;  
She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,  
To seel her father's eyes up, close as oak,<sup>4</sup>—  
He thought, 'twas witchcraft :—But I am much to blame ;  
I humbly do beseech you of your pardon,  
For too much loving you.

*Oth.* I am bound to thee for ever.

*Iago.* I see, this hath a little dash'd your spirits.

*Oth.* Not a jot, not a jot.

*Iago.* Trust me, I fear it has.

I hope, you will consider, what is spoke  
Comes from my love ;—But, I do see you are mov'd :—  
I am to pray you, not to strain my speech  
To grosser issues,<sup>5</sup> nor to larger reach,  
Than to suspicion.

*Oth.* I will not.

[3] This and the following argument of Iago ought to be deeply impressed on every reader. Deceit and falsehood, whatever conveniences they may for a time promise or produce, are, in the sum of life, obstacles to happiness. Those, who profit by the cheat, distrust the deceiver, and the act, by which kindness is sought, puts an end to confidence. The same objection may be made with a lower degree of strength against the imprudent generosity of disproportionate marriages. When the first heat of passion is over, it is easily succeeded by suspicion, that the same violence of inclination, which caused one irregularity, may stimulate to another ; and those who have shown, that their passions are too powerful for their prudence, will, with very slight appearances against them, be censured as not very likely to restrain them by their virtue. JOHNSON.

[4] *Close as oak*, means, *close as the grain of the oak*. To seel a hawk, is to sew up his eyelids. STEEVENS.

[5] Issues, for conclusions. WARBURTON.



*Iago.* Should you do so, my lord,  
My speech should fall into such vile success  
As my thoughts aim not at. Cassio's my worthy friend:—  
My lord, I see you are mov'd.

*Oth.* No, not much mov'd:—

I do not think but Desdemona's honest.

*Iago.* Long live she so! and long live you to think so!

*Oth.* And yet, how nature erring from itself,—

*Iago.* Ay, there's the point:—As,—to be bold with you,—  
Not to affect many proposed matches  
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree;  
Whereto, we see, in all things nature tends:  
Foh! one may smell, in such, a will most rank,<sup>6</sup>  
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.—  
But pardon me; I do not, in position,  
Distinctly speak of her: though I may fear,  
Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,  
May fall to match you with her country forms,  
And (happily) repent.

*Oth.* Farewell, farewell:

If more thou dost perceive, let me know more;  
Set on thy wife to observe: Leave me, Iago.

*Iago.* My lord, I take my leave. [*Going.*]

*Oth.* Why did I marry? This honest creature, doubtless,  
Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.

*Iago.* My lord, I would, I might entreat your honour  
To scan this thing no further; leave it to time:  
And though it be fit that Cassio have his place,  
(For, sure, he fills it up with great ability,)  
Yet, if you please to hold him off a while,  
You shall by that perceive him and his means:  
Note, if your lady strain his entertainment?<sup>7</sup>  
With any strong or vehement opportunity;  
Much will be seen in that. In the mean time,  
Let me be thought too busy in my fears,  
(As worthy cause I have, to fear—I am,)  
And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.

*Oth.* Fear not my government.

*Iago.* I once more take my leave. [*Exit.*]

*Oth.* This fellow's of exceeding honesty,  
And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit,  
Of human dealings: If I do prove her haggard,<sup>8</sup>

[6] *Will.* is for wilfulness. It is so used by Ascham. A rank will is self-will overgrown and exuberant. JOHNSON.

[7] Press hard his re-admission to his pay and office. JOHNSON.

[8] A haggard hawk is a wild hawk, a hawk irreclaimable. JOHNSON

Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,<sup>9</sup>  
 I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,  
 To prey at fortune.<sup>1</sup> Haply, for I am black ;  
 And have not those soft parts of conversation  
 That chamberers have : or, for I am declin'd  
 Into the vale of years ;—yet that's not much ;—  
 She's gone ; I am abus'd ; and my relief  
 Must be—to loath her. O curse of marriage,  
 That we can call these delicate creatures ours,  
 And not their appetites ! I had rather be a toad,  
 And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,  
 Than keep a corner in the thing I love,  
 For others' uses. Yet, 'tis the plague of great ones ;  
 Prerogativ'd are they less than the base ;  
 'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death ;  
 Even then this forked plague is fated to us,  
 When we do quicken. Desdemona comes :

*Enter DESDEMONA and EMILIA.*

If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself !—  
 I'll not believe it.

*Des.* How now, my dear Othello ?  
 Your dinner, and the generous islanders  
 By you invited, do attend your presence.

*Oth.* I am to blame.

*Des.* Why is your speech so faint ? are you not well ?

*Oth.* I have a pain upon my forehead here.

*Des.* Faith, that's with watching ; 'twill away again :  
 Let me but bind it hard, within this hour  
 It will be well.

*Oth.* Your napkin<sup>2</sup> is too little ;

*[He puts the handkerchief from him, and it drops.]*  
 Let it alone. Come, I'll go in with you.

*Des.* I am very sorry that you are not well.

*[Exit OTH. and DESD.]*

*Emil.* I am glad I have found this napkin ;  
 This was her first remembrance from the Moor :  
 My wayward husband hath a hundred times  
 Woo'd me to steal it : but she so loves the token,  
 (For he conjur'd her, she would ever keep it.)  
 That she reserves it evermore about her,

[9] *Jesses* are short straps of leather tied about the foot of a hawk, by which she is held on the fist. HANMER.

[1] The falconers always let fly the hawk against the wind ; if she flies with the wind behind her, she seldom returns. If therefore a hawk was for any reason to be dismissed, she was let down the wind, and from that time shifted for herself, and preyed at fortune. JOHNSON.

[2] Ray says, that a pocket handkerchief is so called about Sheffield in Yorkshire. STEEVENS.

To kiss, and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out,<sup>3</sup>  
 And give it Iago ;  
 What he'll do with it, heaven knows, not I ;  
 I nothing, but to please his fantasy.

*Enter IAGO.*

*Iago.* How now ! what do you here alone ?

*Emil.* Do not you chide ; I have a thing for you.

*Iago.* A thing for me ?—It is a common thing.

*Emil.* Ha !

*Iago.* To have a foolish wife.

*Emil.* O, is that all ? what will you give me now  
 For that same handkerchief ?

*Iago.* What handkerchief ?

*Emil.* What handkerchief ?

Why, that the Moor first gave to Desdemona ;  
 That which so often you did bid me steal.

*Iago.* Hast stolen it from her ?

*Emil.* No, faith ; she let it drop by negligence ;  
 And, to the advantage, I, being here, took't up.  
 Look, here it is.

*Iago.* A good wench ; give it me.

*Emil.* What will you do with it, that you have been  
 so earnest

To have me filch it ?

*Iago.* Why, what's that to you ? *[Snatching it.]*

*Emil.* If it be not for some purpose of import,  
 Give it me again : Poor lady ! she'll run mad,  
 When she shall lack it.

*Iago.* Be not you known of't : I have use for it.  
 Go, leave me. *[Exit EMILIA.]*

I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,  
 And let him find it : Trifles, light as air,  
 Are, to the jealous, confirmations strong  
 As proofs of holy writ. This may do something.  
 The Moor already changes with my poison :—  
 Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons,  
 Which, at the first, are scarce found to distaste ;  
 But, with a little act upon the blood,  
 Burn like the mines of sulphur.—I did say so :—

*Enter OTHELLO.*

Look, where he comes ! Not poppy, nor mandragora,<sup>4</sup>

[3] That is copied. Her first thoughts are to have a copy made of it for her husband, and restore the original to Desdemona. But the sudden coming in of Iago, in a surly humour, makes her alter her resolution, to please him. The same phrase occurs between Cassio and Bianca, sc. iv. BLACKSTONE.

[4] The mandragoras or mandrake has a soporific quality, and the ancients used it when they wanted an opiate of the most powerful kind. STEEV.

Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,  
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep  
Which thou ow'st yesterday.

*Oth.* Ha ! ha ! false to me ?  
To me ?

*Iago.* Why, how now, general ? no more of that.

*Oth.* Avaunt ! begone ! thou hast set me on the rack :—  
I swear, 'tis better to be much abus'd,  
Than but to know't a little.

*Iago.* How now, my lord ?

*Oth.* What sense had I of her stolen hours of lust ?  
I saw it not, thought it not, it harm'd not me :  
I slept the next night well, was free and merry ;  
I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips :  
He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stolen,  
Let him not know it, and he's not robb'd at all.

*Iago.* I am sorry to hear this.

*Oth.* I had been happy, if the general camp,  
Pioneers and all,<sup>5</sup> had tasted her sweet body,  
So I had nothing known : O now, for ever,  
Farewell the tranquil mind ! Farewell content !  
Farewell the plumed troop, and the big wars,  
That make ambition virtue ! O, farewell !  
Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,  
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,  
The royal banner ; and all quality,  
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war !  
And O, you mortal engines, whose rude throats  
The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,  
Farewell ! Othello's occupation's gone !

*Iago.* Is it possible ?—My lord,—

*Oth.* Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore ;  
Be sure of it ; give me the ocular proof ;

[ *Taking him by the throat.*

Or, by the worth of mine eternal soul,  
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog,  
Than answer my wak'd wrath.

*Iago.* Is it come to this ?

*Oth.* Make me to see it ; or (at the least) so prove it,  
That the probation bear no hinge, nor loop,  
To hang a doubt on : or, woe upon thy life !

*Iago.* My noble lord,—

*Oth.* If thou dost slander her, and torture me,

[5] That is, the most abject and vilest of the camp. Pioneers were generally degraded soldiers, appointed to the office of pioneer, as a punishment for misconduct. GROSE.

Never pray more : abandon all remorse ;  
 On horror's head horrors accumulate :  
 Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amaz'd,  
 For nothing canst thou to damnation add,  
 Greater than that.

*Iago.* O grace ! O heaven defend me !  
 Are you a man ? have you a soul, or sense ?—  
 God be wi' you ; take mine office.—O wretched fool,  
 That liv'st to make thine honesty a vice !—  
 O monstrous world ! Take note, take note, O world,  
 To be direct and honest, is not safe.—  
 I thank you for this profit ; and, from hence,  
 I'll love no friend, since love breeds such offence.

*Oth.* Nay, stay :—Thou should'st be honest.

*Iago.* I should be wise ; for honesty's a fool,  
 And loses that it works for.

*Oth.* By the world,  
 I think my wife be honest, and think she is not ;  
 I think that thou art just, and think thou art not ;  
 I'll have some proof : Her name, that was as fresh  
 As Dian's visage, is now begrim'd and black  
 As mine own face.—If there be cords, or knives,  
 Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,  
 I'll not endure it.—'Would, I were satisfied !

