

**TIMON OF ATHENS***A line-by-line translation***Act 1, Scene 1****Shakespeare***Enter Poet, Painter, Jeweller, Merchant, and others, at several doors***POET**

Good day, sir.

**PAINTER**

I am glad you're well.

**POET**

I have not seen you long: how goes the world?

**PAINTER**

It wears, sir, as it grows.

**POET**

5 Ay, that's well known:  
But what particular rarity? what strange,  
Which manifold record not matches? See,  
Magic of bounty! all these spirits thy power  
Hath conjured to attend. I know the merchant.

**PAINTER**

10 I know them both; th' other's a jeweller.

**MERCHANT**

O, 'tis a worthy lord.

**JEWELER**

Nay, that's most fix'd.

**MERCHANT**

A most incomparable man, breathed, as it were,  
To an untirable and continuant goodness:  
15 He passes.

**Jeweler**

I have a jewel here--

**MERCHANT**

O, pray, let's see't: for the Lord Timon, sir?

**Jeweler**

If he will touch the estimate: but, for that--

**POET**

20 [Reciting to himself] 'When we for recompense have  
praised the vile,  
It stains the glory in that happy verse  
Which aptly sings the good.'

**MERCHANT**

'Tis a good form.

**Shakescleare Translation***A POET, PAINTER, JEWELLER, MERCHANT, and others enter from different sides of the stage.***POET**

Hello.

**PAINTER**

It's good to see you.

**POET**

It's been a while. How is everything in your world?

**PAINTER**

Up and down, up and down.

**POET**

So they say. But how weird is this—have you ever seen anything like it? Look at how amazing wealth and generosity are, how they can summon all these people to attend to them. I know this merchant.

**PAINTER**

I know both of them. The other one is a jeweler.

**MERCHANT**Such a worthy man, this lord .

 The word "lord" in this play does not necessarily refer to the typical feudal definition: a person with formal power over a large stretch of land. Nor does it carry the weight of formality that it might today. It means something close to "great man."

**JEWELER**

Definitely.

**MERCHANT**

There's no one like him, almost born to be forever generous. He exceeds everyone else.

**Jeweler**

I have a jewel right here—

**MERCHANT**

Oh please, let's see it. Is it for the Lord Timon?

**JEWELER**

If he will pay the price. But for that—

**POET**

[Reciting a poem to himself]  "When we write poetry praising bad things for money, it ruins the better verse that rightly supports good things."

 It's unclear if within the play this is a poem the poet himself wrote or just a commonplace saying of the time.

**MERCHANT**

[Looking at the jewel] It's beautiful.

**JEWELLER**

And rich: here is a water, look ye.

**PAINTER**

You are rapt, sir, in some work, some dedication  
To the great lord.

**POET**

A thing slipp'd idly from me.  
Our poesy is as a gum, which oozes  
From whence 'tis nourish'd: the fire i' the flint  
Shows not till it be struck; our gentle flame  
Provokes itself and like the current flies  
Each bound it chafes. What have you there?

**PAINTER**

35 A picture, sir. When comes your book forth?

**POET**

Upon the heels of my presentment, sir.  
Let's see your piece.

**PAINTER**

'Tis a good piece.

**POET**

So 'tis: this comes off well and excellent.

**PAINTER**

40 Indifferent.

**POET**

Admirable: how this grace  
Speaks his own standing! what a mental power  
This eye shoots forth! how big imagination  
Moves in this lip! to the dumbness of the gesture  
One might interpret.

**PAINTER**

It is a pretty mocking of the life.  
Here is a touch; is't good?

**POET**

I will say of it,  
It tutors nature: artificial strife  
50 Lives in these touches, livelier than life.

*Enter certain Senators, and pass over*

**PAINTER**

How this lord is follow'd!

**POET**

The senators of Athens: happy man!

**PAINTER**

Look, more!

**POET**

55 You see this confluence, this great flood  
of visitors.  
I have, in this rough work, shaped out a man,  
Whom this beneath world doth embrace and hug  
With amplest entertainment: my free drift  
60 Halts not particularly, but moves itself  
In a wide sea of wax: no levell'd malice  
Infects one comma in the course I hold;  
But flies an eagle flight, bold and forth on,  
Leaving no tract behind.

**JEWELLER**

And expensive from the looks of it. Look at how it shines!

**PAINTER**

You are captivated by some task, writing a poetic  
dedication to Lord Timon.

**POET**

Something slipped my mind. Poetry is like sap that oozes  
from the tree it gets its nutrients from. The spark that  
illuminates in the flint <sup>3</sup> does not reveal itself until the  
flint is hit with something, but our gentle flame lights itself  
up and runs like a current over every surface it touches.  
What is that right there?

<sup>3</sup> Flint is a type of hard quartz used to start fires: striking it creates sparks.

**PAINTER**

A portrait. When will your book be published?

**POET**

After I have presented my poem to Timon. Let me see your  
painting.

**PAINTER**

It's nice.

**POET**

Yes, it looks well made.

**PAINTER**

It's not bad.

**POET**

It is incredible how its beauty reflects the dignity of its  
subject <sup>4</sup>! Look at the intelligence that twinkles in the  
eye! There is a certain imagination that moves in its lip!  
Even though the painting is silent I feel like I could  
understand what the man is saying.

<sup>4</sup> It's not clear exactly what this refers to, but given that the Poet is writing a dedication to Timon, it likely refers to him.

**PAINTER**

It is a pretty good imitation of life. Here is a nice touch, do  
you like it?

**POET**

I will admit it does represent nature <sup>5</sup> well. The purpose of  
art  
lies in these touches. They're almost livelier than life itself.

<sup>5</sup> Many contemporary and ancient theories popular in Shakespeare's time thought art's primary purpose was to imitate nature.

*A few Senators enter and walk across the stage.*

**PAINTER**

Look at all the people following the lord!

**POET**

They're Senators of Athens. How lucky is he!

**PAINTER**

And more too!

**POET**

Look at this huge crowd of flooding visitors. I have in this  
draft of my poem drawn the outline of a man beloved and  
embraced by the earthly world. <sup>6</sup> I do not mean to  
represent particular people, but work in generalities as if  
my tablet were an entire sea of wax <sup>7</sup>. Personal grudges  
do not affect even the smallest details of my writing. My  
creative process flies forth, strong as an eagle in flight, and  
leaves no trace of its earthly inspirations.

<sup>6</sup> When the Poet mentions a "beneath world" he is making reference to the Ptolemaic understanding of astronomy in which the earth is believed to be a spherical region under the moon, the only part of the universe subject to change.

<sup>7</sup> This vague passage likely refers to the small wax tablets that were used for writing in Shakespeare's time. Perhaps the Poet is speaking about how his writing focuses so much on

**PAINTER**

65 How shall I understand you?

**POET**

I will unbolt to you.  
You see how all conditions, how all minds,  
As well of glib and slippery creatures as  
Of grave and austere quality, tender down  
70 Their services to Lord Timon: his large fortune  
Upon his good and gracious nature hanging  
Subdues and properties to his love and tendance  
All sorts of hearts; yea, from the glass-faced  
flatterer  
75 To Apemantus, that few things loves better  
Than to abhor himself: even he drops down  
The knee before him, and returns in peace  
Most rich in Timon's nod.

**PAINTER**

I saw them speak together.

**POET**

80 Sir, I have upon a high and pleasant hill  
Feign'd Fortune to be throned: the base o' the mount  
Is rank'd with all deserts, all kind of natures,  
That labour on the bosom of this sphere  
To propagate their states: amongst them all,  
85 Whose eyes are on this sovereign lady fix'd,  
One do I personate of Lord Timon's frame,  
Whom Fortune with her ivory hand wafts to her;  
Whose present grace to present slaves and servants  
Translates his rivals.

**PAINTER**

90 'Tis conceived to scope.  
This throne, this Fortune, and this hill, methinks,  
With one man beckon'd from the rest below,  
Bowing his head against the sleepy mount  
To climb his happiness, would be well express'd  
95 In our condition.

**POET**

Nay, sir, but hear me on.  
All those which were his fellows but of late,  
Some better than his value, on the moment  
Follow his strides, his lobbies fill with tendance,  
100 Rain sacrificial whisperings in his ear,  
Make sacred even his stirrup, and through him  
Drink the free air.

**PAINTER**

Ay, marry, what of these?

**POET**

When Fortune in her shift and change of mood  
105 Spurns down her late beloved, all his dependants  
Which labour'd after him to the mountain's top  
Even on their knees and hands, let him slip down,  
Not one accompanying his declining foot.

**PAINTER**

'Tis common:  
110 A thousand moral paintings I can show  
That shall demonstrate these quick blows of Fortune's  
More pregnantly than words. Yet you do well

**PAINTER**

How could I possibly understand what you're talking about ?

*the general that it is almost as if it were written on a*

8 *The painter could either be talking about the vague way in which the poet describes his work, or he could be talking about the work itself, asking in earnest whether it would be possible to understand a poem that abandoned its grounding in particulars.*

**POET**

I will unlock the meaning for you. Notice how people of all types and temperaments, whether smooth-talking and self-interested or serious and truthful, offer their services to Lord Timon. His immense wealth and his kind and gracious nature overwhelm people, and buy him the approval of all sorts of people eager to love and attend him, from the flatterer whose face mirrors the wishes of his counterpart, to Apemantus 9, who loves nothing more than hating himself. Even he bows down on his knees to Timon, and leaves peacefully after receiving Timon's approval.

9 *Apemantus, who appears later in this scene, is a notoriously critical philosopher who serves as a foil to Timon throughout the play.*

**PAINTER**

I did see them speaking to one another.

**POET**

*[Speaking of the content of his poem]* I have written down here that the goddess Fortune 10 is sitting high atop her throne on a beautiful hill. The base of the mountain is surrounded by men of all stations, all dispositions, all trying their hardest to get richer while on earth. Among all of these men, who watch Fortune attentively, I have one meant to represent Lord Timon, whom Fortune beckons to her, instantly transforming all of the other men, his rivals, into servants and slaves.

10 *Fortuna (translated to "Fortune" in English) was the goddess of luck and good fortune in Roman mythology.*

**PAINTER**

How well you've depicted the scene! This throne, this depiction of Fortune, and this hill—with one man beckoned from the rest below, bowing his head before the great mountain on which Fortune sits, the source of his happiness—perfectly captures the human condition.

**POET**

Sir, listen to some more of the poem. All of those men who were his equals, some of an even better rank, immediately follow him, so that his rooms are suddenly filled with attendants who shower his ears with whispers of their sacrificial devotion to him, and make sacred even his mounting of a horse, as if it were only because of him that they could breathe.

**PAINTER**

Indeed, and what do we make of these people?

**POET**

The moment Fortune changes her mind and spurns this newly chosen man, all of those who depended on him and who helped him on their hands and knees to reach the mountain top, they let him slip without even trying to save him.

**PAINTER**

That is true. I can show you a thousand paintings of moral lessons that demonstrate Fortune's sudden victims more effectively than words ever could. But you'd do well

To show Lord Timon that mean eyes have seen  
The foot above the head.

*Trumpets sound. Enter TIMON, addressing himself courteously to every suitor; a Messenger from VENTIDIUS talking with him; LUCILIUS and other servants following*

**TIMON**

115 Imprison'd is he, say you?

**MESSENGER**

Ay, my good lord: five talents is his debt,  
His means most short, his creditors most strait:  
Your honourable letter he desires  
To those have shut him up; which failing,

120 Periods his comfort.

**TIMON**

Noble Ventidius! Well;  
I am not of that feather to shake off  
My friend when he must need me. I do know him  
A gentleman that well deserves a help:

125 Which he shall have: I'll pay the debt,  
and free him.

**MESSENGER**

Your lordship ever binds him.

**TIMON**

Commend me to him: I will send his ransom;  
And being enfranchised, bid him come to me.  
'Tis not enough to help the feeble up,  
But to support him after. Fare you well.

**MESSENGER**

All happiness to your honour!

*Exit*

*Enter an old Athenian*

**OLD ATHENIAN**

Lord Timon, hear me speak.

**TIMON**

135 Freely, good father.

**OLD ATHENIAN**

Thou hast a servant named Lucilius.

**TIMON**

I have so: what of him?

**OLD ATHENIAN**

Most noble Timon, call the man before thee.

**TIMON**

Attends he here, or no? Lucilius!

**LUCILIUS**

140 Here, at your lordship's service.

**OLD ATHENIAN**

This fellow here, Lord Timon, this thy creature,  
By night frequents my house. I am a man  
That from my first have been inclined to thrift;  
And my estate deserves an heir more raised

145 Than one which holds a trencher.

**TIMON**

Well; what further?

nevertheless to show the Lord Timon that even we commoners can see that he is falling.

*Trumpets sound and TIMON enters, addressing each of his suitors courteously; a MESSENGER from VENTIDIUS talks with him; LUCILIUS and other servants follow.*

**TIMON**

You say that he is imprisoned?

**MESSENGER**

Yes, my good lord: he owes five talents , and even though he has such a small income, his creditors are insistent that he give it back right away. He wants a letter from you to those who have imprisoned him, without which he claims he'll have no comfort.

 It is unclear how much a talent would be in today's money. The Riverside Shakespeare (1974 edition) says that a talent might very roughly be taken to be about \$2,000, which with inflation is nearly \$10,000 in today's money.

**TIMON**

Great Ventidius! Well, I am not the type of man to neglect a friend in need. I know that he is a gentleman that deserves assistance, which he will get. I'll pay the debt for his freedom.

**MESSENGER**

Your lordship always makes him grateful.

**TIMON**

Give him my regards. I will send his ransom and when he is free I will ask him to come to me. It is not enough simply to help the weak stand. One must also support them after helping them up. Farewell.

**MESSENGER**

Goodbye. Be well!

*The MESSENGER exits.*

*An OLD ATHENIAN enters.*

**OLD ATHENIAN**

Lord Timon, would you hear me speak?

**TIMON**

Speak freely, good man.

**OLD ATHENIAN**

You have a servant named Lucilius.

**TIMON**

I do. What of him?

**OLD ATHENIAN**

Most noble Timon, would you call the man before you?

**TIMON**

Is he here right now? Lucilius!

**LUCILIUS**

Here, at your lordship's service.

**OLD ATHENIAN**

This man, Lord Timon, this dependent of yours, comes by my house at night. I am a man who has been thrifty from the start, and my estate deserves an heir of better rank than this lowly waiter here.

**TIMON**

Okay. What, then?

**OLD ATHENIAN**

One only daughter have I, no kin else,  
On whom I may confer what I have got:  
The maid is fair, o' the youngest for a bride,  
150 And I have bred her at my dearest cost  
In qualities of the best. This man of thine  
Attempts her love: I prithee, noble lord,  
Join with me to forbid him her resort;  
Myself have spoke in vain.

**TIMON**

155 The man is honest.

**OLD ATHENIAN**

Therefore he will be, Timon:  
His honesty rewards him in itself;  
It must not bear my daughter.

**TIMON**

Does she love him?

**OLD ATHENIAN**

160 She is young and apt:  
Our own precedent passions do instruct us  
What levity's in youth.

**TIMON**

[To LUCILIUS] Love you the maid?

**LUCILIUS**

Ay, my good lord, and she accepts of it.

**OLD ATHENIAN**

165 If in her marriage my consent be missing,  
I call the gods to witness, I will choose  
Mine heir from forth the beggars of the world,  
And dispossess her all.

**TIMON**

How shall she be endow'd,  
170 if she be mated with an equal husband?

**OLD ATHENIAN**

Three talents on the present; in future, all.

**TIMON**

This gentleman of mine hath served me long:  
To build his fortune I will strain a little,  
For 'tis a bond in men. Give him thy daughter:  
175 What you bestow, in him I'll counterpoise,  
And make him weigh with her.

**OLD ATHENIAN**

Most noble lord,  
Pawn me to this your honour, she is his.

**TIMON**

My hand to thee; mine honour on my promise.

**LUCILIUS**

180 Humbly I thank your lordship: never may  
The state or fortune fall into my keeping,  
Which is not owed to you!

*Exeunt LUCILIUS and Old Athenian*

**POET**

Vouchsafe my labour, and long live your lordship!

**OLD ATHENIAN**

I have just one daughter, no other family, to whom I can give my estate. She is a good-looking girl, barely old enough to be a bride, and I have raised her well to possess the most desirable qualities. This man of yours keeps flirting with her. Please, my lord, help me forbid him from seeing her. Otherwise I might as well have said nothing.