*Iago.* I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion :  
 I do repent me, that I put it to you.  
 You would be satisfied ?

*Oth.* Would ? nay, I will.

*Iago.* And may : But, how ? how satisfied, my lord ?  
 Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on ?  
 Behold her tupp'd ?

*Oth.* Death and damnation ! O !

*Iago.* It were a tedious difficulty, I think,  
 To bring them to that prospect : Damn them then,  
 If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster,  
 More than their own ! What then ? how then ?  
 What shall I say ? Where's satisfaction ?  
 It is impossible, you should see this,  
 Were they as prime as goats,<sup>6</sup> as hot as monkeys,  
 As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross  
 As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say,  
 If imputation, and strong circumstances,—  
 Which lead directly to the door of truth,—  
 Will give you satisfaction, you may have it.

[6] *Prime* is prompt, from the Ceticick or British *prime*. HANMER.

*Oth.* Give me a living reason she's disloyal.

*Iago.* I do not like the office :

But, sith I am enter'd in this cause so far,—  
Prick'd to it by foolish honesty and love,—  
I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately ;  
And, being troubled with a raging tooth,  
I could not sleep.

There are a kind of men so loose of soul,  
That in their sleeps will mutter their affairs ;  
One of this kind is Cassio :

In sleep I heard him say,—*Sweet Desdemona,*  
*Let us be wary, let us hide our loves !*

And then, sir, would he gripe, and wring my hand,  
Cry,—*O, sweet creature !* and then kiss me hard,  
As if he pluck'd up kisses by the roots,  
That grew upon my lips : then laid his leg  
Over my thigh, and sigh'd, and kiss'd ; and then  
Cry'd,—*Cursed fate ! that gave thee to the Moor !*

*Oth.* O monstrous ! monstrous !

*Iago.* Nay, this was but his dream.

*Oth.* But this denoted a foregone conclusion ;  
'Tis a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.

*Iago.* And this may help to thicken other proofs,  
That do demonstrate thinly.

*Oth.* I'll tear her all to pieces.

*Iago.* Nay, but be wise : yet we see nothing done ;  
She may be honest yet. Tell me but this,—  
Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief,  
Spotted with strawberries, in your wife's hand ?

*Oth.* I gave her such a one ; 'twas my first gift.

*Iago.* I know not that : but such a handkerchief,  
(I am sure it was your wife's,) did I to-day  
See Cassio wipe his beard with.

*Oth.* If it be that,—

*Iago.* If it be that, or any that was hers,  
It speaks against her with the other proofs.

*Oth.* O, that the slave had forty thousand lives ;  
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge !  
Now do I see 'tis true.—Look here, Iago ;  
All my fond love thus I do blow to heaven :  
'Tis gone.—

Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell !

Yield up, O love, thy crown, and hearted throne,<sup>7</sup>

[7] *Hearted throne*, is the heart on which thou wast enthroned. So in *Twelfth Night* :

"It gives a very echo to the *seat*,

"Where love is thron'd."

See also *Romeo and Juliet*, Act v. sc. 1. MALONE.

To tyrannous hate ! swell, bosom, with thy fraught,  
For 'tis of aspicks' tongues !

*Iago.* Pray, be content.

*Oth.* O, blood, Iago, blood !

*Iago.* Patience, I say ; your mind, perhaps, may change.

*Oth.* Never, Iago. Like to the Pontick sea,  
Whose icy current and compulsive course  
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on  
To the Propontick, and the Hellespont ;  
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,  
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,  
Till that a capable and wide revenge  
Swallow them up.—Now, by yond' marble heaven,  
In the due reverence of a sacred vow [Kneels.  
I here engage my words.

*Iago.* Do not rise yet.— [Kneels.

Witness, you ever-burning lights above !  
You elements that clip us round about !  
Witness, that here Iago doth give up  
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,  
To wrong'd Othello's service ! let him command,  
And to obey shall be in me remorse,  
What bloody work soever.<sup>8</sup>

*Oth.* I greet thy love,  
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,  
And will upon the instant put thee to't :  
Within these three days let me hear thee say,  
That Cassio's not alive.

*Iago.* My friend is dead ; 'tis done, at your request :  
But, let her live.

*Oth.* Damn her, lewd minx ! O, damn her !  
Come, go with me apart ; I will withdraw,  
To furnish me with some swift means of death  
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.

*Iago.* I am your own for ever. [Exeunt.

#### SCENE IV.

*The same.* Enter *DESDEMONA*, *EMILIA*, and *Clown*.

*Des.* Do you know, sirrah, where lieutenant Cassio lies?

*Clown.* I dare not say, he lies any where.

*Des.* Why, man ?

[8] Iago devotes himself to wronged Othello, and says, *Let him command whatever bloody business*, and in me it shall be an act, not of cruelty, but of *tenderness to obey him* ; not of malice to others, but of *tenderness for him*.

*Clown.* He is a soldier ; and for me to say a soldier lies, is stabbing.

*Des.* Go to ; where lodges he ?

*Clown.* To tell you where he lodges, is to tell you where I lie.

*Des.* Can any thing be made of this ?

*Clown.* I know not where he lodges ; and for me to devise a lodging, and say—he lies here, or he lies there, were to lie in my own throat.

*Des.* Can you enquire him out, and be edified by report ?

*Clown.* I will catechize the world for him ; that is, make questions, and by them answer.

*Des.* Seek him, bid him come hither : tell him, I have moved my lord in his behalf, and hope, all will be well.

*Clown.* To do this, is within the compass of man's wit ; and therefore I will attempt the doing it. [*Exit.*]

*Des.* Where should I lose that handkerchief, Emilia ?

*Emil.* I know not, madam.

*Des.* Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse Full of cruzadoes. And, but my noble Moor Is true of mind, and made of no such baseness As jealous creatures are, it were enough To put him to ill thinking.

*Emil.* Is he not jealous ?

*Des.* Who, he ? I think, the sun, where he was born, Drew all such humours from him.

*Emil.* Look, where he comes.

*Des.* I will not leave him now, till Cassio Be call'd to him.—How is't with you, my lord ?

*Enter OTHELLO.*

*Oth.* Well, my good lady :—[*Aside.*] O, hardness to dissemble !—

How do you, Desdemona ?

*Des.* Well, my good lord.

*Oth.* Give me your hand : This hand is moist, my lady.

*Des.* It yet has felt no age, nor known no sorrow.

*Oth.* This argues fruitfulness, and liberal heart ;— Hot, hot, and moist : This hand of yours requires A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer, Much castigation, exercise devout ; For here's a young and sweating devil here, That commonly rebels. 'Tis a good hand, A frank one.

*Des.* You may, indeed, say so ; For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.



*Oth.* A liberal hand : The hearts of old, gave hands ;  
But our new heraldry is—hands, not hearts.

*Des.* I cannot speak of this. Come, now your promise.

*Oth.* What promise, chuck ?

*Des.* I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

*Oth.* I have a salt and sullen rheum offends me ;  
Lend me thy handkerchief.

*Des.* Here, my lord.

*Oth.* That which I gave you.

*Des.* I have it not about me.

*Oth.* Not ?

*Des.* No, indeed, my lord.

*Oth.* That is a fault :

That handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give ;  
She was a charmer, and could almost read  
The thoughts of people : she told her, while she kept it,  
'T would make her amiable, and subdue my father  
Entirely to her love ; but if she lost it,  
Or made a gift of it, my father's eye  
Should hold her loathly, and his spirits should hunt  
After new fancies : She, dying, gave it me ;  
And bid me, when my fate would have me wive,  
To give it her. I did so : and take heed of't,  
Make it a darling like your precious eye ;  
To lose or give't away, were such perdition,  
As nothing else could match.

*Des.* Is it possible ?

*Oth.* 'Tis true : there's magic in the web of it :  
A sibyl, that had number'd in the world  
The sun to make two hundred compasses,  
In her prophetic fury sew'd the work :  
The worms were hallow'd that did breed the silk ;  
And it was died in mummy,<sup>9</sup> which the skilful  
Conserv'd of maidens' hearts.

*Des.* Indeed ! is't true ?

*Oth.* Most veritable ; therefore look to't well.

*Des.* Then 'would to heaven, that I had never seen it.

*Oth.* Ha ! wherefore ?

*Des.* Why do you speak so startingly and rash ?

*Oth.* Is't lost ? is't gone ? speak, is it out of the way ?

*Des.* Heaven bless us !

[9] The balsamic liquor running from mummies was formerly celebrated for its anti-epileptic virtues. We are now wise enough to know, that the qualities ascribed to it are all imaginary ; and yet this fanciful medicine still holds a place in the principal shops where drugs are sold. STEEVENS.

*Oth.* Say you ?

*Des.* It is not lost; But what an if it were ?

*Oth.* Ha !

*Des.* I say, it is not lost.

*Oth.* Fetch't, let me see it.

*Des.* Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now ;  
This is a trick, to put me from my suit ;  
I pray, let Cassio be receiv'd again.

*Oth.* Fetch me that handkerchief: my mind misgives.

*Des.* Come, come ;

You'll never meet a more sufficient man.

*Oth.* The handkerchief,——

*Des.* I pray, talk me of Cassio.

*Oth.* The handkerchief,——

*Des.* A man that, all his time,  
Hath founded his good fortune on your love ;  
Shar'd dangers with you ;——

*Oth.* The handkerchief,——

*Des.* In sooth,

You are to blame.

*Oth.* Away !

[*Exit* OTHELLO.]

*Emil.* Is not this man jealous ?

*Des.* I ne'er saw this before.

Sure, there's some wonder in this handkerchief :  
I am most unhappy in the loss of it.

*Emil.* 'Tis not a year or two shows us a man :  
They are all but stomachs, and we all but food ;  
They eat us hungerly, and when they are full,  
They belch us. Look you ! Cassio, and my husband.

*Enter* IAGO and CASSIO.

*Iago.* There is no other way ; 'tis she must do't ;  
And, lo, the happiness ! go, and imp'rtune her.

*Des.* How now, good Cassio? what's the news with you?

*Cas.* Madam, my former suit : I do beseech you,  
That, by your virtuous means, I may again  
Exist, and be a member of his love,  
Whom I, with all the duty of my heart,  
Entirely honour ; I would not be delay'd :  
If my offence be of such mortal kind,  
That neither service past, nor present sorrows,  
Nor purpos'd merit in futurity,  
Can ransom me into his love again ;  
But to know so must be my benefit ;  
So shall I clothe me in a forc'd content ;  
And shut myself up in some other course,

To fortune's alms.

*Des.* Alas ! thrice-gentle Cassio,  
My advocacy is not now in tune ;  
My lord is not my lord ; nor should I know him,  
Were he in favour, as in humour, alter'd.<sup>1</sup>  
So help me, every spirit sanctified,  
As I have spoken for you all my best ;  
And stood within the blank of his displeasure,<sup>2</sup>  
For my free speech ! You must a while be patient :  
What I can do, I will ; and more I will,  
Than for myself I dare : let that suffice you.

*Iago.* Is my lord angry ?

*Emil.* He went hence but now,  
And, certainly, in strange unquietness.

*Iago.* Can he be angry ? I have seen the cannon,  
When it hath blown his ranks into the air,  
And, like the devil, from his very arm  
Puff'd his own brother ;—And can he be angry ?  
Something of moment, then : I will go meet him ;  
There's matter in't indeed, if he be angry. [*Exit.*]

*Des.* I prythee, do so.—Something, sure, of state,—  
Either from Venice ; or some unhatch'd practice,<sup>3</sup>  
Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,—  
Hath puddled his clear spirit ; and, in such cases,  
Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,  
Though great ones are their object. 'Tis even so ;  
For let our finger ache,  
And it endues our other healthful members  
Even to that sense of pain.<sup>4</sup> Nay, we must think,  
Men are not gods ;  
Nor of them look for such observances  
As fit the bridal.<sup>5</sup>—Beshrew me much, *Ethelia*,  
I was (unhandsome warrior as I am,)<sup>6</sup>  
Arraigning his unkindness with my soul ;  
But now I find, I had suborn'd the witness,  
And he's indited falsely.

*Emil.* Pray heaven, it be state-matters, as you think ;  
And no conception, nor no jealous toy  
Concerning you.

*Des.* Alas, the day ! I never gave him cause.

[1] In favour—in look, in countenance. JOHNSON.

[2] Within the shot of his anger. JOHNSON.

[3] Some treason that has not taken effect. JOHNSON.

[4] I believe it should be rather, *Subdues* our other healthful members to a sense of pain. JOHNSON.

[5] That is, the nuptial feast. A Saxon word. STEEVENS.

[6] *Unhandsome warrior*—unfair assailant. JOHNSON.

*Emil.* But jealous souls will not be answer'd so ;  
They are not ever jealous for the cause,  
But jealous for they are jealous : 'tis a monster,  
Begot upon itself, born on itself.

*Des.* Heaven keep that monster from Othello's mind !

*Emil.* Lady, amen !

*Des.* I will go seek him.—Cassio, walk hereabout :  
If I do find him fit, I'll move your suit,  
And seek to effect it to my uttermost.

*Cas.* I humbly thank your ladyship.

[*Exc. DESD. and EMIL.*]

*Enter BIANCA.*

*Bian.* Save you, friend Cassio !

*Cas.* What make you from home ?

How is it with you, my most fair Bianca ?

I'faith, sweet love, I was coming to your house.

*Bian.* And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.  
What ! keep a week away ? seven days and nights ?  
Eight score eight hours ? and lovers' absent hours,  
More tedious than the dial eight score times ?  
O weary reckoning !

*Cas.* Pardon me, Bianca ;

I have this while with leaden thoughts been press'd ;  
But I shall, in a more continueate time,<sup>7</sup>  
Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,

[*Giving her DESDEMONA's handkerchief.*]

Take me this work out.<sup>8</sup>

*Bian.* O, Cassio, whence came this ?

This is some token from a newer friend.

'Tis the felt absence now I feel a cause :

Is it come to this ? Well, well.

*Cas.* Woman, go to !

Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth,  
From whence you have them. You are jealous now,  
'That this is from some mistress, some remembrance :  
No, in good troth, Bianca.

*Bian.* Why, whose is it ?

*Cas.* I know not, sweet : I found it in my chamber.  
I like the work well ; ere it be demanded,  
(As like enough, it will,) I'd have it copied :  
Take it, and do't ; and leave me for this time.

*Bian.* Leave you ! wherefore ?

*Cas.* I do attend here on the general ;

[7] Time less interrupted, time which I can call more my own. JOHNS.

[8] The meaning is not, *Pick out the work and leave the ground plain ;*  
but *Copy this work in another handkerchief.* JOHNSON.

And think it no addition, nor my wish,  
To have him see me woman'd.

*Bian.* Why, I pray you?

*Cas.* Not that I love you not.

*Bian.* But that you do not love me.

I pray you, bring me on the way a little;  
And say, if I shall see you soon at night.

*Cas.* 'Tis but a little way, that I can bring you,  
For I attend here: but I'll see you soon.

*Bian.* 'Tis very good; I must be circumstanc'd.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same.* Enter OTHELLO and IAGO.

*Iago.* Will you think so?

*Oth.* Think so, Iago?

*Iago.* What,  
To kiss in private?

*Oth.* An unauthoriz'd kiss.

*Iago.* Or to be naked with her friend abed,  
An hour, or more, not meaning any harm?

*Oth.* Naked abed, Iago, and not mean harm?  
It is hypocrisy against the devil:<sup>9</sup>

They that mean virtuously, and yet do so,  
The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt heaven.

*Iago.* So they do nothing, 'tis a venial slip:  
But if I give my wife a handkerchief,—

*Oth.* What then?

*Iago.* Why, then 'tis hers, my lord; and, being hers,  
She may, I think, bestow't on any man.

*Oth.* She is protectress of her honour too;  
May she give that?

*Iago.* Her honour is an essence that's not seen;  
They have it very oft, that have it not:  
But, for the handkerchief,—

*Oth.* By heaven, I would most gladly have forgot it:—  
Thou saidst,—O, it comes o'er my memory,  
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,  
Boding to all,—he had my handkerchief.

*Iago.* Ay, what of that?

*Oth.* That's not so good, now.

[9] *Hypocrisy against the devil*, means hypocrisy to cheat the devil. As common hypocrites cheat men, by seeming good, and yet living wickedly, these men would cheat the devil, by giving him flattering hopes, and at the same time avoiding the crime which he thinks them ready to commit. JOHNSON

*Iago.* What, if I had said, I had seen him do you wrong?  
Or heard him say,—As knaves be such abroad,  
Who having, by their own importunate suit,  
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,  
Convinced or supplied them, cannot choose  
But they must blab——

*Oth.* Hath he said any thing?

*Iago.* He hath, my lord; but be you well assur'd,  
No more than he'll unswear.

*Oth.* What hath he said?

*Iago.* 'Faith, that he did,—I know not what he did.

*Oth.* What? what?

*Iago.* Lie——

*Oth.* With her?

*Iago.* With her, on her; what you will.

*Oth.* Lie with her! lie on her!—We say, lie on her,  
when they belie her: Lie with her! that's fulsome.—  
Handkerchief,—confessions,—handkerchief.—To con-  
fess, and be hanged for his labour.—First, to be hanged, and  
then to confess:—I tremble at it. Nature would not  
invest herself in such shadowing passion, without some  
instruction. It is not words, that shake me thus:—Pish!—  
Noses, ears, and lips:—Is it possible?—Confess!—  
Handkerchief!—O devil!—— [*Falls in a trance.*]

*Iago.* Work on,  
My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are caught.  
And many worthy and chaste dames, even thus,  
All guiltless meet reproach.—What, ho! my lord!

*Enter CASSIO.*

My lord, I say! Othello!—How now, Cassio?

*Cas.* What is the matter?

*Iago.* My lord is fallen into an epilepsy;  
This is his second fit; he had one yesterday.

*Cas.* Rub him about the temples.

*Iago.* No, forbear:

The lethargy must have his quiet course;  
If not, he foams at mouth; and, by and by,  
Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs:  
Do you withdraw yourself a little while,  
He will recover straight; when he is gone,  
I would on great occasion speak with you. [*Exit CAS.*]  
—How is it, general? have you not hurt your head?

*Oth.* Dost thou mock me?

*Iago.* I mock you! no, by heaven:

Would you would bear your fortunes like a man.

*Oth.* A horned man's a monster, and a beast.

*Iago.* There's many a beast then in a populous city,  
And many a civil monster.

*Oth.* Did he confess it ?

*Iago.* Good sir, be a man ;  
Think, every bearded fellow, that's but yok'd,  
May draw with you : there's millions now alive,  
That nightly lie in those unproper beds,<sup>2</sup>  
Which they dare swear peculiar ; your case is better.  
O, 'tis the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,  
To lip a wanton in a secure couch,  
And to suppose her chaste ! No, let me know ;  
And, knowing what I am, I know what she shall be.

*Oth.* O, thou art wise ; 'tis certain.

*Iago.* Stand you awhile apart ;  
Confine yourself but in a patient list.<sup>2</sup>  
Whilst you were here, ere while mad with your grief,  
(A passion most unsuited such a man,)  
Cassio came hither : I shifted him away,  
And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy ;  
Bade him anon return, and here speak with me ;  
The which he promis'd. Do but encave yourself,<sup>3</sup>  
And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable scorns,  
That dwell in every region of his face ;  
For I will make him tell the tale anew,—  
Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when  
He hath, and is again to cope your wife ;  
I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience ;  
Or I shall say, you are all in all in spleen,  
And nothing of a man.

*Oth.* Dost thou hear, Iago ?

I will be found most cunning in my patience ;  
But (dost thou hear ?) most bloody.

*Iago.* That's not amiss ;

But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw ?

[OTHELLO *withdraws*.]

Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,  
A housewife, that, by selling her desires,  
Buys herself bread and clothes : it is a creature,  
That dotes on Cassio,—as 'tis the strumpet's plague,  
To beguile many, and be beguil'd by one ;—  
He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain  
From the excess of laughter :—Here he comes :—

[1] *Unproper* for common. WARBURTON.

[2] *List, or lists, is barriers, bounds.* Keep your temper, says Iago, within the bounds of patience. COLLINS.

[3] Hide yourself in a private place. JOHNSON.

Re-enter CASSIO.

As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad ;  
And his unbookish jealousy<sup>4</sup> must construe  
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behaviour,  
Quite in the wrong.—How do you now, lieutenant ?

*Cas.* The worse, that you give me the addition,  
Whose want even kills me.

*Iago.* Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure of't.  
Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power, [*Speaking lower.*]  
How quickly should you speed ?

*Cas.* Alas, poor caitiff !

*Oth.* Look, how he laughs already ! [*Aside.*]

*Iago.* I never knew a woman love man so.

*Cas.* Alas, poor rogue ! I think, i'faith, she loves me.

*Oth.* Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out. [*Aside.*]

*Iago.* Do you hear, Cassio ?

*Oth.* Now he importunes him

To tell it o'er : Go to ; well said, well said. [*Aside.*]

*Iago.* She gives it out, that you shall marry her :

Do you intend it ?

*Cas.* Ha, ha, ha !