**TIMON**

[Speaking of LUCILIUS] This man is honest.

**OLD ATHENIAN**

And because of that your man should be too, Timon. His honesty ought to reward him in and of itself. But it should not earn him my daughter too.

**TIMON**

Does she love him?

**OLD ATHENIAN**

She is young and impressionable. You and I know well from our past passions what lighthearted thoughtlessness there is in youth.

**TIMON**

[To LUCILIUS] Do you love this young woman?

**LUCILIUS**

Yes, my lord, and she loves me back.

**OLD ATHENIAN**

If I do not consent to her marriage, with the gods as my witness, I will choose my heir from all the beggars of the world and deprive her of everything.

**TIMON**

What dowry <sup>12</sup> should she have if she married a husband from the same social class?

<sup>12</sup> A dowry is a payment or other form of compensation given by the bride's family to the groom upon marriage.

**OLD ATHENIAN**

About \$6,000 immediately, and everything I have in the future.

**TIMON**

This gentleman Lucilius has served me for a long time. I will make some efforts to build his fortune, such is the duty of friendship. If you give him your daughter I will match whatever you give and make him her equal.

**OLD ATHENIAN**

Most noble lord, if you swear this on your honor, she is his.

**TIMON**

I swear on my own honor.

**LUCILIUS**

I humbly thank you, my Lord. There is nothing that should come to me that I do not owe to you!

*LUCILIUS and the OLD ATHENIAN exit.*

**POET**

Accept this gift I made for you, and long live my lord!

**TIMON**

185 I thank you; you shall hear from me anon:  
Go not away. What have you there, my friend?

**PAINTER**

A piece of painting, which I do beseech  
Your lordship to accept.

**TIMON**

Painting is welcome.  
190 The painting is almost the natural man;  
or since dishonour traffics with man's nature,  
He is but outside: these pencil'd figures are  
Even such as they give out. I like your work;  
And you shall find I like it: wait attendance  
195 Till you hear further from me.

**PAINTER**

The gods preserve ye!

**TIMON**

Well fare you, gentleman: give me your hand;  
We must needs dine together. Sir, your jewel  
Hath suffer'd under praise.

**JEWELLER**

200 What, my lord! dispraise?

**TIMON**

A more satiety of commendations.  
If I should pay you for't as 'tis extoll'd,  
It would unclew me quite.

**JEWELLER**

My lord, 'tis rated  
205 As those which sell would give: but you well know,  
Things of like value differing in the owners  
Are prized by their masters: believe't, dear lord,  
You mend the jewel by the wearing it.

**TIMON**

Well mock'd.

**MERCHANT**

210 No, my good lord; he speaks the common tongue,  
Which all men speak with him.

**TIMON**

Look, who comes here: will you be chid?

*Enter APEMANTUS*

**Jeweller**

We'll bear, with your lordship.

**MERCHANT**

215 He'll spare none.

**TIMON**

Good Morrow to thee, gentle Apemantus!

**APEMANTUS**

Till I be gentle, stay thou for thy good Morrow;  
When thou art Timon's dog, and these knaves honest.

**TIMON**

Thank you. I will let you know when I'd like to hear your work. But don't go away.

*[To the PAINTER]* What do you have there, friend?

**PAINTER**

A painting, which I'm begging you to accept as a gift from me.

**TIMON**

I do like paintings, and this one is looks almost exactly like me. Sometimes, because men can be duplicitous, a man becomes only what he lets other people see from the outside. But these pencil marks in your painting are no more than they appear to be. I like your work, and I'll let you know soon how much I like it. Wait here until you hear from me.

**PAINTER**

God bless you!

**TIMON**

Well goodbye, gentleman. Give me your hands. We must dine together sometime soon.

*[To the JEWELER]* Sir, your jewel has gotten too much praise!

**JEWELER**

What? You don't like it?

**TIMON**

It's gotten too much praise. If I paid you based on how much it's been praised, I would go broke.

**JEWELER**

My lord, it is valued as much as its sellers would pay for it. But you know well that the value of things differs in the hands of different owners, and increases when they belong to masters of higher status. Believe me, dear lord, you would make this jewel more expensive just by wearing it.

**TIMON**

That's a compelling sales pitch.

**MERCHANT**

No, my good lord. He says what everyone says. They all agree.

**TIMON**

Uh oh, look who's coming. Will we be mocked?

*APEMANTUS enters.*

**Jeweler**

We'll bear the brunt of his insults with you.

**MERCHANT**

He won't spare anyone.

**TIMON**

Good day to you, gentle Apemantus!

**APEMANTUS**

Save your "good Morrow" until after I've been nice to you—

*[To the Artisans]* or maybe for when you are Timon's lapdog, or when either of these villains tell the truth.

**TIMON**

Why dost thou call them knaves? thou know'st them not.

**APEMANTUS**

220 Are they not Athenians?

**TIMON**

Yes.

**APEMANTUS**

Then I repent not.

**Jeweller**

You know me, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

Thou know'st I do: I call'd thee by thy name.

**TIMON**

225 Thou art proud, Apemantus.

**APEMANTUS**

Of nothing so much as that I am not like Timon.

**TIMON**

Whither art going?

**APEMANTUS**

To knock out an honest Athenian's brains.

**TIMON**

That's a deed thou'l die for.

**APEMANTUS**

230 Right, if doing nothing be death by the law.

**TIMON**

How likest thou this picture, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

The best, for the innocence.

**TIMON**

Wrought he not well that painted it?

**APEMANTUS**

He wrought better that made the painter; and yet  
235 he's but a filthy piece of work.

**PAINTER**

You're a dog.

**APEMANTUS**

Thy mother's of my generation: what's she, if I be a  
dog?

**TIMON**

Will dine with me, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

240 No; I eat not lords.

**TIMON**

Why do you call them villains? You don't even know them.

**APEMANTUS**

Are they from Athens?

**TIMON**

Yes.

**APEMANTUS**

Then I don't feel bad for saying it.

**Jeweler**

Do you know who I am, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

You know I do, because I called you by your name, "villain."

**TIMON**

You are too arrogant, Apemantus.

**APEMANTUS**

I couldn't be less like you in that way, Timon.

**TIMON**

Where are you going?

**APEMANTUS**

To knock the brains out of an honest Athenian.

**TIMON**

That is a deed that you will die for.

**APEMANTUS**

Only if doing nothing would be punishable by death under  
the law.

**TIMON**

How do you like this portrait, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

It's fine, but it's just a painting.

**TIMON**

Didn't the painter do a good job?

**APEMANTUS**

Whoever made the painter did a better job, and he himself  
is a terribly flawed piece of work.

**PAINTER**

You're a dog.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> This is a play on the etymology of the word "cynic." Apemantus is a Cynic, a Greek philosophy whose followers rejected things like wealth, fame, and worldly possessions. The word, "cynic" is derived from the Greek word meaning "dog."

**APEMANTUS**

Your mother is of the same species: what is she if I am a  
dog?

**TIMON**

Will you dine with me, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

No, I do not eat.<sup>14</sup> lords.

<sup>14</sup> He is making a joke, because "dine with me" in Shakespearean English could also mean "dine on me" or, more colloquially, "eat me."

**TIMON**

An thou shouldst, thou 'ldst anger ladies.

**APEMANTUS**

O, they eat lords; so they come by great bellies.

**TIMON**

That's a lascivious apprehension.

**APEMANTUS**

So thou apprehendest it: take it for thy labour.

**TIMON**

245 How dost thou like this jewel, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

Not so well as plain-dealing, which will not cost a man a doit.

**TIMON**

What dost thou think 'tis worth?

**APEMANTUS**

Not worth my thinking. How now, poet!

**POET**

250 How now, philosopher!

**APEMANTUS**

Thou liest.

**POET**

Art not one?

**APEMANTUS**

Yes.

**POET**

Then I lie not.

**APEMANTUS**

255 Art not a poet?

**POET**

Yes.

**APEMANTUS**

Then thou liest: look in thy last work, where thou hast feigned him a worthy fellow.

**POET**

That's not feigned; he is so.

**APEMANTUS**

260 Yes, he is worthy of thee, and to pay thee for thy labour: he that loves to be flattered is worthy o' the flatterer. Heavens, that I were a lord!

**TIMON**

What wouldst do then, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

E'en as Apemantus does now; hate a lord with my heart.

**TIMON**

If you did, you would anger the ladies. 15

15 This is a bawdy pun that suggests that if Apemantus "eats" Timon in the literal sense, the women who would otherwise like to "eat" Timon in a sexual sense would be disappointed because he'd be devoured.

**APEMANTUS**

Oh, they eat lords; that's how they get pregnant.

**TIMON**

That's a crude sentiment.

**APEMANTUS**

That's how you've interpreted it: it's your fault then.

**TIMON**

Do you like this jewel, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

Not as much as I value telling the truth, which doesn't cost a penny.

**TIMON**

What do you think it's worth?

**APEMANTUS**

It's not worth my thinking about it. What about you, poet?

**POET**

And you, philosopher!

**APEMANTUS**

You lie. 16

16 Philosophers like Plato famously ejected poets from their idealized cities because they believed poets did not represent the truth.

**POET**

Are you not a philosopher?

**APEMANTUS**

Yes.

**POET**

Then I do not lie.

**APEMANTUS**

Aren't you a poet?

**POET**

Yes.

**APEMANTUS**

Then you lie: look at your last poem, in which you pretended that you think Timon is a worthy man.

**POET**

I wasn't faking that. He is a worthy man.

**APEMANTUS**

Yes he is worthy of you, and to pay you for your labor. He who loves to be flattered is worthy of the flatterer. God, if only I were a lord!

**TIMON**

What would you do then, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

The same that I do right now: hate a lord with all my heart.

**TIMON**

265 What, thyself?

**APEMANTUS**

Ay.

**TIMON**

Wherefore?

**APEMANTUS**That I had no angry wit to be a lord.  
Art not thou a merchant?**MERCHANT**

270 Ay, Apemantus.

**APEMANTUS**

Traffic confound thee, if the gods will not!

**MERCHANT**

If traffic do it, the gods do it.

**APEMANTUS**

Traffic's thy god; and thy god confound thee!

*Trumpet sounds. Enter a Messenger***TIMON**

275 What trumpet's that?

**MESSENGER**'Tis Alcibiades, and some twenty horse,  
All of companionship.**TIMON**

Pray, entertain them; give them guide to us.

*Exeunt some Attendants***TIMON**280 You must needs dine with me: go not you hence  
Till I have thank'd you: when dinner's done,  
Show me this piece. I am joyful of your sights.*Enter ALCIBIADES, with the rest***TIMON**

Most welcome, sir!

285

**APEMANTUS**So, so, there!  
Aches contract and starve your supple joints!  
That there should be small love 'mongst these  
sweet knaves,  
290 And all this courtesy! The strain of man's bred out  
Into baboon and monkey.**ALCIBIADES**Sir, you have saved my longing, and I feed  
Most hungrily on your sight.**TIMON**Right welcome, sir!  
295 Ere we depart, we'll share a bounteous time  
In different pleasures. Pray you, let us in.*Exeunt all except APEMANTUS**Enter two Lords***TIMON**

What? Yourself?

**APEMANTUS**

Yes.

**TIMON**

Why?

**APEMANTUS**Because I would have lost the angry wit I now have if I were  
a lord. Aren't you a merchant?**MERCHANT**

Yes, Apemantus.

**APEMANTUS**I hope your business destroys you—that is, if the gods don't  
first!**MERCHANT**

If my business ruins me, the gods ruin me.

**APEMANTUS**

Business is your god, and your god will ruin you.

*Trumpets play. A MESSENGER enters.***TIMON**

What's the trumpet for?

**MESSENGER**

It is Alcibiades and twenty horsemen, all together.

**TIMON**

Welcome them and guide them to us.

*Some Attendants exit.***TIMON***[To the PAINTER]* You must dine with me. Don't go until I  
have thanked you for your painting, and when dinner is  
over show me your latest work. I will be happy to see you.*Enter ALCIBIADES, with the rest of his people.***TIMON**

Welcome!

**APEMANTUS**Yes, yes! Pains flare up and wither your tender joints! That  
there can be so much disdain amongst these villains, who  
act with such politeness! All this politeness! The human  
species has bred itself into baboons and monkeys.**ALCIBIADES***[To TIMON]* Sir your presence has saved me from my  
longing, and I feed most hungrily at the sight of you.**TIMON**You are welcome, sir! Before you depart, you'll have a  
wonderful time filled with many pleasures. Please, let's go  
inside!*Everyone exits but APEMANTUS.**A FIRST LORD and a SECOND LORD enter.*

**FIRST LORD**

What time o' day is it, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

Time to be honest.

**FIRST LORD**

300 That time serves still.

**APEMANTUS**

The more accursed thou, that still omitt'st it.

**SECOND LORD**

Thou art going to Lord Timon's feast?

**APEMANTUS**

Ay, to see meat fill knaves and wine heat fools.

**SECOND LORD**

Fare thee well, fare thee well.

**APEMANTUS**

305 Thou art a fool to bid me farewell twice.

**SECOND LORD**

Why, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

Shouldst have kept one to thyself, for I mean to give thee none.

**FIRST LORD**

Hang thyself!

**APEMANTUS**

310 No, I will do nothing at thy bidding: make thy requests to thy friend.

**SECOND LORD**

Away, unpeaceable dog, or I'll spurn thee hence!

**APEMANTUS**

I will fly, like a dog, the heels o' the ass.

*Exit*

**FIRST LORD**

315 He's opposite to humanity. Come, shall we in, And taste Lord Timon's bounty? he outgoes The very heart of kindness.

**SECOND LORD**

He pours it out; Plutus, the god of gold, Is but his steward: no meed, but he repays 320 Sevenfold above itself; no gift to him, But breeds the giver a return exceeding All use of quittance.

**FIRST LORD**

The noblest mind he carries That ever govern'd man.

**SECOND LORD**

325 Long may he live in fortunes! Shall we in?

**FIRST LORD**

I'll keep you company.

*Exeunt*

**FIRST LORD**

What time of day is it Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

Time to be honest.

**FIRST LORD**

It is always that time.

**APEMANTUS**

Shame on you then for having failed to do so.

**SECOND LORD**

Are you going to Lord Timon's feast?

**APEMANTUS**

Yes, to see idiots fill up on meat and fools get drunk on wine.

**SECOND LORD**

Farewell, farewell.

**APEMANTUS**

You are a fool to bid me farewell twice.

**SECOND LORD**

Why, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

You should have kept one for yourself, because I have no intention of giving you one.

**FIRST LORD**

Go kill yourself!

**APEMANTUS**

No, I won't do anything you ask me to do: go ask that of your friend.

**SECOND LORD**

Go away you angry dog, or I'll kick you!

**APEMANTUS**

I will run away like a dog so your heels catch nothing but my ass!

*APEMANTUS exits.*

**FIRST LORD**

Apemantus is inhuman. Come, shall we go in and taste Lord Timon's bounty? He exceeds the meaning of the word kindness.

**SECOND LORD**

Kindness pours out of him. Even Plutus, the god of gold, seems like just a mere apprentice of Timon's. There is no service given him that he does not repay seven times in value. There is no gift he receives that doesn't return to the giver a sense of value exceeding the price paid for it.

**FIRST LORD**

He has the noblest mind any man has ever had.

**SECOND LORD**

May he live a long and wealthy life! Shall we go in?

**FIRST LORD**

I'll accompany you.

*They exit.*

## Act 1, Scene 2

### Shakespeare

Hautboys playing loud music. A great banquet served in; FLAVIUS and others attending; then enter TIMON, ALCIBIADES, Lords, Senators, and VENTIDIUS. Then comes, dropping, after all, APEMANTUS, discontentedly, like himself

#### VENTIDIUS

Most honour'd Timon,  
It hath pleased the gods to remember my father's age,  
And call him to long peace.  
He is gone happy, and has left me rich:  
5 Then, as in grateful virtue I am bound  
To your free heart, I do return those talents,  
Doubled with thanks and service, from whose help  
I derived liberty.

#### TIMON

O, by no means,  
10 Honest Ventidius; you mistake my love:  
I gave it freely ever; and there's none  
Can truly say he gives, if he receives:  
If our betters play at that game, we must not dare  
To imitate them; faults that are rich are fair.

#### VENTIDIUS

15 A noble spirit!

#### TIMON

Nay, my lords,

*They all stand ceremoniously looking on TIMON*

#### TIMON

Ceremony was but devised at first  
To set a gloss on faint deeds, hollow welcomes,  
20 Recanting goodness, sorry ere 'tis shown;  
But where there is true friendship, there needs none.  
Pray, sit; more welcome are ye to my fortunes  
Than my fortunes to me.

*They sit*

#### FIRST LORD

My lord, we always have confess'd it.

#### APEMANTUS

25 Ho, ho, confess'd it! hang'd it, have you not?

#### TIMON

O, Apemantus, you are welcome.

#### APEMANTUS

No;  
You shall not make me welcome:  
I come to have thee thrust me out of doors.

#### TIMON

30 Fie, thou'rt a churl; ye've got a humour there  
Does not become a man: 'tis much to blame.  
They say, my lords, 'ira furor brevis est,' but yond  
man is ever angry. Go, let him have a table by  
himself, for he does neither affect company, nor is  
he fit for't, indeed.

### Shakesclare Translation

Oboes play loud music. A great banquet is brought in; FLAVIUS and others are attending; TIMON then enters, along with ALCIBIADES, Lords, Senators, and VENTIDIUS. Then, after everyone else, APEMANTUS drops in, unhappy and not dressed for the occasion.

#### VENTIDIUS

Honorable Timon, it has pleased the gods to remember the times of my father and to call him to a long peace in death. He is now happily gone and has left me rich. Virtue has thus dictated, then, that I honor your generosity. I return all of that money you lent me, and double the amount in thanks and service to you, who helped free me.

#### TIMON

By no means, good Ventidius. I helped you out of love and gave everything to you freely. No one can actually say that he gives if he receives something in return. The politicians play those kind of crafty games, and we must not do the same. If rich people ought to have faults, let them be good faults.

1 By this he means a lack of craft, or strategic thinking.

#### VENTIDIUS

What a noble spirit!

#### TIMON

*[As the Lords stand and look at TIMON]* No, my lords.

*Everyone stands ceremoniously and looks at TIMON.*

#### TIMON

These kinds of formalities were first devised to give meaning to meaningless deeds, hollow greetings, and false kindness. It is sad that it is shown here, where true friendship and ceremony is not needed. Please sit down. You are more welcome to my fortunes than they are welcome to me.

*They sit.*

#### FIRST LORD

My lord, we have always said the same.

2 The meaning of "confess'd" in the original text is "said so" or "declared," not "confessed" in a criminal or religious sense.

#### APEMANTUS

Haha, you've confessed it? And been hanged for the sin, have you not?

3 Apemantus's reply is a pun in response to the First Lord's use of the word "confess" in the original text.

#### TIMON

Apemantus, you (and your humor) are welcome here.

#### APEMANTUS

No, I am not. You will not let me be welcome, because I have come to remove you.

#### TIMON

Ah, you are a mean-spirited man. You have an unbecoming disposition and it's pretty sad. My lords, they say, "anger is a brief madness," but this man here is angry all the time! Let him have a table for himself, for he neither wants company nor seems deserving of it.

**APEMANTUS**

Let me stay at thine apperil, Timon: I come to observe; I give thee warning on't.

**TIMON**

I take no heed of thee; thou'rt an Athenian, therefore welcome: I myself would have no power; 40 prithee, let my meat make thee silent.

**APEMANTUS**

I scorn thy meat; 'twould choke me, for I should ne'er flatter thee. O you gods, what a number of men eat Timon, and he sees 'em not! It grieves me to see so many dip their meat in one man's blood; and all the madness is, he cheers them up too. 45 I wonder men dare trust themselves with men: Methinks they should invite them without knives; Good for their meat, and safer for their lives. There's much example for it; the fellow that sits next him now, parts bread with him, pledges the breath of him in a divided draught, is the readiest man to kill him: 't has been proved. If I were a huge man, I should fear to drink at meals; Lest they should spy my windpipe's dangerous notes: 50 Great men should drink with harness on their throats.

**TIMON**

My lord, in heart; and let the health go round.

**SECOND LORD**

Let it flow this way, my good lord.

**APEMANTUS**

Flow this way! A brave fellow! he keeps his tides well. Those healths will make thee and thy state 60 look ill, Timon. Here's that which is too weak to be a sinner, honest water, which ne'er left man i' the mire: This and my food are equals; there's no odds: Feasts are too proud to give thanks to the gods. [Apemantus' Grace] Immortal gods, I crave no pelf; I pray for no man but myself: Grant I may never prove so fond, To trust man on his oath or bond; 70 Or a harlot, for her weeping; Or a dog, that seems a-sleeping; Or a keeper with my freedom; Or my friends, if I should need 'em. Amen. So fall to': 75 Rich men sin, and I eat root.

*Eats and drinks*

**APEMANTUS**

Much good dich thy good heart, Apemantus!

**TIMON**

Captain Alcibiades, your heart's in the field now.

**ALCIBIADES**

My heart is ever at your service, my lord.

**TIMON**

80 You had rather be at a breakfast of enemies than a dinner of friends.

**ALCIBIADES**

So the were bleeding-new, my lord, there's no meat like 'em: I could wish my best friend at such a feast.

**APEMANTUS**

Let me stay at your own risk, Timon. I come only to observe and am giving you fair warning abo that.

**TIMON**

I do not worry about your insults. You are an Athenian and therefore welcome. I myself would have no power to silence you, so please, just let my food keep you quiet.

**APEMANTUS**

I don't want your food. It would choke me because it is offered to flatterers, and I would never flatter you. Oh you gods, what number of men eat Timon's meat 4, and he doesn't even notice. It makes me sad to see so many dip their meat into the blood of one man, and the crazy thing about it all is that he encourages them to do it! I wonder how men dare to trust other men. They should be cautious of letting them bring their knives 5 to such a feast. It would keep them from eating so much, and probably save their lives too! There are many examples of it: the man sitting next to him now, breaks bread with him, and shares his germs as he drinks from the same glass—that is the man most ready to kill him 6. It is certain. If I were a man of higher rank, I would fear drinking at my meals, because they might be able to see my neck's tenderest spots while I tilted my head back. Great men should drink with armor on their throats.

4 This is a bawdy reference to Timon's sexual organs.

5 It was customary in Shakespeare's time for guests to bring their own knives.

6 Though anachronistic historically, this passage is laden with references to the tale of Judas's betrayal of Jesus Christ.

**TIMON**

Health to everyone!

**SECOND LORD**

I hope it flows this way, my lord!

**APEMANTUS**

Flow this way! What a fine man! He keeps time well. Those wishes of health will make you and your state sorry, Timon.

[Referring to himself] Here before you stands a man not like the wine you toast with, but like honest water, which is too weak a drink to be a sinner and never abandoned a man in times of need. This food for thought is equal to the food you offer, no doubt. Men who attend feasts are too proud to give thanks to the gods.

[APERMANUTUS gives his own toast] Immortal gods, I do not want money; I pray for no one other than myself. Please grant that I never become so dumb as to trust a man on his oath or promise; or a whore, when she weeps; or a dog, that seems to sleep; or a jailer with my freedom; or my friends if I ever need them. Amen. So let's get to eating: rich men will sin while I eat my root.

*He eats and drinks.*

**APEMANTUS**

This food will do your heart much good, Apemantus!

**TIMON**

Captain Alcibiades, you seem to long for battle now.

**ALCIBIADES**

I always long to serve you, my lord.

**TIMON**

It seems you would rather be at a breakfast with your enemies than a dinner with your friends.

**ALCIBIADES**

Only if my enemies are bleeding to death, my lord, there's no food like that. I would wish such a feast on my best friend.

**APEMANTUS**

Would all those fatterers were thine enemies then,  
that then thou mightst kill 'em and bid me to 'em!

85

**FIRST LORD**

Might we but have that happiness, my lord, that you would once use our hearts, whereby we might express some part of our zeals, we should think ourselves for ever perfect.

**TIMON**

O, no doubt, my good friends, but the gods themselves have provided that I shall have much help from you: how had you been my friends else? why have you that charitable title from thousands, did not you chiefly belong to my heart? I have told more of you to myself than you can with modesty speak in your own behalf; and thus far I confirm you. O you gods, think I, what need we have any friends, if we should ne'er have need of 'em? they were the most needless creatures living, should we ne'er have use for 'em, and would most resemble sweet instruments hung up in cases that keep their sounds to themselves. Why, I have often wished myself poorer, that I might come nearer to you. We are born to do benefits: and what better or properer can we can our own than the riches of our friends? O, what a precious comfort 'tis, to have so many, like brothers, commanding one another's fortunes! O joy, e'en made away ere 't can be born! Mine eyes cannot hold out water, methinks: to forget their faults, I drink to you.

100

105

110

**APEMANTUS**

Thou weepest to make them drink, Timon.

**SECOND LORD**

Joy had the like conception in our eyes  
And at that instant like a babe sprung up.

**APEMANTUS**

Ho, ho! I laugh to think that babe a bastard.

**THIRD LORD**

I promise you, my lord, you moved me much.

115

**APEMANTUS**

Much!

*Tucket, within*

**TIMON**

What means that trump?

*Enter a Servant*

**TIMON**

How now?

**SERVANT**

Please you, my lord, there are certain ladies most desirous of admittance.

**TIMON**

Ladies! what are their wills?

**SERVANT**

There comes with them a forerunner, my lord, which bears that office, to signify their pleasures.

**APEMANTUS**

*[Interrupting]* If only all these fat men here were your enemies, then you might kill them and bring them to me.

**FIRST LORD**

Could we have the pleasure, my lord Timon, of serving you in some way? That way we could express our great enthusiasm for you, and be forever happy.

**TIMON**

Without a doubt, my good friends, the gods themselves have made it so that I will need much help from you: how could you be my friends otherwise? Indeed, why else would you—out of thousands of men—have that charitable title of friend, if you did not belong in my heart? I have told you more about myself than you could tell yourself, and through that I have confirmed you to indeed be my friends. I ask the gods sometimes, why would friends be so necessary if we never had any need for them? They would be the most useless creatures alive if we never had any use for them, and would be like beautiful instruments hung up in cases, but keeping their sounds to themselves. Sometimes I wish that I were a poorer man, so that I could be closer to you all in rank. We are born to give and to do good—so what belongs to us more than the riches of our friends? Oh how comforting it is, to have so many friends, like brothers, enjoying one another's fortunes! What a joy, even if it expresses itself in tears before it can be expressed in words! I cannot help but cry, I think. And to forget the faults of my eyes, I drink to you.

**APEMANTUS**

You cry so they can drink, Timon.

**SECOND LORD**

Joy has the same effect on our eyes, and suddenly tears spring up from them like a baby.

**APEMANTUS**

Ha ha! I laugh when I imagine that baby as a bastard!

**THIRD LORD**

I promise you, Timon, you have moved me greatly.

**APEMANTUS**

Much!

*A trumpet call within*.

 "Within" is often understood in stage directions to mean under or behind the stage.

**TIMON**

What does that trumpet sound mean?

*A SERVANT enters.*

**TIMON**

What is going on?

**SERVANT**

If you want, my lord, there are certain ladies who would like to come in.

**TIMON**

Ladies! What do they want?

**SERVANT**

They have brought with them someone to come in first, my lord, and whose job it is to tell you all what they want.

**TIMON**

I pray, let them be admitted.

*Enter Cupid*

**CUPID**

Hail to thee, worthy Timon, and to all  
That of his bounties taste! The five best senses  
Acknowledge thee their patron; and come freely  
To gratulate thy plenteous bosom: th' ear,  
Taste, touch and smell, pleased from thy tale rise;  
They only now come but to feast thine eyes.

**TIMON**

130 They're welcome all; let 'em have kind admittance:  
Music, make their welcome!

*Exit Cupid*

**FIRST LORD**

You see, my lord, how ample you're beloved.

*Music. Re-enter Cupid with a mask of Ladies as Amazons, with lutes in their hands, dancing and playing*

**APEMANTUS**

140 Hoy-day, what a sweep of vanity comes this way!  
They dance! they are mad women.  
Like madness is the glory of this life.  
As this pomp shows to a little oil and root.  
We make ourselves fools, to disport ourselves;  
145 And spend our flatteries, to drink those men  
Upon whose age we void it up again,  
With poisonous spite and envy.  
Who lives that's not depraved or depraves?  
Who dies, that bears not one spurn to their graves  
150 Of their friends' gift?  
I should fear those that dance before me now  
Would one day stamp upon me: 't has been done;  
Men shut their doors against a setting sun.

*The Lords rise from table, with much adoring of TIMON; and to show their loves, each singles out an Amazon, and all dance, men with women, a lofty strain or two to the hautboys, and cease*

**TIMON**

You have done our pleasures much grace, fair ladies,  
155 Set a fair fashion on our entertainment,  
Which was not half so beautiful and kind;  
You have added worth unto 't and lustre,  
And entertain'd me with mine own device;  
I am to thank you for 't.

**FIRST LADY**

160 My lord, you take us even at the best.

**APEMANTUS**

'Faith, for the worst is filthy; and would not hold taking, I doubt me.

**TIMON**

Ladies, there is an idle banquet attends you:  
Please you to dispose yourselves.

**ALL LADIES**

165 Most thankfully, my lord.

*Exeunt Cupid and Ladies*

**TIMON**

Flavius.

**TIMON**

Please, let them be admitted.

*Enter CUPID.*

**CUPID**

Hail, worthy Timon, and all those who enjoy his bounty. All five of the senses acknowledge you as their patron, and that they come here freely to pay homage to you and your great wealth. Yes, hearing, taste touch, and smell, all the senses have enjoyed what you offer. Now it is time to feast your eyes!

**TIMON**

You are all welcome; please let the ladies kindly enter.  
Music, play them in!

*CUPID exits.*

**FIRST LORD**

You see how well loved you are my lord?

*Music plays, and CUPID enters again with an interlude that shows the Ladies dressed up as Amazons, with harps in their hands, dancing and playing.*

**APEMANTUS**

Whoa, what a wave of vanity comes this way! The performers dance! They are mad women and celebrate their madness as if it were the glory of this life. The way this feast exceeds the basic necessities of oil and root makes us all seem like fools to forget ourselves and waste our time flattering these men and drinking to the health of those who eventually stop giving in old age and we come to hate and envy. Who alive is not either deprived or deprives others of wealth? Who dies that does not disrespect the graves of friends who once gave to them? I should be afraid of these people who dance in front of me right now, because one day they might stamp on me. It has happened before. Men shut their doors to those who decline in age like the setting sun.

*The Lords rise from their tables, praising TIMON. Each singles out an Amazon, and they all dance, men with women, a dance to music played by two of the oboes. Then they stop.*

**TIMON**

You have pleased us greatly, fair ladies, and set a wonderful mood for our feast, which before was not half so beautiful and kind. You have added value and brilliance to the event and entertained me in my own home. Thank you.

**FIRST LADY**

My lord, you are too kind.

**APEMANTUS**

Yes, for the worst of you is filthy, and I fear too rotten to hold.

**TIMON**

Ladies, there is a small banquet here for you. Please enjoy yourselves.

**ALL LADIES**

Thank you, my lord.

*CUPID and the Ladies exit.*

**TIMON**

Flavius.

**FLAVIUS**

My lord?

**TIMON**

The little casket bring me hither.

**FLAVIUS**

170 Yes, my lord. More jewels yet!  
There is no crossing him in 's humour;

*Aside*

**FLAVIUS**

Else I should tell him,--well, i' faith I should,  
When all's spent, he 'ld be cross'd then, an he could.  
175 'Tis pity bounty had not eyes behind,  
That man might ne'er be wretched for his mind.

*Exit*

**FIRST LORD**

Where be our men?

**SERVANT**

Here, my lord, in readiness.

**SECOND LORD**

Our horses!

180

*Re-enter FLAVIUS, with the casket*

**TIMON**

O my friends,  
I have one word to say to you: look you, my good lord,  
I must entreat you, honour me so much  
As to advance this jewel; accept it and wear it,  
185 Kind my lord.

**FIRST LORD**

I am so far already in your gifts,--

**ALL**

So are we all.

*Enter a Servant*

**SERVANT**

My lord, there are certain nobles of the senate  
190 Newly alighted, and come to visit you.

**TIMON**

They are fairly welcome.