*Oth.* Do you triumph, Roman ? do you triumph ?<sup>5</sup> [*Aside.*]

*Cas.* I marry her !—what ? a customer !<sup>6</sup> I pr'ythee,  
bear some charity to my wit ; do not think it so un-  
wholesome. Ha, ha, ha !

*Oth.* So, so, so, so : They laugh that win. [*Aside.*]

*Iago.* 'Faith, the cry goes, that you shall marry her.

*Cas.* Pr'ythee, say true.

*Iago.* I am a very villain else.

*Oth.* Have you scored me ?<sup>7</sup> Well. [*Aside.*]

*Cas.* This is the monkey's own giving out : she is  
persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and  
flattery, not out of my promise.

*Oth.* Iago beckons me ; now he begins the story. [*Aside.*]

*Cas.* She was here even now ; she haunts me in ev-  
ery place. I was, the other day, talking on the sea-bank  
with certain Venetians ; and thither comes this baul-  
ble ; by this hand, she falls thus about my neck ;—

*Oth.* Crying, O dear Cassio ! as it were : his gesture  
imports it. [*Aside.*]

[4] *Unbookish*, for ignorant.      WARBURTON.

[5] Othello call him *Roman* ironically. *Triumph*, which was a Roman ceremony, brought Roman into his thoughts. *What*, says he, you are now triumphing as great as a Roman.      JOHNSON.

[6] A common woman, one that invites custom.      STEEVENS.

[7] Have you made my reckoning ? have you settled the term of my life  
See illustrations.      JOHNSON.



*Cas.* So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me ; so hales, and pulls me ; ha, ha, ha !—

*Oth.* Now he tells, how she plucked him to my chamber. O, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to.— [Aside.]

*Cas.* Well, I must leave her company.

*Iago.* Before me ! look, where she comes.

*Enter BIANCA.*

*Cas.* 'Tis such another fitchew !<sup>8</sup> marry, a perfumed one.—What do you mean by this haunting of me ?

*Bian.* Let the devil and his dam haunt you ! What did you mean by that same handkerchief, you gave me even now ? I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out the whole work ?—A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there ! This is some minx's token, and I must take out the work ? There,—give it your hobby-horse : wheresoever you had it, I'll take out no work on't.

*Cas.* How now, my sweet Bianca ? how now ? how now ?

*Oth.* By heaven, that should be my handkerchief ! [Asi.]

*Bian.* An you'll come to supper to-night, you may : an you will not, come when you are next prepared for. [Exit.]

*Iago.* After her, after her.

*Cas.* 'Faith I must, she'll rail in the street else.

*Iago.* Will you sup there ?

*Cas.* 'Faith, I intend so.

*Iago.* Well, I may chance to see you ; for I would very fain speak with you.

*Cas.* Pr'ythee, come ; Will you ?

*Iago.* Go to ; say no more. [Exit CASSIO.]

*Oth.* How shall I murder him, Iago ?

*Iago.* Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice ?

*Oth.* O, Iago !

*Iago.* And did you see the handkerchief ?

*Oth.* Was that mine ?

*Iago.* Yours, by this hand : and to see how he prizes the foolish woman, your wife ! she gave it him, and he hath given it his whore.

*Oth.* I would have him nine years a killing :—

A fine woman ! a fair woman ! a sweet woman !

*Iago.* Nay, you must forget that.

*Oth.* Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damned to-night ; for she shall not live : No, my heart is turned to

[8] *Fitchew*, a pole-cat. So in *King Lear* :

“The *fitchew*, nor the soiled horse,” &c

A pole-cat was anciently one of the cant terms for a strumpet. STEEVENS.

stone ; I strike it, and it hurts my hand. O, the world hath not a sweeter creature : she might lie by an emperor's side, and command him tasks.

*Iago.* Nay, that's not your way.

*Oth.* Hang her ! I do but say what she is :—so delicate with her needle !—An admirable musician ! O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear !—Of so high and plenteous wit and invention !—

*Iago.* She's the worse for all this.

*Oth.* O, a thousand, a thousand times :—And then, of so gentle a condition !

*Iago.* Ay, too gentle.

*Oth.* Nay, that's certain : But yet the pity of it, Iago !—O, Iago, the pity of it, Iago !

*Iago.* If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend ; for, if it touch not you, it comes near nobody.

*Oth.* I will chop her into messes :—Cuckold me !

*Iago.* O, 'tis foul in her.

*Oth.* With mine officer !

*Iago.* That's fouler.

*Oth.* Get me some poison, Iago ; this night :—I'll not expostulate with her, lest her body and beauty unprovide my mind again :—this night, Iago.

*Iago.* Do it not with poison, strangle her in her bed, even the bed she hath contaminated.

*Oth.* Good, good : the justice of it pleases ; very good.

*Iago.* And, for Cassio,—let me be his undertaker : You shall hear more by midnight. [*A trumpet within.*]

*Oth.* Excellent good.—What trumpet is that same ?

*Iago.* Something from Venice, sure. 'Tis Lodovico, Come from the duke : and, see, your wife is with him.

*Enter* LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, and Attendants.

*Lod.* 'Save you, worthy general !

*Oth.* With all my heart, sir.

*Lod.* The duke and senators of Venice greet you.

[*Gives him a packet.*]

*Oth.* I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.

[*Opens the packet, and reads.*]

*Des.* And what's the news, good cousin Lodovico ?

*Iago.* I am very glad to see you, signior ;

Welcome to Cyprus.

*Lod.* I thank you : How does lieutenant Cassio ?

*Iago.* Lives, sir.

*Des.* Cousin, there's fallen between him and my lord An unkind breach : but you shall make all well.

*Oth.* Are you sure of that ?

*Des.* My lord ?

*Oth.* *This fail you not to do, as you will—* [Reads.]

*Lod.* He did not call ; he's busy in the paper.  
Is there division 'twixt thy lord and Cassio ?

*Des.* A most unhappy one ; I would do much  
To atone them, for the love I bear to Cassio.

*Oth.* Fire and brimstone !

*Des.* My lord ?

*Oth.* Are you wise ?

*Des.* What, is he angry ?

*Lod.* 'May be, the letter mov'd him ;  
For, as I think, they do command him home,  
Deputing Cassio in his government.

*Des.* By my troth, I am glad on't.

*Oth.* Indeed ?

*Des.* My lord ?

*Oth.* I am glad to see you mad.

*Des.* How, sweet Othello ?

*Oth.* Devil !

[Striking her.]

*Des.* I have not deserv'd this.

*Lod.* My lord, this would not be believ'd in Venice,  
Though I should swear I saw it : 'Tis very much ;  
Make her amends, she weeps.

*Oth.* O devil, devil !

If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,  
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile :—  
Out of my sight !

*Des.* I will not stay to offend you.

[Going.]

*Lod.* Truly, an obedient lady :—

I do beseech your lordship, call her back.

*Oth.* Mistress,——

*Des.* My lord ?

*Oth.* What would you with her, sir ?

*Lod.* Who, I, my lord ?

*Oth.* Ay ; you did wish, that I would make her turn :  
Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,  
And turn again ; and she can weep, sir, weep ;  
And she's obedient, as you say,—obedient,—  
Very obedient ;—Proceed you in your tears.—  
Concerning this, sir,—O well-painted passion !—  
I am commanded home :—Get you away ;

[9] *Atone them*—make them one ; reconcile them. The expression is formed by the coalescence of the word *at one*, the verb *to set*, or some equivalent being omitted. Thus in the *Acts* : “—he showed himself to them as they strove, and would have set them at one again.” And in *The Boshog of the Romish Church* : “—through which God is made at one with us, and hath forgiven us our sins.” HENLEY.

I'll send for you anon.—Sir, I obey the mandate,  
 And will return to Venice;—Hence, avaunt! [*Ex. DESD.*  
 Cassio shall have my place:— And,—sir, to-night,  
 I do entreat that we may sup together.

You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus.—Goats and monnies! [*Ex.*

*Lod.* Is this the noble Moor whom our full senate  
 Call—all-in-all sufficient?—this the noble nature  
 Whom passion could not shake? whose solid virtue  
 The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,  
 Could neither graze, nor pierce?

*Iago.* He is much chang'd.

*Lod.* Are his wits safe? is he not light of brain?

*Iago.* He is that he is; I may not breathe my censure.  
 What he might be,—if, what he might, he is not,—  
 I would to heaven, he were.

*Lod.* What, strike his wife!

*Iago.* 'Faith, that was not so well; Yet 'would I knew,  
 That stroke would prove the worst.

*Lod.* Is it his use?

Or did the letters work upon his blood,  
 And new-create this fault?

*Iago.* Alas, alas!

It is not honesty in me, to speak  
 What I have seen and known. You shall observe him;  
 And his own courses will denote him so,  
 That I may save my speech: Do but go after,  
 And mark how he continues.

*Lod.* I am sorry, that I am deceiv'd in him. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

*A Room in the Castle. Enter OTHELLO and EMILIA.*

*Oth.* You have seen nothing then?

*Emil.* Nor ever heard; nor ever did suspect.

*Oth.* Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together.

*Emil.* But then I saw no harm; and then I heard  
 Each syllable, that breath made up between them.

*Oth.* What, did they never whisper?

*Emil.* Never, my lord.

*Oth.* Nor send you out o'the way?

*Emil.* Never.

*Oth.* To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor nothing?

[1] Perhaps this is addressed to Desdemona, who had just expressed her joy on hearing Cassio was deputed in the room of her husband. Her innocent satisfaction in the hope of returning to her native place, is construed by Othello, into the pleasure she received from the advancement of his [12]. STEEVENS

*Emil.* Never, my lord.

*Oth.* That's strange.

*Emil.* I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,  
Lay down my soul at stake : if you think other,  
Remove your thought ; it doth abuse your bosom.  
If any wretch hath put this in your head,  
Let heaven requite it with the serpent's curse !  
For, if she be not honest, chaste, and true,  
There's no man happy ; the purest of their wives  
Is foul as slander.

*Oth.* Bid her come hither :—go. [Exit EMIL.  
She says enough ;—yet she's a simple bawd,  
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle whore,  
A closet-lock-and-key of villainous secrets ;  
And yet she'll kneel, and pray ; I have seen her do't.

*Re-enter EMILIA, with DESDEMONA.*

*Des.* My lord, what is your will ?

*Oth.* Pray, chuck, come hither.

*Des.* What is your pleasure ?

*Oth.* Let me see your eyes ;  
Look in my face.

*Des.* What horrible fancy's this ?

*Oth.* [To EMIL.] Some of your function, mistress ;  
Leave procreants alone, and shut the door ;  
Cough, or cry—hem, if any body come :  
Your mystery, your mystery ;—nay, despatch. [Ex. EMIL.]