*Exit servant.*

**FLAVIUS**

I beseech your honor,  
Vouchsafe me a word; it does concern you near.

**TIMON**

Near! why then, another time I'll hear thee:  
I prithee, let's be provided to show them  
195 entertainment.

**FLAVIUS**

[*Aside*] I scarce know how.

*Enter a Second Servant*

**FLAVIUS**

Yes my lord?

**TIMON**

Bring that little chest here.

**FLAVIUS**

Yes, my lord. [*Seeing the chest*] Even more jewels! There is  
no opposing him when he is in this mood!

*He speaks to himself.*

**FLAVIUS**

Otherwise I would tell him—and really I should, that when  
all these gifts are spent on others, which he has proven  
capable of doing, he'd have all his debts erased. It is sad  
that generosity is not more vigilant, that way man might  
never lack for having such a giving spirit.

*FLAVIUS exits.*

**FIRST LORD**

Where is everyone?

**SERVANT**

Here, my lord, all ready.

**SECOND LORD**

Our horses!

*FLAVIUS enters again with the casket.*

**TIMON**

Oh my friends, I wanted to say one thing to you. You, my  
good lord, I must beg you—please—to honor me by taking  
this jewel. Accept it and wear it kindly, my lord.

**FIRST LORD**

You have already given me so many gifts.

**ALL**

And us, too.

*A SERVANT enters.*

**SERVANT**

My lord, there are some senators who have just arrived and  
come to visit you.

**TIMON**

They are welcome.

*The SERVANT exits.*

**FLAVIUS**

Could I speak with you a moment, your honor? It is urgent.

**TIMON**

Urgent! Let's do it another time. Please, let's get ready to  
entertain these new guests.

**FLAVIUS**

[*To himself*] I don't know how we'll afford to.

*A SECOND SERVANT enters.*

**SECOND SERVANT**

May it please your honour, Lord Lucius,  
200 Out of his free love, hath presented to you  
Four milk-white horses, trapp'd in silver.

**TIMON**

I shall accept them fairly; let the presents  
Be worthily entertain'd.

*Enter a third Servant*

**TIMON**

205 How now! what news?

**THIRD SERVANT**

Please you, my lord, that honourable  
gentleman, Lord Lucullus, entreats your company  
to-morrow to hunt with him, and has sent your honour  
210 two brace of greyhounds.

**TIMON**

I'll hunt with him; and let them be received,  
Not without fair reward.

**FLAVIUS**

*[Aside]* What will this come to?  
He commands us to provide, and give great gifts,  
215 And all out of an empty coffer:  
Nor will he know his purse, or yield me this,  
To show him what a beggar his heart is,  
Being of no power to make his wishes good:  
His promises fly so beyond his state  
220 That what he speaks is all in debt; he owes  
For every word: he is so kind that he now  
Pays interest for 't; his land's put to their books.  
Well, would I were gently put out of office  
Before I were forced out!  
225 Happier is he that has no friend to feed  
Than such that do e'en enemies exceed.  
I bleed inwardly for my lord.

*Exit*

**TIMON**

You do yourselves  
Much wrong, you bate too much of your own merits:  
230 Here, my lord, a trifle of our love.

**SECOND LORD**

With more than common thanks I will receive it.

**THIRD LORD**

O, he's the very soul of bounty!

**TIMON**

And now I remember, my lord, you gave  
Good words the other day of a bay courser  
235 I rode on: it is yours, because you liked it.

**SECOND LORD**

O, I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, in that.

**TIMON**

You may take my word, my lord; I know, no man  
Can justly praise but what he does affect:  
I weigh my friend's affection with mine own;  
240 I'll tell you true. I'll call to you.

**ALL LORDS**

O, none so welcome.

**SECOND SERVANT**

May it please your honor that Lord Lucius, out of pure  
kindness, has presented to you four milk-white horses  
wearing silver trappings.

**TIMON**

I shall accept them, and let the rest of those present be well  
entertained.

*A THIRD SERVANT enters.*

**TIMON**

What now?

**THIRD SERVANT**

If you like, my lord, the honorable Lord Lucullus begs that  
you accompany him hunting tomorrow, and has sent you  
two sets of greyhounds.

**TIMON**

I'll hunt with him, and make sure he is not received into our  
home without fair compensation.

**FLAVIUS**

*[To himself]* What will this come to? He commands us to  
provide for others, and give great gifts, and all out of an  
empty pocket. He won't even let us tell him how much is  
left in his wallet, or let me show him what a beggar he truly  
is, having no power to actually make give the things he  
promises. His promises exceed what he has by so much that  
what he offers is putting him even further in debt. He owes  
money for every word he gives. He is so kind that now he  
pays interest for it. His land has been incorporated into  
their accounts. Well, I wish I were relieved of this job before  
he is forced to fire me! The man is happier that has no  
friends to feed than the one who has friends that do him  
more harm than enemies. I hurt so much for my lord!

*He exits.*

**TIMON**

You do yourselves much wrong and undervalue yourselves  
too much. Here, my lord, a small sign of my love.

**SECOND LORD**

I will receive it with great thanks.

**THIRD LORD**

Oh, he's the very meaning of generosity.

**TIMON**

And now I remember, my lord, you complimented me the  
other day when I rode on a great horse. Since you liked it so  
much, take it!

**SECOND LORD**

Please, my lord, there is no need for that.

**TIMON**

You may take my word, my lord. I know no man who can  
fairly praise more than what he likes: I count my friends'  
desires as my own. This is the truth. We'll see each other  
again.

**ALL LORDS**

We would like nothing more.

**TIMON**

I take all and your several visitations  
So kind to heart, 'tis not enough to give;  
Methinks, I could deal kingdoms to my friends,  
245 And ne'er be weary. Alcibiades,  
Thou art a soldier, therefore seldom rich;  
It comes in charity to thee: for all thy living  
Is 'mongst the dead, and all the lands thou hast  
Lie in a pitch'd field.

**ALCIBIADES**

250 Ay, defiled land, my lord.

**FIRST LORD**

We are so virtuously bound--

**TIMON**

And so  
Am I to you.

**SECOND LORD**

So infinitely endear'd--

**TIMON**

255 All to you. Lights, more lights!

**FIRST LORD**

The best of happiness,  
Honour and fortunes, keep with you, Lord Timon!

**TIMON**

Ready for his friends.

*Exeunt all but APEMANTUS and TIMON*

**APEMANTUS**

260 What a coil's here!  
Serving of becks and jutting-out of bums!  
I doubt whether their legs be worth the sums  
That are given for 'em. Friendship's full of dregs:  
Methinks, false hearts should never have sound legs,  
265 Thus honest fools lay out their wealth on court'sies.

**TIMON**

Now, Apemantus, if thou wert not sullen, I would be  
good to thee.

**APEMANTUS**

No, I'll nothing: for if I should be bribed too,  
there would be none left to rail upon thee, and then  
270 thou wouldest sin the faster. Thou givest so long,  
Timon, I fear me thou wilt give away thyself in  
paper shortly: what need these feasts, pomps and  
vain-glories?

**TIMON**

Nay, an you begin to rail on society once, I am  
275 sworn not to give regard to you. Farewell; and come  
with better music.

*Exit*

**APEMANTUS**

So:  
Thou wilt not hear me now; thou shalt not then:  
280 I'll lock thy heaven from thee.  
O, that men's ears should be  
To counsel deaf, but not to flattery!

*Exit*

**TIMON**

I hold you all and your many visits so dear to my heart,  
there is not enough to give. I could deal kingdoms to my  
friends, and never tire of it. Alcibiades, you are a soldier,  
and therefore will never be rich. To give to you would be  
genuine charity, because you live among the dead, and all  
the lands you have are in the battlefield.

**ALCIBIADES**

Yes, ruined land, my lord.

**FIRST LORD**

We are so indebted--

**TIMON**

And so am I to you.

**SECOND LORD**

So infinitely owing--

**TIMON**

All to you. More lights please!

**FIRST LORD**

May the best happiness, honor, and fortune be yours, Lord  
Timon!

**TIMON**

I am always there for friends.

*Everyone exits but APEMANTUS and TIMON.*

**APEMANTUS**

What a fuss of bows and butts sticking out, here! I wonder  
whether their bows are worth the money that you pay for  
them. Friendship is full of worthless people, and such false  
people should not have good legs, so that true fools do not  
give all their wealth for a few curtsies.

**TIMON**

Now Apemantus, if you weren't so sullen, I would be nice to  
you.

**APEMANTUS**

No, I'll have nothing from you. Besides, if I were bribed like  
all the others, there wouldn't be anyone left to criticize you,  
and then you would fall even faster than you do now. You  
give so much I worry that you will yourself away in IOUs  
shortly: why do you have these feasts, celebrations, and  
vanities?

**TIMON**

No, if you attack all my friends again, I swear I will never  
listen to you. Goodbye, and come next time with better  
music to sing.

*TIMON exits.*

**APEMANTUS**

Very well, then. You will not listen to me now, and I will not  
help you later. And I won't give you any more advice. Oh,  
that human ears should be deaf to good advice, but not to  
flattery!

*He exits.*

## Act 2, Scene 1

### Shakespeare

*Enter Senator, with papers in his hand*

**SENATOR**

And late, five thousand: to Varro and to Isidore  
He owes nine thousand; besides my former sum,  
Which makes it five and twenty. Still in motion  
Of raging waste? It cannot hold; it will not.  
5 If I want gold, steal but a beggar's dog,  
And give it Timon, why, the dog coins gold.  
If I would sell my horse, and buy twenty more  
Better than he, why, give my horse to Timon,  
Ask nothing, give it him, it foals me, straight,  
10 And able horses. No porter at his gate,  
But rather one that smiles and still invites  
All that pass by. It cannot hold: no reason  
Can found his state in safety. Caphis, ho!  
Caphis, I say!

*Enter CAPHIS*

**CAPHIS**

15 Here, sir; what is your pleasure?

**SENATOR**

Get on your cloak, and haste you to Lord Timon;  
Importune him for my moneys; be not ceased  
With slight denial, nor then silenced when--  
'Commend me to your master'--and the cap  
20 Plays in the right hand, thus: but tell him,  
My uses cry to me, I must serve my turn  
Out of mine own; his days and times are past  
And my reliances on his fracted dates  
Have smit my credit: I love and honour him,  
25 But must not break my back to heal his finger;  
Immediate are my needs, and my relief  
Must not be toss'd and turn'd to me in words,  
But find supply immediate. Get you gone:  
Put on a most importunate aspect,  
30 A visage of demand; for, I do fear,  
When every feather sticks in his own wing,  
Lord Timon will be left a naked gull,  
Which flashes now a phoenix. Get you gone.

**CAPHIS**

I go, sir.

**SENATOR**

35 'I go, sir!--Take the bonds along with you,  
And have the dates in contempt.'

**CAPHIS**

I will, sir.

**SENATOR**

Go.

*Exeunt*

### Shakescleare Translation

*A SENATOR enters carrying papers.*

**SENATOR**

So Timon right now owes five thousand, plus the nine thousand he borrowed from Varro and Isidore, not including what he previously owed me, which totals up to twenty five thousand. And he is still wasting all of this money? This cannot last. Right now, if I want money, all I have to do is take a beggar's dog and give it to Timon. When he gives me gifts in return, it is as if the dog were made of gold. If I wanted to sell my horse and then buy twenty better ones, all I need to do is give that horse to Timon, and without even asking for anything in return, he will give me horses right away—good ones, too. It is as if he has no guard at the gate of his house, only a man that smiles and invites anyone walking by to enjoy his house. This cannot last, and no man of sound mind could think his estate is safe. Hey, Caphis! Caphis!

*CAPHIS enters.*

**CAPHIS**

Hello, sir, what do you want?

**SENATOR**

Get your cloak and go straight to Lord Timon. Ask him to give me my money, and do not take no for an answer. Don't even stop asking for my money when he asks you to bring him to me. Tell him that I am busy with other things, and that the terms of his loans have expired and that my kindness to his delays in repaying them has damaged my credit. I do like him, but I cannot suffer for his sake. I need money right away, and I will not accept excuses, only what I am owed. Go now, and make sure to seem urgent, like you are demanding and not asking him. I am afraid that by the time every creditor tries to take back what Timon borrowed from them, he will default with nothing, left like a naked seagull after everyone has plucked a feather from his wing, despite his current brilliant, phoenix-like appearance. Go right away.

**CAPHIS**

I will leave now, sir.

**SENATOR**

Yes, leave, and take these notes of the debt with you, and make sure to show him that the time has already passed to pay me back.

**CAPHIS**

Ok, sir.

**SENATOR**

Go.

*CAPHIS and the SENATOR exit.*

## Act 2, Scene 2

### Shakespeare

### Shakescleare Translation

*Enter FLAVIUS, with many bills in his hand*

**FLAVIUS**

No care, no stop! so senseless of expense,  
That he will neither know how to maintain it,  
Nor cease his flow of riot: takes no account  
How things go from him, nor resumes no care  
5 Of what is to continue: never mind  
Was to be so unwise, to be so kind.  
What shall be done? he will not hear, till feel:  
I must be round with him, now he comes from hunting.  
Fie, fie, fie, fie!

*Enter CAPHIS, and the Servants of Isidore and Varro*

**CAPHIS**

10 Good even, Varro: what,  
You come for money?

**Varro's Servant**

Is't not your business too?

**CAPHIS**

It is: and yours too, Isidore?

15

**Isidore's Servant**

It is so.

**CAPHIS**

Would we were all discharged!

**Varro's Servant**

I fear it.

**CAPHIS**

Here comes the lord.

20

*Enter TIMON, ALCIBIADES, and Lords, & c*

**TIMON**

So soon as dinner's done, we'll forth again,  
My Alcibiades. With me? what is your will?

**CAPHIS**

My lord, here is a note of certain dues.

**TIMON**

Dues! Whence are you?

**CAPHIS**

25 Of Athens here, my lord.

**TIMON**

Go to my steward.

**CAPHIS**

Please it your lordship, he hath put me off  
To the succession of new days this month:  
My master is awaked by great occasion  
30 To call upon his own, and humbly prays you  
That with your other noble parts you'll suit  
In giving him his right.

**TIMON**

Mine honest friend,  
I prithee, but repair to me next morning.

**CAPHIS**

35 Nay, good my lord,--

*FLAVIUS enters carrying money.*

**FLAVIUS**

He has no common sense, no restraint! He spends his money so thoughtlessly that there is no way he will ever learn to care for it responsibly or even stop lending it out extravagantly. He does not even take account of what he gives away, nor does he give a thought to what means he has to keep this up. I have never seen someone so dumb, but so kind. But what can we do? He will not listen until he suffers for his actions. I must be honest with him, and here he comes from hunting. Damn, damn, damn!

*CAPHIS enters with the servants of ISIDORE and VARRO.*

**CAPHIS**

Good evening. You've come from Varro for money?

**Varro's Servant**

Isn't that why you're here too?

**CAPHIS**

Yes, and you come from Isidore for the same?

**Isidore's Servant**

Yes.

**CAPHIS**

I just want to get paid!

**Varro's Servant**

I'm worried we won't be.

**CAPHIS**

Here he comes.

*TIMON enters with ALCIBIADES and other Lords.*

**TIMON**

So as soon as we're done with dinner you will be leaving,  
Alcibiades.

*[To CAPHIS] What? You're here to see me?*

**CAPHIS**

Yes my lord, here is a note stating your debts.

**TIMON**

Debts! Where are you from?

**CAPHIS**

Athens, my lord.

**TIMON**

Go see my assistant.

**CAPHIS**

Please, he has been putting me off every day for the past month. Please, my master is newly aware of reasons to want his money back, and only asks that your honor will prove consistent and give him what you owe.

**TIMON**

Fine, just please wait until tomorrow morning.

**CAPHIS**

No.

**TIMON**

Contain thyself, good friend.

**Varro's Servant**

One Varro's servant, my good lord,--

**Isidore's Servant**

From Isidore;  
He humbly prays your speedy payment.

**CAPHIS**

40 If you did know, my lord, my master's wants--

**Varro's Servant**

'Twas due on forfeiture, my lord, six weeks And past.

**Isidore's Servant**

Your steward puts me off, my lord;  
And I am sent expressly to your lordship.

**TIMON**

Give me breath.  
I do beseech you, good my lords, keep on;  
I'll wait upon you instantly.