*Des.* Upon my knees, what doth your speech import ?  
I understand a fury in your words,  
But not the words.

*Oth.* Why, what art thou ?

*Des.* Your wife, my lord ; your true  
And loyal wife.

*Oth.* Come, swear it, damn thyself ;  
Lest, being like one of heaven, the devils themselves  
Should fear to seize thee : therefore be double-damn'd,  
Swear—thou art honest.

*Des.* Heaven doth truly know it.

*Oth.* Heaven truly knows, that thou art false as hell.

*Des.* To whom, my lord ? with whom ? How am I false ?

*Oth.* O Desdemona !—away ! away ! away !

*Des.* Alas, the heavy day !—why do you weep ?  
Am I the occasion of these tears, my lord ?  
If, haply, you my father do suspect,  
An instrument of this your calling back,  
Lay not your blame on me ; if you have lost him,

Why, I have lost him too.

*Oth.* Had it pleas'd heaven  
To try me with affliction ; had he rain'd  
All kinds of sores, and shames, on my bare head ;  
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips ;  
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes ;  
I should have found in some part of my soul  
A drop of patience : but (alas !) to make me  
A fixed figure, for the time of scorn  
To point his slow unmoving finger at,—  
O ! O !

Yet could I bear that too ; well, very well :  
But there, where I have garner'd up my heart ;<sup>2</sup>  
Where either I must live, or bear no life ;  
The fountain from the which my current runs,  
Or else dries up ; to be discarded thence !  
Or keep it as a cistern, for foul toads  
To knot and gender in !—turn thy complexion there !  
Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin ;  
Ay, there, look grim as hell !<sup>3</sup>

*Des.* I hope, my noble lord esteems me honest.

*Oth.* O, ay ; as summer flies are in the shambles,  
That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,  
Who art so lovely fair, and smell'st so sweet,  
That the sense aches at thee.—'Would, thou hadst ne'er  
been born !

*Des.* Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed ?

*Oth.* Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,  
Made to write whore upon ? What committed !  
Committed !—O thou public commoner !  
I should make very forges of my cheeks,  
That would to cinders burn up modesty,  
Did I but speak thy deeds.—What committed !  
Heaven stops the nose at it, and the moon winks ;  
The bawdy wind, that kisses all it meets,  
Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,  
And will not hear it : What committed !—  
Impudent strumpet !

*Des.* By heaven, you do me wrong.

*Oth.* Are not you a strumpet ?

*Des.* No, as I am a christian :  
If to preserve this vessel for my lord,  
From any other foul unlawful touch,

[2] That is, *treasured up* ; the *garner* and the *fountain* are improperly conjoined. JOHNSON

[3] At such an object do thou, *Patience*, thyself change colour ; at this do thou, even thou, *rosy cherub*, as thou art, look as grim as hell. JOHNSON.

Be—not to be a strumpet, I am none.

*Oth.* What, not a whore ?

*Des.* No, as I shall be saved.

*Oth.* Is it possible ?

*Des.* O, heaven forgive us !

*Oth.* I cry you mercy, then ;

I took you for that cunning whore of Venice,  
That married with Othello.—You, mistress,

*Re-enter EMILIA.*

That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,  
And keep the gate of hell ; You ! you ! ay, you !  
We have done our course ; there's money for your pains ;  
I pray you, turn the key, and keep our counsel. [*Exit.*

*Emil.* Alas, what does this gentleman conceive ?—  
How do you, madam ? how do you, my good lady ?

*Des.* 'Faith, half asleep.

*Emil.* Good madam, what's the matter with my lord ?

*Des.* With who ?

*Emil.* Why, with my lord, madam ?

*Des.* Who is thy lord ?

*Emil.* He that is yours, sweet lady.

*Des.* I have none : Do not talk to me, Emilia ;  
I cannot weep ; nor answer I have none,  
But what should go by water. Pr'ythee, to-night  
Lay on my bed my wedding-sheets,—remember ;—  
And call thy husband hither.

*Emil.* Here is a change, indeed ! [*Exit.*

*Des.* 'Tis meet I should be us'd so, very meet.  
How have I been behav'd, that he might stick  
The small'st opinion on my great'st abuse ?

*Re-enter EMILIA, with IAGO.*

*Iago.* What is your pleasure, madam ? How is it  
with you ?

*Des.* I cannot tell. Those, that do teach young babes,  
Do it with gentle means, and easy tasks :  
He might have chid me so ; for, in good faith,  
I am a child to chiding.

*Iago.* What's the matter, lady ?

*Emil.* Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhor'd her,  
Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,  
As true hearts cannot bear.

*Des.* Am I that name, Iago ?

*Iago.* What name, fair lady ?

*Des.* Such as, she says, my lord did say I was.

*Emil.* He call'd her, whore ; a beggar, in his drink.

Could not have laid such terms upon his callet.<sup>4</sup>

*Iago.* Why did he so ?

*Des.* I do not know ; I am sure, I am none such.

*Iago.* Do not weep, do not weep : Alas the day !

*Emil.* Has she forsook so many noble matches,  
Her father, and her country, and her friends,  
To be call'd—whore ? Would it not make one weep ?

*Des.* It is my wretched fortune.

*Iago.* Beshrew him for it !

How comes this trick upon him ?

*Des.* Nay, heaven doth know.

*Emil.* I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,  
Some busy and insinuating rogue,  
Some cogging cozening slave, to get some office,  
Have not devis'd this slander ; I'll be hang'd else.

*Iago.* Fye, there is no such man ; it is impossible.

*Des.* If any such there be, heaven pardon him !

*Emil.* A halter pardon him ! and hell gnaw his bones !  
Why should he call her, whore ? who keeps her company ?  
What place ? what time ? what form ? what likelihood ?  
The Moor's abus'd by some most villainous knave,  
Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow :—  
O, heaven, that such companions thou'dst unfold ;  
And put in every honest hand a whip,  
To lash the rascal naked through the world,  
Even from the east to the west !

*Iago.* Speak within door.<sup>5</sup>

*Emil.* O, fye upon him ! Some such squire he was,  
That turn'd your wit the seamy side without,<sup>6</sup>  
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.

*Iago.* You are a fool ; go to.

*Des.* O, good Iago,

What shall I do to win my lord again ?  
Good friend, go to him ; for, by this light of heaven,  
I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel :—  
If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,  
Either in discourse of thought, or actual deed ;  
Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,  
Delighted them in any other form ;  
Or that I do not yet, and ever did,  
And ever will,—though he do shake me off  
To beggarly divorcement,—love him dearly,  
Comfort forswear me ! Unkindness may do much ;

[4] *Callet* is a lewd woman : so called, says Dr Gray, from the French *calotte*, which was a sort of head-dress worn by country girls. STEVENS.

[5] Do not clamour so as to be heard beyond the house.

[6] That is, *inside out*. JOHNSON.



And his unkindness may defeat my life,  
 But never taint my love: I cannot say, whore ;  
 It does abhor me, now I speak the word ;  
 To do the act that might the addition earn,  
 Not the world's mass of vanity could make me.

*Iago.* I pray you, be content ; 'tis but his humour ;  
 The business of the state does him offence ;  
 And he does chide with you.

*Des.* If 'twere no other, —

*Iago.* It is but so, I warrant you. [*Trumpets*  
 Hark, how these instruments summon to supper !  
 And the great messengers of Venice stay :  
 Go in, and weep not ; all things shall be well.

[*Exe. DESD. and EMILIA.*

*Enter RODERIGO.*

How now, Roderigo ?

*Rod.* I do not find, that thou deal'st justly with me.

*Iago.* What is the contrary ?

*Rod.* Every day thou doff'st me with some device,  
*Iago* ; and rather (as it seems to me now,) keep'st from  
 me all conveniency, than suppliest me with the least ad-  
 vantage of hope. I will, indeed, no longer endure it.  
 Nor am I yet persuaded, to put up in peace what al-  
 ready I have foolishly suffered.

*Iago.* Will you hear me, Roderigo ?

*Rod.* 'Faith, I have heard too much ; for your words,  
 and performances, are no kin together.

*Iago.* You charge me most unjustly.

*Rod.* With nought but truth. I have wasted myself  
 out of my means. The jewels you have had from me,  
 to deliver to Desdemona, would half have corrupted a  
 votarist : You have told me—she has received them,  
 and returned me expectations and comforts of sudden  
 respect and acquittance ; but I find none.

*Iago.* Well ; go to ; very well.

*Rod.* Very well ! go to ! I cannot go to, man ; nor 'tis  
 not very well : By this hand, I say, it is very scurvy ;  
 and begin to find myself fobbed in it.

*Iago.* Very well.

*Rod.* I tell you, 'tis not very well. I will make myself  
 known to Desdemona : If she will return me my jewels, I  
 will give over my suit, and repent my unlawful solicitation ;  
 if not, assure yourself, I will seek satisfaction of you.

*Iago.* You have said now.

*Rod.* Ay, and I have said nothing, but what I protest  
*intendment of doing.*

*Iago.* Why, now I see there's mettle in thee ; and even, from this instant, do build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo : Thou hast taken against me a most just exception ; but, yet, I protest, I have dealt most directly in thy affair.

*Rod.* It hath not appeared.

*Iago.* I grant, indeed, it hath not appeared ; and your suspicion is not without wit and judgment. But, Roderigo, if thou hast that within thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever,—I mean, purpose, courage, and valour,—this night show it : if thou the next night following enjoyest not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery, and devise engines for my life.

*Rod.* Well, what is it ? is it within reason, and compass ?

*Iago.* Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice, to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

*Rod.* Is that true ? why, then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

*Iago.* O, no ; he goes into Mauritania, and takes away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be lingered here by some accident ; wherein none can be so determinate, as the removing of Cassio.

*Rod.* How do you mean—removing of him ?

*Iago.* Why, by making him incapable of Othello's place ; knocking out his brains.

*Rod.* And that you would have me do ?

*Iago.* Ay ; if you dare do yourself a profit, and a right. He sups to-night with a harlot, and thither will I go to him ;—he knows not yet of his honourable fortune : if you will watch his going thence, (which I will fashion to fall out between twelve and one,) you may take him at your pleasure ; I will be near to second your attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand not amazed at it, but go along with me ; I will show you such a necessity in his death, that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him. It is now high supper-time, and the night grows to waste : about it.

*Rod.* I will hear further reason for this.

*Iago.* And you shall, be satisfied. [*Exeunt.*

### SCENE III.

*Another Room in the Castle. Enter OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA, and Attendants.*

*Lod.* I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.

*Oth.* O, pardon me ; 'twill do me good to walk.

*Lod.* Madam, good night; I humbly thank your ladyship.