*Exeunt ALCIBIADES and Lords*

*To FLAVIUS*

**TIMON**

Come hither: pray you,  
How goes the world, that I am thus encounter'd  
50 With clamourous demands of date-broke bonds,  
And the detention of long-since-due debts,  
Against my honour?

**FLAVIUS**

Please you, gentlemen,  
The time is unagreeable to this business:  
55 Your importunacy cease till after dinner,  
That I may make his lordship understand  
Wherfore you are not paid.

**TIMON**

Do so, my friends. See them well entertain'd.

*Exit*

**FLAVIUS**

60 Pray, draw near.

*Exit*

*Enter APEMANTUS and Fool*

**CAPHIS**

Stay, stay, here comes the fool with Apemantus:  
let's ha' some sport with 'em.

**Varro's Servant**

Hang him, he'll abuse us.

**Isidore's Servant**

65 A plague upon him, dog!

**Varro's Servant**

How dost, fool?

**TIMON**

Calm down.

**Varro's Servant**

I come as Varro's servant, sir--

**Isidore's Servant**

And I come as Isidore's. He wants you to pay him back as soon as possible.

**CAPHIS**

If you knew why my master needed the money, sir--

**Varro's Servant**

Your debt was owed six weeks ago.

**Isidore's Servant**

Your assistant keeps ignoring me, and now I've been told to speak only to you.

**TIMON**

Give me a second. Please wait a bit and I'll be with you as soon as I can.

*ALCIBIADES and the Lords exit.*

*TIMON speaks to FLAVIUS.*

**TIMON**

Come here, please. What the hell is going on? Why is everyone yelling at me about overdue payments, which I promised to pay a long time ago?

**FLAVIUS**

Please, sir. Now is not the time to talk about this. Keep your questions until after dinner, then I will tell you why you have not repaid these debts.

**TIMON**

Ok, and make sure to take care of them.

*TIMON exits.*

**FLAVIUS**

Here it comes.

*FLAVIUS exits.*

*APEMANTUS enters with the FOOL.*

**CAPHIS**

Look! Here comes Apemantus with the fool  . Let's make fun of them.

 The "fool" was a type of character-type/entertainment act common in the drama of Shakespeare's time. It refers to a certain comedic routine often played by the same man in the company.

**Varro's Servant**

We should kill him before he harasses us.

**Isidore's Servant**

I do hope that dog dies.

**Varro's Servant**

What's up, fool?

**APEMANTUS**

Dost dialogue with thy shadow?

**Varro's Servant**

I speak not to thee.

**APEMANTUS**

No'tis to thyself.

70

*To the Fool*

**APEMANTUS**

Come away.

**Isidore's Servant**

There's the fool hangs on your back already.

**APEMANTUS**

No, thou stand'st single, thou'rt not on him yet.

**CAPHIS**

75 Where's the fool now?

**APEMANTUS**

He last asked the question. Poor rogues, and usurers' men! bawds between gold and want!

**ALL SERVANTS**

What are we, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

Asses.

**ALL SERVANTS**

80 Why?

**APEMANTUS**

That you ask me what you are, and do not know yourselves. Speak to 'em, fool.

**FOOL**

How do you, gentlemen?

**ALL SERVANTS**

Gramercies, good fool: how does your mistress?

**FOOL**

85 She's e'en setting on water to scald such chickens as you are. Would we could see you at Corinth!

**APEMANTUS**

Good! gramercy.

*Enter Page*

**FOOL**

Look you, here comes my mistress' page.

**PAGE**90 *[To the Fool]* Why, how now, captain! what do you in this wise company? How dost thou, Apemantus?**APEMANTUS**

Would I had a rod in my mouth, that I might answer thee profitably.

**APEMANTUS**

Are you talking to yourself?

**Varro's Servant**

I'm not talking to you.

**APEMANTUS**

Exactly, you could only be calling yourself a fool.

*APEMANTUS speaks to the FOOL.*

**APEMANTUS**

Let's go.

**Isidore's Servant**

Actually, it seems the "fool" goes with you.

**APEMANTUS**

You're not even good enough to come with me. You are the fool.

**CAPHIS**

Wait, now, who does the title, "fool," attend now?

**APEMANTUS**

The man who needs to ask. You poor idiots, working for money-lenders. You're like whores who shuttle between money and greed?

**ALL SERVANTS**

What did you call us?

**APEMANTUS**

Asses.

**ALL SERVANTS**

Excuse me?

**APEMANTUS**

Proof of it lies in the fact that you even need to ask, because you don't even know that you're asses. Go ahead, fool.

**FOOL**

Good day, gentlemen.

**ALL SERVANTS**

Why thank you! How is your whore girlfriend?

**FOOL**

She's sitting over hot water <sup>2</sup> to sweat out STDs like yourselves. If only we had known about you all at the Corinth <sup>3</sup> whorehouse!

<sup>2</sup> This is a reference to common treatments for sexually transmitted diseases like syphilis.

<sup>3</sup> Corinth is another city in Greece.

**APEMANTUS**

Haha. Well done!

*A PAGE enters.*

**FOOL**

Look, here comes my girlfriend's little man.

**PAGE**

*[To the FOOL]* What are you doing here with these people? And how are you Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

I wish my mouth were a bat to beat you with. That way, I could answer your question correctly.

**PAGE**

95 Prithee, Apemantus, read me the superscription of these letters: I know not which is which.

**APEMANTUS**

Canst not read?

**PAGE**

No.

**APEMANTUS**

There will little learning die then, that day thou art hanged. This is to Lord Timon; this to 100 Alcibiades. Go; thou wast born a bastard, and thou'rt die a bawd.

**PAGE**

Thou wast whelped a dog, and thou shalt famish a dog's death. Answer not; I am gone.

*Exit*

**APEMANTUS**

105 E'en so thou outrunnest grace. Fool, I will go with you to Lord Timon's.

**FOOL**

Will you leave me there?

**APEMANTUS**

If Timon stay at home. You three serve three usurers?

**ALL SERVANTS**

Ay; would they served us!

**APEMANTUS**

110 So would I,—as good a trick as ever hangman served thief.

**FOOL**

Are you three usurers' men?

**ALL SERVANTS**

Ay, fool.

**FOOL**

I think no usurer but has a fool to his servant: my 115 mistress is one, and I am her fool. When men come to borrow of your masters, they approach sadly, and go away merry; but they enter my mistress' house merrily, and go away sadly: the reason of this?

**Varro's Servant**

I could render one.

**APEMANTUS**

120 Do it then, that we may account thee a whoremaster and a knave; which notwithstanding, thou shalt be no less esteemed.

**Varro's Servant**

What is a whoremaster, fool?

**PAGE**

Please Apemantus, could you read the different lines in these letters? I can't make any sense of them.

**APEMANTUS**

You can't read?

**PAGE**

No.

**APEMANTUS**

You might as well die, because the day you can't learn is the day you are basically hanged.

*[Gesturing with the letters]* This one is to Lord Timon, and this one is to Alcibiades. You were born a bastard, and now you'll die a whore.

**PAGE**

You talk like a dog <sup>4</sup> and you're going to die like a dog. Don't even answer me, I'm leaving.

<sup>4</sup> Again referring to Apemantus's being a cynic philosopher.

*The PAGE exits.*

**APEMANTUS**

You're running away from the teaching that might have saved you.

*[To the FOOL]* Let's go together to Lord Timon's.

**FOOL**

I can't stay here?

**APEMANTUS**

If Timon is there I'm going to leave a Fool with him.

*[To CAPHIS and the Servants]* The three of you are assistants to the money-lenders?

**ALL SERVANTS**

Yes, if only they were our assistants!

**APEMANTUS**

Me too—that would be like an executioner serving a thief.

**FOOL**

Say again, you three are assistants to the money-lenders?

**ALL SERVANTS**

Yes, fool.

**FOOL**

Any assistant to a money-lender is a fool. My girlfriend is a fool, and I am her fool. When people come to borrow from your bosses, they come with sad faces and leave with happy ones, but when they come to my girlfriend's whorehouse, they come with happy faces and leave with sad ones. What's the reason for this?

**Varro's Servant**

I can give you a reason.

**APEMANTUS**

Give it then, so we can call you both a pimp and an idiot, which would not be any worse than what you are now.

**Varro's Servant**

What is a pimp, fool?

**FOOL**

A fool in good clothes, and something like thee.  
 125 'Tis a spirit: sometime it appears like a lord; sometimes like a lawyer; sometime like a philosopher, with two stones moe than's artificial one: he is very often like a knight; and, generally, in all shapes that man goes up and down in from fourscore to thirteen, this spirit walks in.

**Varro's Servant**

Thou art not altogether a fool.

**FOOL**

Nor thou altogether a wise man: as much foolery as I have, so much wit thou lackest.

**APEMANTUS**

That answer might have become Apemantus.

**ALL SERVANTS**

135 Aside, aside; here comes Lord Timon.

*Re-enter TIMON and FLAVIUS*

**APEMANTUS**

Come with me, fool, come.

**FOOL**

I do not always follow lover, elder brother and woman; sometime the philosopher.

140

*Exeunt APEMANTUS and Fool*

**FLAVIUS**

Pray you, walk near: I'll speak with you anon.

*Exeunt Servants*

**TIMON**

You make me marvel: wherefore ere this time Had you not fully laid my state before me, That I might so have rated my expense, As I had leave of means?

145

**FLAVIUS**

You would not hear me, At many leisures I proposed.

**TIMON**

Go to: Perchance some single vantages you took. When my indisposition put you back: And that unaptness made your minister, Thus to excuse yourself.

150

**FLAVIUS**

O my good lord, At many times I brought in my accounts, Laid them before you; you would throw them off, And say, you found them in mine honesty. When, for some trifling present, you have bid me Return so much, I have shook my head and wept; 160 Yea, 'gainst the authority of manners, pray'd you To hold your hand more close: I did endure Not seldom, nor no slight cheques, when I have Prompted you in the ebb of your estate And your great flow of debts. My loved lord, Though you hear now, too late--yet now's a time-- The greatest of your having lacks a half To pay your present debts.

**FOOL**

A fool that wears nice clothes, not unlike you. He can change appearances. Sometimes he looks like a lord, and sometimes he looks like lawyer. Sometimes, he looks like a philosopher with two testicles to add to the stone he uses for alchemy. 165 A lot of times he looks like a knight, but generally he sticks to the appearances men take between the ages of 13 and 80.

 Alchemists—people thought to be capable of turning common metal into gold—were thought to use certain "Alchemist's stones" in their practices. In the original text, Shakespeare puns on the alternate meaning of the word "stones"—testicles.

**VARRO'S SERVANT**

You're not a complete fool.

**FOOL**

And you're definitely not the brightest bulb on the tree. As much as I am a fool, that's how much intelligence you lack.

**APEMANTUS**

That response could have come from my own mouth.

**ALL SERVANTS**

Move away, here comes Lord Timon.

*TIMON enters again with FLAVIUS.*

**APEMANTUS**

Let's go, fool.

**FOOL**

I do not always stick to lovers, women, and rich men. Sometimes I hang out with philosophers!

*APEMANTUS and the Fool exit.*

**FLAVIUS**

*[To TIMON]* Let's walk and talk.

*The Servants exit.*

**TIMON**

I'm shocked. Why did you not tell me about all of the debts, so I could cut off my spending?

**FLAVIUS**

I brought it up many times. You didn't listen to me.

**TIMON**

No way! Maybe you took some small opportunities to mention it to me, and you took my deafness on a few occasions as an excuse not to ask me ever again.

**FLAVIUS**

Oh no, I showed you the numbers several times and put them right in front of you. You would throw them away and say you had me look at them. I have said no and cried when you offered huge amounts of money in return for small gifts, and I have told you to be tighter with your wallet, so bluntly that it was almost rude. I faced many hard outbursts of yours when I told you about your shrinking estate and your growing debts. Now that you are listening to me it's too late, and still I have to tell you that all your money will only pay half of all that you owe.

**TIMON**

Let all my land be sold.

**FLAVIUS**

'Tis all engaged, some forfeited and gone;  
170 And what remains will hardly stop the mouth  
Of present dues: the future comes apace:  
What shall defend the interim? and at length  
How goes our reckoning?

**TIMON**

To Lacedaemon did my land extend.

**FLAVIUS**

175 O my good lord, the world is but a word:  
Were it all yours to give it in a breath,  
How quickly were it gone!

**TIMON**

You tell me true.

**FLAVIUS**

If you suspect my husbandry or falsehood,  
180 Call me before the exactest auditors  
And set me on the proof. So the gods bless me,  
When all our offices have been oppress'd  
With riotous feeders, when our vaults have wept  
With drunken spilth of wine, when every room  
185 Hath blazed with lights and bray'd with minstrelsy,  
I have retired me to a wasteful cock,  
And set mine eyes at flow.

**TIMON**

Prithee, no more.

**FLAVIUS**

Heavens, have I said, the bounty of this lord!  
190 How many prodigal bits have slaves and peasants  
This night engluttet! Who is not Timon's?  
What heart, head, sword, force, means, but is  
Lord Timon's?  
Great Timon, noble, worthy, royal Timon!  
195 Ah, when the means are gone that buy this praise,  
The breath is gone whereof this praise is made:  
Feast-won, fast-lost; one cloud of winter showers,  
These flies are couch'd.

**TIMON**

Come, sermon me no further:  
200 No villanous bounty yet hath pass'd my heart;  
Unwisely, not ignobly, have I given.  
Why dost thou weep? Canst thou the conscience lack,  
To think I shall lack friends? Secure thy heart;  
If I would broach the vessels of my love,  
205 And try the argument of hearts by borrowing,  
Men and men's fortunes could I frankly use  
As I can bid thee speak.

**FLAVIUS**

Assurance bless your thoughts!

**TIMON**

And, in some sort, these wants of mine are crown'd,  
210 That I account them blessings; for by these  
Shall I try friends: you shall perceive how you  
Mistake my fortunes; I am wealthy in my friends.  
Within there! Flaminus! Servilius!

*Enter FLAMINIUS, SERVILIUS, and other Servants*

**SERVANTS**

My lord? my lord?

**TIMON**

Sell all my land.

**FLAVIUS**

It's all mortgaged, and some of it already sold. What's left  
won't even come close to paying off everyone. And what  
are we going to do about the even greater number of  
creditors that will approach us soon? What can we do in the  
long run?

**TIMON**

My land extended all the way to Sparta.

**FLAVIUS**

But sir, you would have given the entire world in one  
breath. Your holdings shrank so quickly!

**TIMON**

You are telling the truth.

**FLAVIUS**

If you think that my management has been poor or  
dishonest, have me inspected by the strictest auditors to  
prove my integrity. This is how the gods reward me, when  
greedy freeloaders have eaten everything in the kitchen  
and drunk all the wine, and when hired musicians have  
been made to occupy and light up every room in the house.  
I have given myself up to wastefulness and now all I can do  
is cry about it.

**TIMON**

Please stop.

**FLAVIUS**

And yet I have not touched on how loose you've been with  
your money! How many delicacies have poor men eaten  
tonight on your account? Who does not seem to belong to  
Timon? Is there anything in the world that you have not  
claimed as your own to give? They have called you great,  
noble, worthy, and royal, but when all you have to buy  
compliments is gone, there will be no praise left. What is  
quickly made is quickly lost, and these men will disappear  
like flies after seeing one winter cloud.

**TIMON**

Don't preach to me. I have not done a single bad thing in  
giving these gifts, for they were imprudently, not  
dishonorably, given. Why are you so upset? Can't you see  
that I have all the friends in the world? Don't worry,  
because if I could appeal to those who have received so  
much from me in love and work to inspire their sympathy,  
other men and their fortunes will prove themselves  
available to me. One word and someone will lend to me.

**FLAVIUS**

I hope you're right.

**TIMON**

In a way, these debts are a blessing in disguise, because this  
way I can see who my real friends are. You'll see how wrong  
you are about their loyalty to me—I have many friends!  
Come here Flaminus, Servilius!

*FLAMINIUS, SERVILIUS, and other Servants enter.*

**SERVANTS**

Hello?

**TIMON**

215 I will dispatch you severally; you to Lord Lucius;  
to Lord Lucullus you: I hunted with his honour  
to-day; you, to Sempronius: commend me to their  
loves, and, I am proud, say, that my occasions have  
found time to use 'em toward a supply of money: let  
220 the request be fifty talents.