*Des.* Your honour is most welcome.

*Oth.* Will you walk, sir?—O,—Desdemona,—

*Des.* My lord?

*Oth.* Get you to bed on the instant; I will be returned forthwith: dismiss your attendant there; look, it be done.

*Des.* I will, my lord. [*Exe. OTH. LOD. and Attend.*]

*Emil.* How goes it now? he looks gentler than he did.

*Des.* He says, he will return incontinent;

He hath commanded me to go to bed,  
And bade me to dismiss you.

*Emil.* Dismiss me!

*Des.* It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia,  
Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu:  
We must not now displease him.

*Emil.* I would, you had never seen him!

*Des.* So would not I; my love doth so approve him,  
That even his stubbornness, his checks, and frowns,—  
Pr'ythee, unpin me,—have grace and favour in them.

*Emil.* I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.

*Des.* All's one.—Good father! how foolish are our minds!  
—If I do die before thee, pr'ythee, shroud me  
In one of those same sheets.

*Emil.* Come, come, you talk.

*Des.* My mother had a maid call'd—Barbara;  
She was in love; and he, she lov'd, prov'd mad,  
And did forsake her: she had a song of—willow,  
An old thing 'twas, but it express'd her fortune,  
And she died singing it: That song, to-night,  
Will not go from my mind; I have much to do,  
But to go hang my head all at one side,<sup>7</sup>  
And sing like poor Barbara. Pr'ythee, despatch.

*Emil.* Shall I go fetch your night-gown?

*Des.* No, unpin me here.—

This Lodovico is a proper man.

*Emil.* A very handsome man.

*Des.* And he speaks well.

*Emil.* I know a lady in Venice, who would have  
walked barefoot to Palestine, for a touch of his nether lip.

[7] *I have much ado to do any thing but hang my head.* We might read, *Not to go hang my head.*—This is perhaps the only insertion made in the latter editions which has improved the play. The rest seem to have been added for the sake of amplification, or of ornament. When the imagination had subsided, and the mind was no longer agitated by the horror of the action, it became at leisure to look round for specious additions. This addition is natural. Desdemona can at first hardly forbear to sing the song; she endeavours to change her train of thoughts, but her imagination at last prevails, and she sings it. JOHNSON.

## I.

*Des. The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,*

*Sing all a green willow ;*

[Singing.

*Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,*

*Sing willow, willow, willow :*

*The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her moans ;*

*Sing willow, &c.*

*Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the stones ;*

Lay by these :

*Sing willow, willow, willow ;*

Pr'ythee, hie thee ; he'll come anon.—

*Sing all a green willow must be my garland.*

## II.

*Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve,—*

Nay, that's not next.—Hark ! who is it that knocks ?

*Emil. It is the wind.*

*Des. I call'd my love false love ; but what said he then ?*

*Sing willow, &c.*

*If I court no women, you'll couch with no men.*

So, get thee gone ; good night. Mine eyes do itch ;

Doth that bode weeping ?

*Emil. 'Tis neither here nor there.*

*Des. I have heard it said so.—O, these men, these men!—*

Dost thou in conscience think,—tell me, Emilia,—

That there be women do abuse their husbands

In such gross kind ?

*Emil. There be some such, no question.*

*Des. Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world ?*

*Emil. Why, would not you ?*

*Des. No, by this heavenly light !*

*Emil. Nor I neither by this heavenly light ;*

I might do't as well i'the dark.

*Des. Would'st thou do such a deed for all the world ?*

*Emil. The world is a huge thing : 'Tis a great price  
For a small vice.*

*Des. Good troth, I think thou would'st not.*

*Emil. By my troth, I think I should ; and undo't,  
when I had done. Marry, I would not do such a thing  
for a joint-ring ; nor for measures of lawn, nor for  
gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty exhibition :  
but, for the whole world,—Why, who would not make  
her husband a cuckold, to make him a monarch ? I  
should venture purgatory for't.*

*Des. Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong for the  
whole world.*

*Emil.* Why, the wrong is but a wrong i'the world ; and, having the world for your labour, 'tis a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly make it right.

*Des.* I do not think there is any such woman.

*Emil.* Yes, a dozen ; and as many  
To the vantage, as would store the world they play'd for.  
But, I do think, it is their husbands' faults,  
If wives do fall : Say, that they slack their duties,  
And pour our treasures into foreign laps ;  
Or else break out in peevish jealousies,  
Throwing restraint upon us ; or, say, they strike us,  
Or scant our former having in despite ;  
Why, we have galls ; and, though we have some grace,  
Yet we have some revenge. Let husbands know,  
Their wives have sense like them ; they see, and smell,  
And have their palates both for sweet and sour,  
As husbands have. What is it that they do,  
When they change us for others ? Is it sport ?  
I think it is ; And doth affection breed it ?  
I think, it doth ; Is't frailty, that ~~the~~ errs ?  
It is so too : And have not we affections ?  
Desires for sport ? and frailty, as men have ?  
Then, let them use us well : else, let them know,  
The ills we do, their ills instruct us to.

*Des.* Goodnight, good night. Heaven me such usage send,  
Not to pick bad from bad ; but, by bad, mend ! [*Exit.*]

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Street. Enter IAGO and RODERIGO.*

*Iago.* Here, stand behind this bulk ; straight will he come.  
Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home ;  
Quick, quick ; fear nothing ; I'll be at thy elbow.  
It makes us, or it mars us ; think on that,  
And fix most firm thy resolution.

*Rod.* Be near at hand ; I may miscarry in't.

*Iago.* Here, at thy hand ; be bold, and take thy sword.  
[*Retires to a little distance.*]

*Rod.* I have no great devotion to the deed ;  
And yet he has given me satisfying reasons :—  
'Tis but a man gone :—Forth, my sword ; he dies.

[*Goes to his stand.*]

*Iago.* I have rubb'd this young quat<sup>s</sup> almost to the sense.

[<sup>s</sup>] A quat, in the midland counties, is a pimple, which by rubbing is made to smart, or is rubbed to sense. Roderigo is called a quat by the same

And he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cassio,  
 Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,  
 Every way makes my gain. Live Roderigo,  
 He calls me to a restitution large  
 Of gold, and jewels, that I bobb'd from him,  
 As gifts to Desdemona ;  
 It must not be : if Cassio do remain,  
 He hath a daily beauty in his life,  
 That makes me ugly ; and, besides, the Moor  
 May unfold me to him ; there stand I in much peril :  
 No, he must die :—But so, I hear him coming.

*Enter CASSIO.*

*Rod.* I know his gait, 'tis he ;—Villain, thou diest.

*[Rushes from his post, and makes a pass at CASSIO.]*

*Cas.* That thrust had been mine enemy indeed,  
 But that my coat is better than thou think'st ;  
 I will make proof of thine. *[Draws and wounds ROD.]*

*Rod.* O, I am slain ! *[IAGO rushes from his post, cuts*

*CASSIO behind in the leg, and exit.*

*Cas.* I am maim'd for ever :—Help, ho ! murder ! murder !  
*[Falls.]*

*Enter OTHELLO, at a distance.*

*Oth.* The voice of Cassio :—Iago keeps his word.

*Rod.* O, villain that I am !

*Oth.* Hark ; 'tis even so.

*Cas.* O, help ! ho ! light ! a surgeon !

*Oth.* 'Tis he ;—O brave Iago, honest, and just,  
 That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong !  
 Thou teachest me,—Minion, your dear lies dead,  
 And your fate hies space :—Strumpet, I come :  
 Forth of my heart those charms, thine eyes, are blotted ;  
 Thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be spotted.  
*[Exit.]*

*Enter LODOVICO and GRATIANO, at a distance.*

*Cas.* What, ho ! no watch ? no passage ?<sup>9</sup> murder ! murder !

*Gra.* 'Tis some mischance ; the cry is very direful.

*Cas.* O, help !

*Lod.* Hark !

*Rod.* O wretched villain !

*Lod.* Two or three groans ;—it is a heavy night :<sup>1</sup>  
 These may be counterfeits ; let's think't unsafe  
 To come in to the cry, without more help.

*Rod.* No body come ? then shall I lead to death.

mode of speech, as a low fellow is now termed in low language, a *scab*. *Ye rub to the sense, is to rub to the quick.* JOHNSON.

[9] No passengers ? Nobody going by ? JOHNSON.

[1] A thick cloudy night, in which an ambush may be laid. JOHNSON.

*Enter IAGO, with a light.*

*Lod.* Hark!

*Gra.* Here's one comes in his shirt, with light and weapons.

*Iago.* Who's there? whose noise is this, that cries on murder?

*Lod.* We do not know.

*Iago.* Did you not hear a cry?

*Cas.* Here, here; for heaven's sake, help me.

*Iago.* What's the matter?

*Gra.* This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.

*Lod.* The same, indeed; a very valiant fellow.

*Iago.* What are you here that cry so grievously?

*Cas.* Iago? O, I am spoil'd, undone by villains!

Give me some help.

*Iago.* O me, lieutenant! what villains have done this?

*Cas.* I think that one of them is hereabout,

And cannot make away.

*Iago.* O treacherous villains!—

What are you there? come in, and give some help.

*{To LOD. and GRA.}*

*Rod.* O, help me here!

*Cas.* That's one of them.

*Iago.* O murderous slave! O villain! [*IAGO stabs ROD.*]

*Rod.* O damned Iago! O inhuman dog!—

O! O! O!

*Iago.* Kill men i'the dark!—Where be these bloody thieves?—

How silent is this town!—Ho! murder! murder!

What may you be? are you of good, or evil?

*Lod.* As you shall prove us, praise us.

*Iago.* Signior Lodovico?

*Lod.* He, sir.

*Iago.* I cry you mercy; here's Cassio hurt  
By villains.

*Gra.* Cassio?

*Iago.* How is it, brother?

*Cas.* My leg is cut in two.

*Iago.* Marry, heaven forbid!—

Light, gentlemen; I'll bind it with my shirt.

*Enter BIANCA.*

*Bian.* What is the matter, ho? who is't that cry'd?

*Iago.* Who is't that cry'd?

*Bian.* O my dear Cassio! my sweet Cassio!

O Cassio! Cassio! Cassio!

*Iago.* O notable strumpet !—Cassio, may you suspect  
Who they should be, that have thus mangled you ?

*Cas.* No.

*Gra.* I am sorry, to find you thus : I have been to  
seek you.

*Iago.* Lend me a garter : So.—O, for a chair,  
To bear him easily hence !

*Bian.* Alas, he faints :—O Cassio ! Cassio ! Cassio !

*Iago.* Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash  
To be a party in this injury.—

Patience a while, good Cassio.—Come, come ;  
Lend me a light.—Know we this face, or no ?

Alas ! my friend, and my dear countryman,  
Roderigo ? no :—Yes, sure ; O heaven ! Roderigo.

*Gra.* What, of Venice ?

*Iago.* Even he, sir ; did you know him ?

*Gra.* Know him ? ay.

*Iago.* Signior Gratiano ? I cry you gentle pardon ;  
These bloody accidents must excuse my manners,  
That so neglected you.

*Gra.* I am glad to see you.

*Iago.* How do you, Cassio ?—O, a chair, a chair !

*Gra.* Roderigo !

*Iago.* He, he, 'tis he :—O, that's well said ;—the  
chair. *[A chair brought in.]*

Some good man bear him carefully from hence ;  
I'll fetch the general's surgeon.—For you, mistress, *[To BIAN.]*  
Save you your labour.—He that lies slain here, Cassio,  
Was my dear friend : What malice was between you ?

*Cas.* None in the world ; nor do I know the man.

*Iago.* *[To BIAN.]* What, look you pale ?—O, bear  
him out o'the air.—*[CASSIO and ROD. borne off.]*  
Stay you, good gentlemen :—Look you pale, mistress ?  
Do you perceive the gastness of her eye ?—

Nay, if you stare, we shall hear more anon :—

Behold her well ; I pray you, look upon her ;

Do you see, gentlemen ? Nay, guiltiness will speak,  
Though tongues were out of use.

*Enter EMILIA.*

*Emil.* 'Las, what's the matter ; what's the matter,  
husband ?

*Iago.* Cassio has here been set on in the dark,  
By Roderigo, and fellows that are 'scap'd ;  
He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead..

*Emil.* Alas, good gentleman ! alas, good Cassio !

*Iago.* This is the fruit of whoring.—Pr'ythee, Emilia,



Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night :—

What, do you shake at that ?

*Bian.* He supp'd at my house, but I therefore shake not.

*Iago.* O, did he so ? I charge you, go with me.

*Emil.* Fye, fye upon thee, strumpet !

*Bian.* I am no strumpet ; but of life as honest,  
As you that thus abuse me.

*Emil.* As I ? foh ! fie upon thee !

*Iago.* Kind gentlemen, let's go see poor Cassio dress'd ;

—Come, mistress, you must tell us another tale.—

*Emilia,* run you to the citadel,

And tell my lord and lady what has happ'd.—

Will you go on, I pray ?—This is the night, [*Aside.*

That either makes me, or fordoes me quite. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

*A Bedchamber : DESDEMONA in bed asleep. A light burning.*

*Enter OTHELLO.*

*Oth.* It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul,—

Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars !—

It is the cause. <sup>2</sup> Yet I'll not shed her blood ;

Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,

And smooth as monumental alabaster. [*Takes off his sword.*

Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.

Put out the light, and then put out the light :

If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,

I can again thy former light restore,

Should I repent me :—but once put out thine,

Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,

I know not where is that Promethean heat,

That can thy light relume. When I have pluck'd thy rose,

I cannot give it vital growth again,

It needs must wither :—I'll smell it on the tree.—

O balmy breath, that dost almost persuade [*Kissing her.*

Justice to break her sword !—One more, one more.—

Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,

And love thee after :—one more, and this the last :

So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,

But they are cruel tears : This sorrow's heavenly ; <sup>3</sup>

It strikes, where it doth love.—She wakes—

*Des.* Who's there ? Othello ?

*Oth.* Ay, Desdemona.

*Des.* Will you come to-bed, my lord ?

*Oth.* Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona ?

[2] See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

*Des.* Ay, my lord.

*Oth.* If you bethink yourself of any crime,  
Unreconcil'd as yet to heaven and grace,  
Solicit for it straight.

*Des.* Alas, my lord, what may you mean by that ?

*Oth.* Well, do it, and be brief ; I will walk by :  
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit ;  
No,—Heaven forefend !—I would not kill thy souh

*Des.* Talk you of killing ?

*Oth.* Ay, I do.

*Des.* Then, heaven  
Have mercy on me !

*Oth.* Amen, with all my heart !

*Des.* If you say so, I hope you will not kill me.

*Oth.* Humph !

*Des.* And yet I fear you ; for you are fatal then,  
When your eyes roll so : Why I should fear, I know not,  
Since guiltiness I know not ; but yet, I feel, I fear.

*Oth.* Think on thy sins.

*Des.* They are loves I bear to you.

*Oth.* Ay, and for that thou diest.

*Des.* That death's unnatural, that kills for loving—  
Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip ?  
Some bloody passion shakes your very frame :  
These are portents ; but yet, I hope, I hope,  
They do not point on me.

*Oth.* Peace, and be still !

*Des.* I will so. What's the matter ?

*Oth.* That handkerchief which I so lov'd, and gave thee,  
Thou gav'st to Cassio.

*Des.* No, by my life and soul ;  
Send for the man, and ask him.

*Oth.* Sweet soul, take heed,  
Take heed of perjury ; thou'rt on thy death-bed.

*Des.* Ay, but not yet to die.

*Oth.* Yes, presently :

Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin ;  
For to deny each article with oath,  
Cannot remove, nor choke, the strong conception,  
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.

*Des.* Then, Lord have mercy on me !

*Oth.* I say, amen.

*Des.* And have you mercy too !—I never did  
Offend you in my life ; never lov'd Cassio,  
But with such general warranty of heaven  
As I might love ; I never gave him token.

*Oth.* By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in his hand. . .  
O perjur'd woman ! thou dost stone my heart,  
And mak'st me call, what I intend to do,—  
A murder, which I thought a sacrifice :<sup>4</sup>  
I saw the handkerchief.

*Des.* He found it then ;  
I never gave it him :—Send for him hither,  
And let him confess a truth.

*Oth.* He hath confess'd.

*Des.* What, my lord ?

*Oth.* That he hath—us'd thee.

*Des.* How ? unlawfully ?

*Oth.* Ay.

*Des.* He'll not say so.

*Oth.* No, his mouth is stopp'd ;  
Honest Iago hath ta'en order for't.

*Des.* My fear interprets then,—What, is he dead ?

*Oth.* Had all his hairs been lives, my great revenge  
Had stomach for them all.

*Des.* Alas ! he is betray'd, and I undone.

*Oth.* Out, strumpet ! Weep'st thou for him to my face ?

*Des.* O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not.

*Oth.* Down, strumpet !

*Des.* Kill me to-morrow, let me live to-night.

*Oth.* Nay, if you strive,—

*Des.* But half an hour.

*Oth.* Being done,

There is no pause.

*Des.* But while I say one prayer.

*Oth.* It is too late. [*He smothers her.*]

*Emil.* [*within.*] My lord, my lord ! What ho ! my  
lord ! my lord !

*Oth.* What noise is this ?—not dead ! not yet quite dead ?  
I, that am cruel, am yet merciful ;

I would not have thee linger in thy pain.—

So, so.

*Emil.* [*within.*] What ho ! my lord, my lord !

*Oth.* Who's there ?

*Emil.* O, good my lord, I would speak a word with you.

*Oth.* Yes ;—'tis Emilia :—by and by.—She's dead.

'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death ;

The noise was high.—Ha ! no more moving ?

[4] This line is difficult. *Thou hast hardened my heart and makest me kill thee with the rage of a murderer, when I thought to have sacrificed thee to justice with the calmness of a priest striking a victim.—I am glad that I have ended my revival of this dreadful scene, it is not to be endured. JOHNS.*

Still as the grave. Shall she come in ? Were't good ?  
 I think, she stirs again :—No.—What's the best ?  
 If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife :  
 My wife ! my wife ! what wife ?—I have no wife :  
 O, insupportable ! O heavy hour !  
 Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse  
 Of sun and moon ; and that the affrighted globe  
 Should yawn at alteration.

*Emil.* [*within.*] I do beseech you I may speak with you,  
 O, good my lord !

*Oth.* I had forgot thee : O, come in, Emilia :—  
 Soft,—by and by :—Let me the curtains draw.—  
 Where art thou ? What's the matter with thee now ?

[*Unlocks the door.*]

*Enter EMILIA.*

*Emil.* O, good my lord, yonder's foul murder done.

*Oth.* What ? now ?

*Emil.* But now, my lord !

*Oth.* It is the very error of the moon ;  
 She comes more near the earth than she was wont,  
 And makes men mad.

*Emil.* Cassio, my lord, has kill'd a young Venetian,  
 Call'd—Roderigo.

*Oth.* Roderigo kill'd ?  
 And Cassio kill'd ?

*Emil.* No, Cassio is not kill'd.

*Oth.* Not Cassio kill'd ? Then murder's out of tune,  
 And sweet revenge grows harsh.

*Des.* O, falsely, falsely murder'd !

*Emil.* Alas ! what cry is that ?

*Oth.* That ! what ?

*Emil.* Out, and alas ! that was my lady's voice :—  
 Help ! help, ho ! help !—O lady, speak again !  
 Sweet Desdemona ! O, sweet mistress, speak !

*Des.* A guiltless death I die.

*Emil.* O, who hath done this deed ?

*Des.* Nobody ; I myself ; farewell :  
 Commend me to my kind lord. O, farewell. [*Dies.*]

*Oth.* Why, how should she be murder'd ?

*Emil.* Alas, who knows ?

*Oth.* You heard her say herself, it was not I.

*Emil.* She said so ; I must needs report the truth.

*Oth.* She's, like a liar, gone to burning hell ;  
 'Twas I that kill'd her.

*Emil.* O, the more angel she,  
 And you the blacker devil !

*Oth.* She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.

*Emil.* Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.

*Oth.* She was false as water.

*Emil.* Thou art rash as fire, to say  
That she was false ; O, she was heavenly true !

*Oth.* Cassio did tup her ; ask thy husband else.

O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell,  
But that I did proceed upon just grounds  
To this extremity ; Thy husband knew it all.

*Emil.* My husband ?

*Oth.* Thy husband.

*Emil.* That she was false to wedlock ?

*Oth.* Ay, with Cassio.  
Nay, had she been true,  
If heaven would make me such another world  
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,  
I'd not have sold her for it.

*Emil.* My husband ?

*Oth.* Ay, 'twas he that told me first ;  
An honest man he is, and hates the slime  
That sticks on filthy deeds.

*Emil.* My husband ?

*Oth.* What needs this iterance, woman ? I say, thy  
husband.

*Emil.* O mistress ! villainy hath made mocks with love !  
—My husband say, that she was false ?

*Oth.* He, woman ;

I say, thy husband ; Do'st understand the word ?  
My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.

*Emil.* If he say so, may his pernicious soul  
Rot half a grain a day ! he lies to the heart ;  
She was too fond of her most filthy bargain.

*Oth.* Ha !