**FLAMINIUS**

As you have said, my lord.

**FLAVIUS**

[Aside] Lord Lucius and Lucullus? hum!

**TIMON**

Go you, sir, to the senators--  
Of whom, even to the state's best health, I have  
225 Deserved this hearing --bid 'em send o' the instant  
A thousand talents to me.

**FLAVIUS**

I have been bold--  
For that I knew it the most general way--  
To them to use your signet and your name;  
230 But they do shake their heads, and I am here  
No richer in return.

**TIMON**

Is't true? can't be?

**FLAVIUS**

They answer, in a joint and corporate voice,  
That now they are at fall, want treasure, cannot  
235 Do what they would; are sorry--you are honourable,--  
But yet they could have wish'd--they know not--  
Something hath been amiss --a noble nature  
May catch a wrench--would all were well--'tis pity;--  
And so, intending other serious matters,  
240 After distasteful looks and these hard fractions,  
With certain half-caps and cold-moving nods  
They froze me into silence.

**TIMON**

You gods, reward them!  
Prithee, man, look cheerly. These old fellows  
245 Have their ingratitude in them hereditary:  
Their blood is caked, 'tis cold, it seldom flows;  
'Tis lack of kindly warmth they are not kind;  
And nature, as it grows again toward earth,  
Is fashion'd for the journey, dull and heavy.

*To a Servant*

**TIMON**

250 Go to Ventidius.

*To FLAVIUS*

**TIMON**

Prithee, be not sad,  
Thou art true and honest; ingeniously I speak.  
No blame belongs to thee.

*To Servant*

**TIMON**

Ventidius lately  
Buried his father; by whose death he's stepp'd  
Into a great estate: when he was poor,  
Imprison'd and in scarcity of friends,  
260 I clear'd him with five talents: greet him from me;  
Bid him suppose some good necessity

**TIMO**

[Pointing to different servants] I will split you all up and send you to Lord Lucius, you to Lord Lucullus, my hunting-partner today, and you to Sempronius. Tell them you come from me, and due to extenuating circumstances I could use their help and some money. Ask for fifty talents from each.

**FLAMINIUS**

Whatever you say.

**FLAVIUS**

[To himself] He's going to ask Lucius and Lucullus, of all people?

**TIMON**

[To FLAVIUS] You go to the senators. I deserve an audience with them. Ask them to send me a thousand talents.

**FLAVIUS**

I have used your badge as sign of my authority to act for you and approached them aggressively asking for money. They said no, and I came back with no more than I left with.

**TIMON**

That can't be true!

**FLAVIUS**

They answered in unison that they would like to help, but do not have enough to spare. They did say they were sorry and that they liked you, and that they had no idea anything was wrong with your estate. They lamented that even the noblest men can come upon bad luck, wished life were better, and said it was all so sad. Then they moved on to what they said were more serious matters, and shared looks of disgust and hard, half-uttered sentences. Then they were so gruff with their grudging salutes and cold nods that I was shocked into silence.

**TIMON**

I hope the gods give them what they deserve! But calm down, those old cronies have ingratitude in their DNA. Their blood is thick and runs slow and cold. They do not have the warmth to be kind. And they must act as their nature dictates, dull and heavy.

*He speaks to one Servant.*

**TIMON**

Go to Ventidius.

*He speaks to FLAVIUS*

**TIMON**

Please cheer up. You are a good man, and I don't blame you.

*He speaks to another servant.*

**TIMON**

Ventidius just held his father's funeral, who died and left him heir to an enormous fortune. When he was poor and had no one to turn to, I gave him five talents. Go to him for me and ask that his friend needs him right now, and hopes that he remembers those five talents.

Touches his friend, which craves to be remember'd  
With those five talents.

*Exit Servant*

*To FLAVIUS*

**TIMON**

That had, give't these fellows  
265 To whom 'tis instant due. Ne'er speak, or think,  
That Timon's fortunes 'mong his friends can sink.

**FLAVIUS**

I would I could not think it: that thought is  
bounty's foe;  
270 Being free itself, it thinks all others so.

*Exeunt*

*The Servant exits.*

*TIMON speaks to FLAVIUS.*

**TIMON**

Now that that's done, give these men what they are due  
right now. Don't say or even imagine that my friends will fail  
me.

**FLAVIUS**

I wish I could unthink it. The idea that some will fail you is  
the enemy of generosity, because once it gets out that some  
are withholding their money, everyone will do the same.

*They both exit.*

## Act 3, Scene 1

### Shakespeare

*FLAMINIUS waiting. Enter a Servant to him*

**SERVANT**

I have told my lord of you; he is coming down to you.

**FLAMINIUS**

I thank you, sir.

*Enter LUCULLUS*

**SERVANT**

Here's my lord.

**LUCULLUS**

5 [Aside] One of Lord Timon's men? a gift, I warrant. Why, this hits right; I dreamt of a silver basin and ewer to-night. Flaminus, honest Flaminus; you are very respectively welcome, sir. Fill me some wine.

*Exit Servants*

**LUCULLUS**

10 And how does that honourable, complete, free-hearted gentleman of Athens, thy very bountiful good lord and master?

**FLAMINIUS**

His health is well sir.

**LUCULLUS**

15 I am right glad that his health is well, sir: and what hast thou there under thy cloak, pretty Flaminus?

**FLAMINIUS**

'Faith, nothing but an empty box, sir; which, in my lord's behalf, I come to entreat your honour to supply; who, having great and instant occasion to use fifty talents, hath sent to your lordship to furnish him, nothing doubting your present assistance therein.

### Shakescleare Translation

*FLAMINIUS stands waiting to see the lord LUCULLUS on behalf of TIMON. A SERVANT walks in.*

**SERVANT**

I told Lucullus that you were here. He'll be in soon.

**FLAMINIUS**

Thanks.

*LUCULLUS walks in.*

**SERVANT**

There he is.

**LUCULLUS**

[To himself] Is this one of Timon's servants? Great! I dreamt last night of expensive gifts.

[To FLAMINIUS] Welcome, Flaminus.

[To the SERVANT] Go get some wine for us.

*The SERVANT exits.*

**LUCULLUS**

How is your master Timon? He's so honest and generous.

**FLAMINIUS**

He is healthy.

**LUCULLUS**

It's important to be healthy. What do you have under your cloak, Flaminus?

**FLAMINIUS**

Nothing, just an empty box, which Timon asked that I beg you fill with some money. He could really use fifty talents, and thinks you would be kind enough to lend him that money. He thinks without a doubt you will assist him.

**LUCULLUS**

La, la, la, la! 'nothing doubting,' says he? Alas,  
good lord! a noble gentleman 'tis, if he would not  
25 keep so good a house. Many a time and often I ha'  
dined with him, and told him on't, and come again to  
supper to him, of purpose to have him spend less,  
and yet he would embrace no counsel, take no warning  
30 by my coming. Every man has his fault, and honesty  
is his: I ha' told him on't, but I could ne'er get  
him from't.

*Re-enter Servant, with wine*

**SERVANT**

Please your lordship, here is the wine.

**LUCULLUS**

Flaminius, I have noted thee always wise. Here's to  
thee.

**FLAMINIUS**

35 Your lordship speaks your pleasure.

**LUCULLUS**

I have observed thee always for aowardly prompt  
spirit--give thee thy due--and one that knows what  
belongs to reason; and canst use the time well, if  
the time use thee well: good parts in thee.

*To Servant*

**LUCULLUS**

40 Get you gone, sirrah.

*Exit Servant*

**LUCULLUS**

Draw nearer, honest Flaminius. Thy lord's a  
bountiful gentleman: but thou art wise; and thou  
knowest well enough, although thou comest to me,  
45 that this is no time to lend money, especially upon  
bare friendship, without security. Here's three  
solidares for thee: good boy, wink at me, and say  
thou sawest me not. Fare thee well.

**FLAMINIUS**

Is't possible the world should so much differ,  
50 And we alive that lived? Fly, damned baseness,  
To him that worships thee!

*Throwing the money back*

**LUCULLUS**

Ha! now I see thou art a fool, and fit for thy master.

*Exit*

**FLAMINIUS**

55 May these add to the number that may scald thee!  
Let moulten coin be thy damnation,  
Thou disease of a friend, and not himself!  
Has friendship such a faint and milky heart,  
It turns in less than two nights? O you gods,  
60 I feel master's passion! this slave,  
Unto his honour, has my lord's meat in him:  
Why should it thrive and turn to nutriment,  
When he is turn'd to poison?  
O, may diseases only work upon't!  
65 And, when he's sick to death, let not that part of  
nature  
Which my lord paid for, be of any power  
To expel sickness, but prolong his hour!

**LUCULLUS**

Ha ha ha! He thinks so? He's a very nice guy, but he has  
spent too much money. I came over several times for dinner  
and told him to be more thrifty, but he would never listen or  
heed my warnings. No one is perfect, and his vice is  
generosity. I told him so, but never could change his ways.

*The SERVANT re-enters with wine.*

**SERVANT**

Here's the wine.

**LUCULLUS**

I always thought you were smart, Flaminius. Take this.

**FLAMINIUS**

Timon says the same.

**LUCULLUS**

I always thought you were an able and efficient guy  
who—to give you your due credit—knows how to be  
reasonable. I always imagined that instead of being swept  
up in circumstance you'd be able to see an opportunity  
when it presented itself. These are good traits.

*He speaks to the SERVANT.*

**LUCULLUS**

Leave and give us a moment.

*The SERVANT exits.*

**LUCULLUS**

Come closer to me Flaminius. Your lord is a generous man,  
but you are smart and know as well as anybody, even  
though you've come to me, that now is not the time to lend  
money, especially to friends, without some kind of  
insurance. Here are three coins. This way you can say that  
you never visited me and I did not reject your request for a  
loan. Goodbye.

**FLAMINIUS**

Is it really possible that such bad men can exist when there  
are good ones too? You and your money sicken me.

*He throws the money back at LUCULLUS.*

**LUCULLUS**

Ah, now I can tell that you're as dumb as Timon.

*He exits.*

**FLAMINIUS**

I hope those coins melt into a burning hot liquid and scald  
you! You make me sick. Is friendship really such a flimsy  
thing that it can break in less than two nights? God! I am  
offended for Timon. This idiot has eaten at his table, and  
what he ate should not have nourished him, but poisoned  
him! I hope he gets a fatal disease, and that whatever part  
of him existed thanks to eating Timon's food works to make  
his suffering even more painful.

[Exit](#)*He exits.*

## Act 3, Scene 2

### Shakespeare

*Enter LUCILIUS, with three Strangers*

**LUCILIUS**

Who, the Lord Timon? he is my very good friend, and an honourable gentleman.

**FIRST STRANGER**

We know him for no less, though we are but strangers to him. But I can tell you one thing, my lord, and which I hear from common rumours: now Lord Timon's happy hours are done and past, and his estate shrinks from him.

**LUCILIUS**

Fie, no, do not believe it; he cannot want for money.

**SECOND STRANGER**

But believe you this, my lord, that, not long ago, 10 one of his men was with the Lord Lucullus to borrow so many talents, nay, urged extremely for't and showed what necessity belonged to't, and yet was denied.

**LUCILIUS**

How!

**SECOND STRANGER**

15 I tell you, denied, my lord.

**LUCILIUS**

What a strange case was that! now, before the gods, I am ashamed on't. Denied that honourable man! there was very little honour showed in't. For my own part, I must needs confess, I have received some 20 small kindnesses from him, as money, plate, jewels and such-like trifles, nothing comparing to his; yet, had he mistook him and sent to me, I should ne'er have denied his occasion so many talents.

*Enter SERVILIUS*

**SERVILIUS**

See, by good hap, yonder's my lord; 25 I have sweat to see his honour. My honoured lord,--

*To LUCILIUS*

**LUCILIUS**

Servilius! you are kindly met, sir. Fare thee well: commend me to thy honourable virtuous lord, my very exquisite friend.

**SERVILIUS**

30 May it please your honour, my lord hath sent--

**LUCILIUS**

Ha! what has he sent? I am so much endeared to that lord; he's ever sending: how shall I thank him, thinkest thou? And what has he sent now?

### Shakescleare Translation

*LUCILIUS enters with three Strangers.*

**LUCILIUS**

You're talking about Timon? He is my friend and a good guy.

**FIRST STRANGER**

We've heard as much, even though we've never met the man. Still, I can tell you something else which I've heard as a rumor: Timon's best days are behind him, and his estate is shrinking beyond his control.

**LUCILIUS**

Psh, no, don't believe the rumors. He has plenty of money.

**SECOND STRANGER**

But, my lord, believe this: one of his men went to the Lord Lucullus to ask for that much. Really, he begged desperately for it, showing just how much he really needed it, and still he was rejected.

**LUCILIUS**

No way!

**SECOND STRANGER**

Yes, totally rejected.

**LUCILIUS**

That is so weird! God as my witness, I am ashamed to hear that such an honorable man was denied a loan. There is no honor at all in that, and when I think of myself, I must say I have received many gifts from him: money, silver, jewels, and other things—though nothing compared to what he gave Lucullus. If Timon had foregone Lucullus and asked me for a loan, I never would have denied him so much.

*SERVILIUS enters.*

**SERVILIUS**

There you are, my lord, I've been look all over for you. My lord—

*To LUCILIUS.*

**LUCILIUS**

Servilius! It's good to see you. Please, bring me to Timon, my good friend.

**SERVILIUS**

If you are willing, Timon sent—

**LUCILIUS**

Ha! What gift has he sent me? I owe that man so much, since he's always giving me gifts. How do you think I should thank him? What has he sent me?

**SERVILIUS**

Has only sent his present occasion now, my lord;  
35 requesting your lordship to supply his instant use  
with so many talents.

**LUCILIUS**

I know his lordship is but merry with me;  
He cannot want fifty five hundred talents.

**SERVILIUS**

But in the mean time he wants less, my lord.  
40 If his occasion were not virtuous,  
I should not urge it half so faithfully.

**LUCILIUS**

Dost thou speak seriously, Servilius?

**SERVILIUS**

Upon my soul,'tis true, sir.

**LUCILIUS**

What a wicked beast was I to disfurnish myself  
45 against such a good time, when I might ha' shown  
myself honourable! how unluckily it happened, that I  
should purchase the day before for a little part,  
and undo a great deal of honoured! Servilius, now,  
before the gods, I am not able to do,--the more  
50 beast, I say:--I was sending to use Lord Timon  
myself, these gentlemen can witness! but I would  
not, for the wealth of Athens, I had done't now.  
Commend me bountifully to his good lordship; and I  
hope his honour will conceive the fairest of me,  
55 because I have no power to be kind: and tell him  
this from me, I count it one of my greatest  
afflictions, say, that I cannot pleasure such an  
honourable gentleman. Good Servilius, will you  
befriend me so far, as to use mine own words to him?

**SERVILIUS**

60 Yes, sir, I shall.

**LUCILIUS**

I'll look you out a good turn, Servilius.

*Exit SERVILIUS*

**LUCILIUS**

True as you said, Timon is shrunk indeed;  
And he that's once denied will hardly speed.

65

*Exit*

**FIRST STRANGER**

Do you observe this, Hostilius?

**SECOND STRANGER**

Ay, too well.

**FIRST STRANGER**

Why, this is the world's soul; and just of the  
same piece  
70 Is every flatterer's spirit. Who can call him  
His friend that dips in the same dish? for, in  
My knowing, Timon has been this lord's father,  
And kept his credit with his purse,  
Supported his estate; nay, Timon's money  
75 Has paid his men their wages: he ne'er drinks,  
But Timon's silver treads upon his lip;  
And yet--O, see the monstrousness of man  
When he looks out in an ungrateful shape!--  
He does deny him, in respect of his,  
80 What charitable men afford to beggars.

**SERVILIUS**

Only me to state his current state of affairs, and to ask you  
to lend him some money.

**LUCILIUS**

Timon must be joking. There's no way he needs fifty five  
hundred talents.

**SERVILIUS**

For now he wants less. I wouldn't speak with such urgency  
about this if it were a joke.

**LUCILIUS**

You're serious?

**SERVILIUS**

Yes, I swear.