*Emil.* Do thy worst :  
This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven,  
Than thou wast worthy her.

*Oth.* Peace, you were best.

*Emil.* Thou hast not half the power to do me harm,  
As I have to be hurt. O gull ! O dolt !  
As ignorant as dirt ! thou hast done a deed,—  
I care not for thy sword ; I'll make thee known,  
Though I lost twenty lives :—Help ! help ho ! help !  
The Moor has kill'd my mistress ; Murder ! murder !

*Enter MONTANO, GRATIANO, and IAGO.*

*Mon.* What is the matter !—How now, general ?

*Emil.* O, are you come, Iago ? you have done well,  
That men must lay their murders on your neck.

*Gra.* What is the matter ?

*Emil.* Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man :  
He says, thou told'st him that his wife was false :  
I know, thou did'st not, thou'rt not such a villain ;  
Speak, for my heart is full.

*Iago.* I told him what I thought ; and told no more  
Than what he found himself was apt and true.

*Emil.* But did you ever tell him, she was false ?

*Iago.* I did.

*Emil.* You told a lie ; an odious, damned lie ;  
Upon my soul, a lie ; a wicked lie :—  
She false with Cassio !—Did you say with Cassio ?

*Iago.* With Cassio, mistress ; Go to, charm your tongue.

*Emil.* I will not charm my tongue ; I am bound to speak ;  
My mistress here lies murder'd in her bed.

*All.* O heavens forefend !

*Emil.* And your reports have set the murder on.

*Oth.* Nay, stare not, masters ; it is true, indeed.

*Gra.* 'Tis a strange truth.

*Mon.* O monstrous act !

*Emil.* Villainy, villainy, villainy !

I think upon't,—I think,—I smell't ;—O villainy !

I thought so then ;—I'll kill myself for grief.—

O villainy, villainy !

*Iago.* What, are you mad ? I charge you, get you home.

*Emil.* Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak ;  
'Tis proper I obey him, but not now :—

Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.

*Oth.* O ! O ! O ! [Hanging over his wife.]

*Emil.* Nay, lay thee down, and roar ;

For thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent,

That e'er did lift up eye.

*Oth.* O, she was foul !— [Rising.]

I scarce did know you, uncle : There lies your niece,  
Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly stopp'd :  
I know, this act shows horrible and grim.

*Gra.* Poor Desdemona ! I am glad thy father's dead ;  
Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief  
Shore his old thread in twain : did he live now,  
This sight would make him do a desperate turn,  
Yea, curse his better angel from his side,  
And fall to reprobation.

*Oth.* 'Tis pitiful : but yet Iago knows,  
That she with Cassio hath the act of shame  
A thousand times committed ; Cassio confess'd it :  
And she did gratify his amorous works  
With that recognizance and pledge of love

Which I first gave her ; I saw it in his hand ;  
It was a handkerchief, an antique token  
My father gave my mother.

*Emil.* O heaven ! O heavenly powers !

*Iago.* Come, hold your peace.

*Emil.* 'Twill out, 'twill out ;—I hold my peace, sir ? no :  
No, I will speak as liberal as the air ;  
Let heaven, and men, and devils, let them all,  
All, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll speak.

*Iago.* Be wise, and get you home.

*Emil.* I will not. [*IAGO offers to stab his wife.*]

*Gra.* Fye!

Your sword upon a woman ?

*Emil.* O thou dull Moor ! That handkerchief thou  
speak'st of,

I found by fortune, and did give my husband ;  
For often, with a solemn earnestness,  
(More than, indeed, belong'd to such a trifle,)  
He begg'd of me to steal it.

*Iago.* Villainous whore !

*Emil.* She give it Cassio ! no, alas ; I found it,  
And I did give't my husband.

*Iago.* Filth, thou liest.

*Emil.* By heaven, I do not ; I do not, gentlemen :  
O murd'rous coxcomb ! what should such a fool  
Do with so good a wife ? [*IAGO stabs EMIL then runs out.*]

*Oth.* Are there no stones in heaven,  
But what serve for the thunder ?—Precious villain !

*Gra.* The woman falls ; sure, he has kill'd his wife.

*Emil.* Ay, ay ; O, lay me by my mistress' side !

*Gra.* He's gone, but his wife's kill'd.

*Mont.* 'Tis a notorious villain. Take you this weapon,  
Which I have here recover'd from the Moor :  
Come, guard the door without ; let him not pass,  
But kill him rather ; I'll after that same villain,  
For 'tis a damned slave. [*Exeunt MON. and GRA.*]

*Oth.* I am not valiant neither,  
But every puny whipster gets my sword :—  
But why should honour outlive honesty ?  
Let it go all.

*Emil.* What did thy song bode, lady ?  
Hark, can'st thou hear me ? I will play the swan,  
And die in music ;—*Willow, willow, willow.*—  
Moor, she was chaste ; she lov'd thee, cruel Moor ;  
So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true ;  
So speaking as I think, I die,—I die.

[*Dies*]

*Oth.* I have another weapon in this chamber,  
It is a sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper ;<sup>9</sup>—  
O, here it is :—Uncle, I must come forth.

*Gra.* [*within.*] If thou attempt it, it will cost thee dear ;  
Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer.

*Oth.* Look in upon me then, and speak with me,  
Or, naked as I am, I will assault thee.

*Re-enter GRATIANO.*

*Gra.* What is the matter ?

*Oth.* Behold ! I have a weapon ;  
A better never did itself sustain  
Upon a soldier's thigh : I have seen the day,  
That, with this little arm, and this good sword,  
I have made my way through more impediments  
Than twenty times your stop :—But, O vain boast !  
Who can control his fate ? 'tis not so now.—  
Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd ;  
Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,  
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.  
Do you go back dismay'd ? 'tis a lost fear :  
Man but a rush against Othello's breast,  
And he retires ;—Where should Othello go ?—  
Now, how dost thou look now ? O ill-starr'd wench !<sup>1</sup>  
Pale as thy smock ? when we shall meet at compt,  
This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,  
And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl ?  
Even like thy chastity.—  
O cursed, cursed slave !—Whip me, ye devils,  
From the possession of this heavenly sight !  
Blow me about in winds ! roast me in sulphur !  
Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire !—  
O Desdemona ! Desdemona ! dead ?  
Dead ? O ! O ! O !

*Enter* LODOVICO, MONTANO, CASSIO, *carried in a  
chair, and Officers, with* IAGO, *prisoner.*

*Lod.* Where is this rash and most unfortunate man ?

*Oth.* That's he, that was Othello ; here I am.

*Lod.* Where is that viper ? bring the villain forth.

*Oth.* I look down towards his feet ;<sup>2</sup> but that's a fable ;  
If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.

[*OTHELLO wounds* IAGO.]

*Lod.* Wrench his sword from him.

*Iago.* I bleed, sir ; but not kill'd.

*Oth.* I am not sorry neither ; I'd have thee live ;

[9] See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

[2] To see if, according to the common opinion, his feet be cloven. *JOHN,*



For, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die.

*Lod.* O thou Othello, that was once so good,  
Fall'n in the practice of a cursed slave,  
What shall be said to thee ?

*Oth.* Why, any thing :  
An honourable murderer, if you will ;  
For nought I did in hate, but all in honour.

*Lod.* This wretch hath part confess'd his villainy.  
Did you and he consent in Cassio's death ?

*Oth.* Ay.

*Cas.* Dear general, I never gave you cause.

*Oth.* I do believe it, and I ask your pardon.  
Will you, I pray you, demand that demi-devil,  
Why he hath thus ensnar'd my soul and body ?

*Iago.* Demand me nothing : What you know, you know :  
From this time forth I never will speak word.

*Lod.* What ? not to pray ?

*Gra.* Torments will open your lips.

*Oth.* Well, thou dost best.

*Lod.* Sir, you shall understand what hath befall'n,  
Which, as I think, you know not : Here is a letter,  
Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo ;  
And here, another : the one of them imports  
The death of Cassio to be undertook  
By Roderigo.

*Oth.* O villain !

*Cas.* Most heathenish, and most gross !

*Lod.* Now here's another discontented paper,  
Found in his pocket too ; and this, it seems,  
Roderigo meant to have sent this damned villain ;  
But that, belike, Iago in the interim  
Came in and satisfied him.

*Oth.* O the pernicious caitiff !—  
How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief  
That was my wife's ?

*Cas.* I found it in my chamber :  
And he himself confess'd, but even now,  
That there he dropp'd it, for a special purpose,  
Which wrought to his desire.

*Oth.* O fool ! fool ! fool !

*Cas.* There is, besides, in Roderigo's letter,—  
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him  
Brave me upon the watch ; whereon it came  
That I was cast : And even but now he spake,  
After long seeming dead,—Iago hurt him,  
Iago set him on.

*Lod.* You must forsake this room, and go with us ;  
Your power and your command is taken off,  
And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave,—  
If there be any cunning cruelty,  
That can torment him much, and hold him long,  
It shall be his : You shall close prisoner rest,  
Till that the nature of your fault be known  
To the Venetian state :—Come, bring him away.

*Oth.* Soft you ; a word or two, before you go.  
I have done the state some service, and they know it ;  
No more of that :—I pray you, in your letters,  
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,  
Speak of me as I am ; nothing extenuate,  
Nor set down aught in malice : then must you speak  
Of one, that lov'd not wisely, but too well ;  
Of one, not easily jealous, but, being wrought,  
Perplex'd in the extreme ; of one, whose hand,  
Like the base Judean,<sup>3</sup> threw a pearl away,  
Richer than all his tribe ; of one, whose subdu'd eyes  
Albeit unused to the melting mood,  
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees  
Their medicinal gum : Set you down this :  
And say, besides,—that in Aleppo once,  
Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk  
Beat a Venetian, and traduc'd the state,  
I took by the throat the circumcised dog,  
And smote him—thus.

[*Stabs himself.*]

*Lod.* O bloody period !

*Gra.* All, that's spoke, is marr'd.

*Oth.* I kiss'd thee, ere I kill'd thee ;—No way but  
this, [Falling upon DESDEM.]  
Killing myself, to die upon a kiss. [Dies.]

*Cas.* This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon ;  
For he was great of heart.

*Lod.* O Spartan dog,  
More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea !  
Look on the tragic loading of this bed ; [To IAGO.]  
This is thy work : the object poisons sight ;—  
Let it be hid.—Gratiano, keep the house,  
And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,  
For they succeed to you.—To you, lord governor,  
Remains the censure of this hellish villain ;  
The time, the place, the torture,—O enforce it !  
Myself will straight aboard ; and, to the state,  
This heavy act with heavy heart relate. [Exeunt.]

[3] See Illustrations, Vol. IX.

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