**LUCILIUS**

I'm a horrible man for accepting all those gifts from Timon,  
when I could have been better! I gave up the opportunity to  
be a good man for something that brings me no honor!  
Servilius, I swear to god that I cannot help. I was actually  
going to send someone to borrow from Timon, and these  
men here will back me up. I swear on all the wealth of  
Athens! Tell Timon what I've said. I hope he will think of me  
well, even if I cannot help him. Tell him that it pains me  
more than anything else that I cannot aid such a good man.  
Servilius, would you be a good friend to me and tell him  
this?

**SERVILIUS**

Yes, I will.

**LUCILIUS**

I wish you the best, Servilius!

*SERVILIUS exits.*

**LUCILIUS**

It's as you said, Timon is poor. And someone who is denied  
once does not have much hope of prospering.

*LUCILIUS exits.*

**FIRST STRANGER**

Did you see that, Hostilius?

**SECOND STRANGER**

Yes.

**FIRST STRANGER**

That's what the world is like, and every flatterer is the same.  
What is a friend who takes so much? Timon was so good to  
Lucilius, and kept him afloat with his own money. It's Timon  
who paid for his servants, and he never enjoys anything  
that does not owe itself to him. But how monstrous he  
looks for being so ungrateful! He denies him what rich men  
would give to beggars.

**THIRD STRANGER**

Religion groans at it.

**FIRST STRANGER**

For mine own part,  
I never tasted Timon in my life,  
Nor came any of his bounties over me,  
85 To mark me for his friend; yet, I protest,  
For his right noble mind, illustrious virtue  
And honourable carriage,  
Had his necessity made use of me,  
I would have put my wealth into donation,  
90 And the best half should have return'd to him,  
So much I love his heart: but, I perceive,  
Men must learn now with pity to dispense;  
For policy sits above conscience.

*Exeunt*

**THIRD STRANGER**

It's unholy.

**FIRST STRANGER**

I myself have never received anything from Timon, and am not his friend. But I swear on all of his good qualities that if he approached me for money, I would have given him something. I like him that much. Men don't know how to give and value shrewd money-making over their conscience.

*They all exit.*

## Act 3, Scene 3

### Shakespeare

*Enter SEMPRONIUS, and a Servant of TIMON's*

**SEMPRONIUS**

Must he needs trouble me in 't,--hum!--'bove  
all others?  
He might have tried Lord Lucius or Lucullus;  
And now Ventidius is wealthy too,  
5 Whom he redeem'd from prison: all these  
Owe their estates unto him.

**SERVANT**

My lord,  
They have all been touch'd and found base metal, for  
They have all denied him.

**SEMPRONIUS**

10 How! have they denied him?  
Has Ventidius and Lucullus denied him?  
And does he send to me? Three? hum!  
It shows but little love or judgment in him:  
Must I be his last refuge! His friends, like  
15 physicians,  
Thrive, give him over: must I take the cure upon me?  
Has much disgraced me in't; I'm angry at him,  
That might have known my place: I see no sense for't,  
But his occasion might have wo'd me first;  
20 For, in my conscience, I was the first man  
That e'er received gift from him:  
And does he think so backwardly of me now,  
That I'll requite its last? No:  
So it may prove an argument of laughter  
25 To the rest, and 'mongst lords I be thought a fool.  
I'd rather than the worth of thrice the sum,  
Had sent to me first, but for my mind's sake;  
I'd such a courage to do him good. But now return,  
And with their faint reply this answer join;  
30 Who bates mine honour shall not know my coin.

*Exit*

**SERVANT**

Excellent! Your lordship's a goodly villain. The devil knew not what he did when he made man politic; he crossed himself by 't: and I cannot think but, in the end, the villainies of man will set him clear. How fairly this lord strives to appear foul! takes virtuous copies to be wicked,

### Shakescleare Translation

*Enter TIMON's Servant and SEMPRONIUS.*

**SEMPRONIUS**

Should Timon really have to struggle for this? He could go to Lord Lucius or Lucullus for a loan, and he could also call on the rich Ventidius, who is free from prison thanks to Timon. All these men owe some of their wealth to Timon.

**SERVANT**

All those men must be under some wicked influence, because they all denied him.

**SEMPRONIUS**

No way! Ventidius and Lucullus denied him? Has he approached me for a loan? It shows little Timon's friends loved him that all three of these men refused him, and now I must be his last hope! All his friends benefitted from the charity that leaves him without money, and now leave him for broke like doctor does a case he has deemed helpless. Must I now try to cure him of his debts? What a disgrace and an unenviable position for me! I cannot understand why he did not come to me first—I was the first to receive a gift from him, after all. Does he think so poorly of me as to believe I would be the last to repay him? No, and that way I'll have reason to laugh at him and all the others, who have called me an idiot. If Timon had approached me first, I would have three times the amount he asks for. But now, servant, go back to him and tell him this: whoever scorns me this way will never get my money.

*SEMPRONIUS exits.*

**SERVANT**

Wow, what a villain! Even the devil couldn't have known how evil men would be when he made them so crafty. He ruined himself in the process, and there's no way that all the badness in men will ever absolve him. It is incredible how this lord actually works to seem horrible! He makes himself seem virtuous, but only so he can be as wicked as

like those that under hot ardent zeal would set  
whole realms on fire: Of such a nature is his  
politic love.  
40 This was my lord's best hope; now all are fled,  
Save only the gods: now his friends are dead,  
Doors, that were ne'er acquainted with their wards  
Many a bounteous year must be employ'd  
Now to guard sure their master.  
45 And this is all a liberal course allows;  
Who cannot keep his wealth must keep his house.

*Exit*

those who would burn entire empires to the ground. That's what political desire is made of. He was Timon's best chance at getting money, and now all hopes are gone except for the will of the gods. Timon's friends are dead to him, and now all those doors he had left wide open all those years must be closed and used to protect him in his home. That's what being too generous gets you. He who cannot hang onto wealth must at least hang onto his house.

*The SERVANT exits.*

## Act 3, Scene 4

### Shakespeare

*Enter two Servants of Varro, and the Servant of LUCIUS, meeting TITUS, HORTENSIOUS, and other Servants of TIMON's creditors, waiting his coming out*

#### Varro's FIRST SERVANT

Well met; good morrow, Titus and Hortensius.

#### TITUS

The like to you kind Varro.

#### HORTENSIOUS

Lucius!  
What, do we meet together?

#### LUCIUS'S SERVANT

Ay, and I think  
One business does command us all; for mine Is money.

#### TITUS

So is theirs and ours.

*Enter PHILOTUS*

#### TITUS

Lucius' Servant And Sir Philotus too!

#### PHILOTUS

Good day at once.

#### Lucius' Servant

Welcome, good brother.  
What do you think the hour?

#### PHILOTUS

Labouring for nine.

15

#### Lucius' Servant

So much?

#### PHILOTUS

Is not my lord seen yet?

#### Lucius' Servant

Not yet.

#### PHILOTUS

I wonder on't; he was wont to shine at seven.

#### LuciUs' Servant

Ay, but the days are wax'd shorter with him:  
You must consider that a prodigal course

### Shakescleare Translation

*Two of VARRO's Servants enter with one of LUCIUS's Servants. They find TITUS and HORTENSIOUS, along with other Servants representing TIMON's creditors.*

#### varro's FIRST SERVANT

Right on time. Good day, Titus and Hortensius.

#### TITUS

And you as well.

#### HORTENSIOUS

Oh, a representative of Lucius! Are you here to see Timon as well?

#### LUCIUS'S SERVANT

Yes. We do all have the same goal, and mine is money.

#### TITUS

And your goal is our goal.

*PHILOTUS enters.*

#### TITUS

Not only Lucius's Servant, but Philotus's too!

#### PHILOTUS

Good day.

#### Lucius's Servant

Hello. What time is it?

#### PHILOTUS

Close to nine.

#### Lucius's Servant

That late?

#### PHILOTUS

Has anyone seen Timon yet?

#### Lucius's Servant

Not yet.

#### PHILOTUS

I wonder why. He usually wakes up at seven.

#### LuciUs's Servant

Yeah, but the days have become shorter for him, because you should remember that the path of extravagance

Is like the sun's; but not, like his, recoverable.  
I fear 'tis deepest winter in Lord Timon's purse;  
That one may reach deep enough, and yet  
Find little.

**PHILOTUS**

I am of your fear for that.

**TITUS**

I'll show you how to observe a strange event.  
Your lord sends now for money.

**HORTENSIUS**

Most true, he does.

**TITUS**

And he wears jewels now of Timon's gift,  
For which I wait for money.

**HORTENSIUS**

It is against my heart.

**Lucius' Servant**

Mark, how strange it shows,  
Timon in this should pay more than he owes:  
And e'en as if your lord should wear rich jewels,  
And send for money for 'em.

**HORTENSIUS**

I'm weary of this charge, the gods can witness:  
I know my lord hath spent of Timon's wealth,  
And now ingratitude makes it worse than stealth.

**Varro's FIRST SERVANT**

Yes, mine's three thousand crowns: what's yours?

**Lucius' Servant**

Five thousand mine.

**Varro's FIRST SERVANT**

'Tis much deep: and it should seem by the sun,  
Your master's confidence was above mine;  
Else, surely, his had equal'd.

*Enter FLAMINIUS.*

**TITUS**

One of Lord Timon's men.

**Lucius' Servant**

Flaminus! Sir, a word: pray, is my lord ready to  
come forth?

**FLAMINIUS**

No, indeed, he is not.

**TITUS**

We attend his lordship; pray, signify so much.

**FLAMINIUS**

I need not tell him that; he knows you are too  
diligent.

*Exit*

*Enter FLAVIUS in a cloak, muffled*

**Lucius' servant**

Ha! Is not that his steward muffled so?  
He goes away in a cloud: call him, call him.

descends like the sun in winter, even if it does not regain its height the following year. And I'm afraid that Lord Timon's estate is withering, no matter how hard he tries to recover money.

**PHILOTUS**

Me too.

**TITUS**

And I'll tell you something funny.

*[To HORTENSIUS]* Your lord sent you to get money, right?

**HORTENSIUS**

Yes.

**TITUS**

And he now possesses jewels from Timon, which I lent him  
the money to buy.

**HORTENSIUS**

Unfortunately, yes.

**Lucius' Servant**

It's so weird how Timon must pay out more than he owes,  
while your lord seems to get the privilege of wearing the  
jewels and getting to request the money paid for them.

**HORTENSIUS**

God I'm sick of this job. I know that my lord spent Timon's  
money and now in his ingratitude is as bad as a thief.

**Varro's FIRST SERVANT**

Yeah. My lord is asking for three thousand crowns. What  
about yours?

**Lucius' Servant**

Five thousand.

**Varro's FIRST SERVANT**

Way too much. It seems your master is more brazen even  
than mine, otherwise mine would have asked for as much.

*Enter FLAMINIUS.*

**TITUS**

One of Timon's servants is coming

**Lucius' Servant**

Flaminus! Can we talk for a second? Is Timon coming?

**FLAMINIUS**

No he's not.

**TITUS**

At least tell him we are waiting for him.

**FLAMINIUS**

I don't have to do that. He knows how attentive you are.

*FLAMINIUS exits.*

*FLAVIUS enters covered in a cloak.*

**Lucius' servant**

Ha! Is that his assistant wrapped up like that? Get him, he's  
trying to sneak away under cover.

**TITUS**

Do you hear, sir?

**varro's SECOND SERVANT**

By your leave, sir,--

**FLAVIUS**

What do ye ask of me, my friend?

**TITUS**

60 We wait for certain money here, sir.

**FLAVIUS**

Ay,  
If money were as certain as your waiting,  
'Twere sure enough.  
Why then preferr'd you not your sums and bills,  
65 When your false masters eat of my lord's meat?  
Then they could smile and fawn upon his debts  
And take down the interest into their  
gluttonous maws.  
You do yourselves but wrong to stir me up;  
70 Let me pass quietly:  
Believe 't, my lord and I have made an end;  
I have no more to reckon, he to spend.

**Lucius' Servant**

Ay, but this answer will not serve.

**FLAVIUS**

If 'twill not serve,'tis not so base as you;  
75 For you serve knaves.

*Exit*

**Varro's FIRST SERVANT**

How! what does his cashiered worship mutter?

**Varro's sECOND SERVANT**

No matter what; he's poor, and that's revenge  
enough. Who can speak broader than he that has no  
80 house to put his head in? such may rail against  
great buildings.

*Enter SERVILIUS*

**TITUS**

O, here's Servilius; now we shall know some answer.

**SERVILIUS**

If I might beseech you, gentlemen, to repair some  
other hour, I should derive much from't; for,  
85 take't of my soul, my lord leans wondrously to  
discontent: his comfortable temper has forsook him;  
he's much out of health, and keeps his chamber.

**LuciUS' Servant**

Many do keep their chambers are not sick:  
And, if it be so far beyond his health,  
90 Methinks he should the sooner pay his debts,  
And make a clear way to the gods.

**SERVILIUS**

Good gods!

**TITUS**

We cannot take this for answer, sir.

**FLAMINIUS**

[Within] Servilius, help! My lord! my lord!

95

**TITUS**

[Pesterling FLAVIUS] Can we talk, please?

**varro's SECOND SERVANT**

[Pesterling FLAVIUS] Please, sir--

**FLAVIUS**

What do you want?

**TITUS**

We want the money Timon owes.

**FLAVIUS**

Yes, if only money were as sure a thing as you all asking for  
it, then you would definitely have it. Why didn't your  
masters send you to pay the bills for the food they ate off  
Timon's plate? That way, they could smile and enjoy the  
debts he incurred and then shovel all the interest he owed  
into their greedy mouths. You're not doing yourself any  
favors riling me up like this. Let me go. My lord and I have  
parted ways. I have no more counsel to give, and he has no  
more money to spend.

**LUCIUS' SERVANT**

Yes, but that still isn't enough.

**FLAVIUS**

If it's not enough, it's still worth more than all of you,  
because you serve bad men.

*FLAVIUS exits.*

**varro's FIRST SERVANT**

What did the fired man just say?

**Varro's SECOND SERVANT**

Whatever, he's poor and that's punishment enough for him.  
After all, who can say whatever he wants more than the  
man with no home and nothing to lose?

*SERVILIUS enters.*

**TITUS**

Here is Servilius. Now we'll know what is going on.

**SERVILIUS**

If I may ask, gentleman, please come back some other time,  
and it will help me a great deal. I swear, Timon is extremely  
upset. His cheerful disposition is gone, he is sick, and he  
keeps to his room.

**LuciUS' Servant**

Lots of people who stay in their rooms aren't sick, and if  
he's as sick as you say he is, all the more reason for him to  
pay off his debts before he dies.

**SERVILIUS**

Good lord!

**TITUS**

We can't accept this.

**FLAMINIUS**

[Shouting from inside] Servilius, help! Timon! Timon!

*Enter TIMON, in a rage, FLAMINIUS following*

**TIMON**

What, are my doors opposed against my passage?  
Have I been ever free, and must my house  
Be my retentive enemy, my gaol?  
The place which I have feasted, does it now,  
Like all mankind, show me an iron heart?

100

**Lucius' Servant**

Put in now, Titus.

**TITUS**

My lord, here is my bill.

**Lucius' Servant**

Here's mine.

**HORTENSIUS**

And mine, my lord.

**Both Varro's Servants**

105 And ours, my lord.

**PHILOTUS**

All our bills.

**TIMON**

Knock me down with 'em: cleave me to the girdle.

**Lucius' Servant**

Alas, my lord,-

**TIMON**

Cut my heart in sums.

**TITUS**

110 Mine, fifty talents.

**TIMON**

Tell out my blood.

**Lucius' Servant**

Five thousand crowns, my lord.

**TIMON**

Five thousand drops pays that.  
What yours?--and yours?

**Varro's FIRST SERVANT**

My lord,-

**Varro's SECOND SERVANT**

115 My lord,-

**TIMON**

Tear me, take me, and the gods fall upon you!

*Exit*

**HORTENSIUS**

'Faith, I perceive our masters may throw their caps  
at their money: these debts may well be called  
desperate ones, for a madman owes 'em.

120

*Exeunt*

*TIMON storms onto the stage in a rage and FLAMINIUS follows him.*

**TIMON**

What, are my own doors going to shut themselves to me?  
Am I not free to leave my own house? Does the home to  
such great parties turn its back on me, like everyone else?

**Lucius' Servant**

Calm down Titus.

**TITUS**

Here is the receipt for debts you owe me.

**Lucius' Servant**

Here's mine.

**HORTENSIUS**

And mine.

**Both Varro's Servants**

And ours.

**PHILOTUS**

All our receipts.

**TIMON**

Go ahead, kill me with them.

**Lucius' Servant**

But—

**TIMON**

Rip pieces  of my heart out.

 1 The original, "sums" allows for a double meaning alluding to the "sums" of money he owes.

**TITUS**

My receipt is for fifty talents.

**TIMON**

Count my blood drop by drop and take it from me.

**Lucius' Servant**

Mine is for five thousand.

**TIMON**

Five thousand drops should cover.

*[To the other servants] What about all your receipts?*

**Varro's FIRST SERVANT**

My lord—

**Varro's SECOND SERVANT**

My lord—

**TIMON**

Tear me apart and take me away, and may the gods take  
their revenge upon you!

*TIMON exits.*

**HORTENSIUS**

It seems our masters should probably give up on getting  
their money back. Now that Timon's mad, these debts are  
junk.

*They all exit.*

*Re-enter TIMON and FLAVIUS***TIMON**

They have e'en put my breath from me, the slaves.  
Creditors? devils!

**FLAVIUS**

My dear lord,—

**TIMON**

125 What if it should be so?

**FLAVIUS**

My lord,—

**TIMON**

I'll have it so. My steward!

**FLAVIUS**

Here, my lord.

**TIMON**

130 So fitly? Go, bid all my friends again,  
Lucius, Lucullus, and Sempronius:  
All, sirrah, all:  
I'll once more feast the rascals.

**FLAVIUS**

O my lord,  
You only speak from your distracted soul;  
135 There is not so much left, to furnish out  
A moderate table.

**TIMON**

Be't not in thy care; go,  
I charge thee, invite them all: let in the tide  
Of knaves once more; my cook and I'll provide.

140

*Exeunt**TIMON and FLAVIUS reenter.***TIMON**

[Panting] These men have even taken my breath away. They call themselves creditors? They are devils!

**FLAVIUS**

Timon—

**TIMON**

[Coming up with an idea] But what if...

**FLAVIUS**

Timon—

**TIMON**

[Realizing something] Yes, that's it! Come here!

**FLAVIUS**

I'm here.

**TIMON**

So soon? Go get all those men for me. Lucius, Lucullus, and Sempronius, all of them! I'll throw them one last party!

**FLAVIUS**

But my lord you only speak in a daze. You do not have enough money yet to offer even a small meal.

**TIMON**

Don't worry about that. Go, and invite them all. Let in that wave of villains once more. My cook and I will figure it out.

*They all exit.*

## Act 3, Scene 5

**Shakespeare****FIRST SENATOR**

My lord, you have my voice to it; the fault's  
Bloody; 'tis necessary he should die:  
Nothing emboldens sin so much as mercy.

**SECOND SENATOR**

Most true; the law shall bruise him.

5

*Enter ALCIBIADES, with Attendants*

**ALCIBIADES**

Honour, health, and compassion to the senate!

**FIRST SENATOR**

Now, captain?

**ALCIBIADES**

I am an humble suitor to your virtues;  
For pity is the virtue of the law,  
10 And none but tyrants use it cruelly.  
It pleases time and fortune to lie heavy  
Upon a friend of mine, who, in hot blood,  
Hath stepp'd into the law, which is past depth  
To those that, without heed, do plunge into 't.

**Shakescleare Translation****FIRST SENATOR**

You have my vote! He should die for this heinous act,  
because mercy would only lead to more behavior like it.

**SECOND SENATOR**

I agree. He must face the rule of law.

*ALCIBIADES walks in with his Attendants.*

**ALCIBIADES**

Long live the senate!

**FIRST SENATOR**

What, captain?

**ALCIBIADES**

I stand before you virtuous men to ask a favor. The law is a merciful thing, which only a tyrant could use for cruel purposes. Time and hard luck have worked against a friend of mine who recently broke the law in a fit of rage, a state which unfortunately the law does not consider when men break it. My friend, this action aside, is a good man, who in the moment actually acted without cowardice—something

15

He is a man, setting his fate aside,  
Of comely virtues:  
Nor did he soil the fact with cowardice--  
An honour in him which buys out his fault--  
But with a noble fury and fair spirit,  
20 Seeing his reputation touch'd to death,  
He did oppose his foe:  
And with such sober and unnoted passion  
He did behave his anger, ere 'twas spent,  
As if he had but proved an argument.

**FIRST SENATOR**

25 You undergo too strict a paradox,  
Striving to make an ugly deed look fair:  
Your words have took such pains as if they labour'd  
To bring manslaughter into form and set quarrelling  
Upon the head of valour; which indeed  
30 Is valour misbegot and came into the world  
When sects and factions were newly born:  
He's truly valiant that can wisely suffer  
The worst that man can breathe, and make his wrongs  
His outsides, to wear them like his raiment,  
35 carelessly,  
And ne'er prefer his injuries to his heart,  
To bring it into danger.  
If wrongs be evils and enforce us kill,  
What folly 'tis to hazard life for ill!

**ALCIBIADES**

40 My lord,--

**FIRST SENATOR**

You cannot make gross sins look clear:  
To revenge is no valour, but to bear.

**ALCIBIADES**

My lords, then, under favour, pardon me,  
If I speak like a captain.  
45 Why do fond men expose themselves to battle,  
And not endure all threats? sleep upon't,  
And let the foes quietly cut their throats,  
Without repugnancy? If there be  
Such valour in the bearing, what make we  
50 Abroad? why then, women are more valiant  
That stay at home, if bearing carry it,  
And the ass more captain than the lion, the felon  
Loaden with irons wiser than the judge,  
If wisdom be in suffering. O my lords,  
55 As you are great, be pitifully good:  
Who cannot condemn rashness in cold blood?  
To kill, I grant, is sin's extremest gust;  
But, in defence, by mercy, 'tis most just.  
To be in anger is impurity;  
60 But who is man that is not angry?  
Weigh but the crime with this.

**SECOND SENATOR**

You breathe in vain.

**ALCIBIADES**

In vain! his service done  
At Lacedaemon and Byzantium  
65 Were a sufficient briber for his life.

**FIRST SENATOR**

What's that?

**ALCIBIADES**

I say, my lords, he has done fair service,  
And slain in fight many of your enemies:  
How full of valour did he bear himself  
70 In the last conflict, and made plenteous wounds!

which ought to be held against his crime—by bravely identifying and responding to one who had ruined his reputation. He opposed this enemy with a clearheaded and calculating passion, expressing his anger with a certain coldness, almost as if he were proving a point.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Your argument is contradictory, a forced attempt to make gross actions seem justifiable. Your rhetoric reaches almost to the point of labor as it tries to turn murder into a mere formality and feuding into an act of valor. Feuds actually prove to be valor in its most degenerate form, as they come from the formation of rivalries. A man is truly valiant only when he can endure the worst insults men can speak, and even wear them like clothing without a care in the world. True valor never takes injury to heart, or retaliates in violence. If acts of injustice are in fact evil and force us to kill others, how dumb it would be then to risk your life for such a cause!

**ALCIBIADES**

But—

**FIRST SENATOR**

You cannot make terrible sins look innocent. Valor is patience, not revenge.

**ALCIBIADES**

Then forgive me for speaking like a military man, my lords. Why do good people fight and not patiently bear the insults of their enemies? Why do they not patiently let those same enemies murder them in their sleep? If there is such honor in patience, what do we make of our wars abroad, and why are women not considered more valiant for staying at home? Why do we not deem the donkey superior to the lion, or the prisoner to the judge, if there is such wisdom in suffering? You are great men, be compassionate. Who would not sentence a man for violent aggression? You are right, murder is the greatest sin, but when it is done for self-defense it is fair. Anger is wicked, but who has not been angry before? Think about this as you judge the crime before you.

**SECOND SENATOR**

Your speech is useless.

**ALCIBIADES**

Useless! The man's heroism at the battles of Lacedaemon  and Byzantium should be enough to win him his life.

 Another Greek city-state, also known more commonly as Sparta.

**FIRST SENATOR**

What?

**ALCIBIADES**

The man is a hero and has killed many of our enemies. How bravely did he fight and wound many men in the last battle?

**SECOND SENATOR**

He has made too much plenty with 'em;  
He's a sworn rioter: he has a sin that often  
Drowns him, and takes his valour prisoner:  
If there were no foes, that were enough  
75 To overcome him: in that beastly fury  
He has been known to commit outrages,  
And cherish factions: 'tis inferr'd to us,  
His days are foul and his drink dangerous.

**FIRST SENATOR**

He dies.

**ALCIBIADES**

80 Hard fate! he might have died in war.  
My lords, if not for any parts in him--  
Though his right arm might purchase his own time  
And be in debt to none --yet, more to move you,  
Take my deserts to his, and join 'em both:  
85 And, for I know your reverend ages love  
Security, I'll pawn my victories, all  
My honours to you, upon his good returns.  
If by this crime he owes the law his life,  
Why, let the war receive 't in valiant gore  
90 For law is strict, and war is nothing more.

**FIRST SENATOR**

We are for law: he dies; urge it no more,  
On height of our displeasure: friend or brother,  
He forfeits his own blood that spills another.

**ALCIBIADES**

Must it be so? it must not be. My lords,  
95 I do beseech you, know me.

**SECOND SENATOR**

How!

**ALCIBIADES**

Call me to your remembrances.

**THIRD SENATOR**

What!

**ALCIBIADES**

I cannot think but your age has forgot me;  
100 It could not else be, I should prove so base,  
To sue, and be denied such common grace:  
My wounds ache at you.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Do you dare our anger?  
'Tis in few words, but spacious in effect;  
105 We banish thee for ever.

**ALCIBIADES**

Banish me!  
Banish your dotage; banish usury,  
That makes the senate ugly.

**FIRST SENATOR**

If, after two days' shine, Athens contain thee,  
110 Attend our weightier judgment. And, not to swell  
our spirit,  
He shall be executed presently.

*Exeunt Senators*

**ALCIBIADES**

Now the gods keep you old enough; that you may live  
Only in bone, that none may look on you!  
115 I'm worse than mad: I have kept back their foes,  
While they have told their money and let out

**SECOND SENATOR**

He wounded too many men. He's a crazy drunk, and that vice ruins his honor. He would fight even if he had no enemies, and in his temper he has committed many crimes and encourages rebellion. We have been told that he is a dangerous and wicked man.

**FIRST SENATOR**

He will die.

**ALCIBIADES**

How cruel! He would have died in battle if he did not have certain good qualities. And even though his sword-arm has bought him a longer life, in which he owes nothing to anyone, take this as encouragement to change your ruling. Think of what's mine as his, and because I know you all love money, I'll give to you all that I have won at war in return for his safety. If he owes his life for this crime, let it at least be had at war with the army. War can punish the way the law does.

**FIRST SENATOR**

We represent the law. He will die, and stop pushing the point. Though it does not please us, he will die for murder, even if he is your friend or family.

**ALCIBIADES**

Why does it have to be this way? It cannot be. Please, my lords, I beg you to trust me.

**SECOND SENATOR**

How!

**ALCIBIADES**

Remember what I have done.

**THIRD SENATOR**

What?

**ALCIBIADES**

You cannot possibly have forgotten me, but there is no other reason you would deny me after I have lowered myself to beg for something you would grant any other man. It hurts me to the very core.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Are you seriously provoking us? In just a few words we can have an enormous impact. We banish you forever.

**ALCIBIADES**

Banish me! Banish your old ways! Banish your money-lending! Banish everything that has ruined the senate!

**FIRST SENATOR**

If we find you in Athens two days from now, you will face the most severe punishment. And even though it displeases us, your friend will be executed now.

*The Senators exit.*

**ALCIBIADES**

The gods have let you live so long that you are only skin and bones, and so ugly that no one will even look at you! I'm crazy with anger. I have defended them from their enemies. They have lent their money to everyone and pocketed the

120 Their coin upon large interest, I myself  
Rich only in large hurts. All those for this?  
Is this the balsam that the usuring senate  
Pours into captains' wounds? Banishment!  
It comes not ill; I hate not to be banish'd;  
It is a cause worthy my spleen and fury,  
That I may strike at Athens. I'll cheer up  
My discontented troops, and lay for hearts.  
125 'Tis honour with most lands to be at odds;  
Soldiers should brook as little wrongs as gods.

*Exit*

earnings, while all I have are wounds from battle. All that fighting for this? Is this what the senate gives its captains for sacrificing themselves to battle? Banishment! Good! I would hate not to be banished. It makes me angry enough to attack Athens. I'll gather the troops and garner their support. Countries are always at war, and soldiers should not have to face any more trials than the gods.

*He exits.*

## Act 3, Scene 6

### Shakespeare

*Music. Tables set out: Servants attending. Enter divers Lords, Senators and others, at several doors*

#### FIRST LORD

The good time of day to you, sir.

#### SECOND LORD

I also wish it to you. I think this honourable lord did but try us this other day.

#### FIRST LORD

Upon that were my thoughts tiring, when we 5 encountered: I hope it is not so low with him as he made it seem in the trial of his several friends.

#### SECOND LORD

It should not be, by the persuasion of his new feasting.

#### FIRST LORD

I should think so: he hath sent me an earnest 10 inviting, which many my near occasions did urge me to put off; but he hath conjured me beyond them, and I must needs appear.

#### SECOND LORD

In like manner was I in debt to my importunate business, but he would not hear my excuse. I am 15 sorry, when he sent to borrow of me, that my provision was out.

#### FIRST LORD

I am sick of that grief too, as I understand how all things go.

#### SECOND LORD

Every man here's so. What would he have borrowed of 20 you?

#### FIRST LORD

A thousand pieces.

#### SECOND LORD

A thousand pieces!

#### FIRST LORD

What of you?

#### SECOND LORD

He sent to me, sir,—Here he comes.

### Shakescleare Translation

*Music plays while dining tables are set up. Several Lords and Senators enter from different parts of the stage with their Servants attending them.*

#### FIRST LORD

Good day, sir.

#### SECOND LORD

You too. This feels familiar.

#### FIRST LORD

I was just thinking that when we met. I hope things are not so bad that Timon has had to borrow more from his friends.

#### SECOND LORD

From what I see at this feast, I don't think so.

#### FIRST LORD

I do. He sent me an invitation, and when I said I had other engagements, he pressed me further and told me I had to come.

#### SECOND LORD

I also said I needed to deal with some business matters, but he didn't care. I am not happy to say it, but when he asked me for money, I had no more left to give him.

#### FIRST LORD

Same with me. I know how it is.

#### SECOND LORD

So does everyone here. How much money did he ask you for?

#### FIRST LORD

A thousand pieces.

#### SECOND LORD

A thousand pieces!

#### FIRST LORD

What did he ask you for?

#### SECOND LORD

He asked me for—here he is.

Enter *TIMON* and *Attendants*

**TIMON**

With all my heart, gentlemen both; and how fare you?

**FIRST LORD**

Ever at the best, hearing well of your lordship.

**SECOND LORD**

The swallow follows not summer more willing than we  
your lordship.

**TIMON**

30 *[Aside]* Nor more willingly leaves winter; such  
summer-birds are men. Gentlemen, our dinner will not  
recompense this long stay: feast your ears with the  
music awhile, if they will fare so harshly o' the  
trumpet's sound; we shall to 't presently.

**FIRST LORD**

35 I hope it remains not unkindly with your lordship  
that I returned you an empty messenger.

**TIMON**

O, sir, let it not trouble you.

**SECOND LORD**

My noble lord,--

**TIMON**

Ah, my good friend, what cheer?

**SECOND LORD**

40 My most honourable lord, I am e'en sick of shame,  
that, when your lordship this other day sent to me,  
I was so unfortunate a beggar.

**TIMON**

Think not on 't, sir.

**SECOND LORD**

If you had sent but two hours before,--

**TIMON**

45 Let it not cumber your better remembrance.

*The banquet brought in*

**TIMON**

Come, bring in all together.

**SECOND LORD**

All covered dishes!

50 **FIRST LORD**  
Royal cheer, I warrant you.

**THIRD LORD**

Doubt not that, if money and the season can yield  
it.

**FIRST LORD**

How do you? What's the news?

**THIRD LORD**

Alcibiades is banished: hear you of it?

55 **SECOND LORD**  
Alcibiades banished!

*TIMON enters with his Attendants.*

**TIMON**

Greetings, gentleman. How are you?

**FIRST LORD**

Well, especially after seeing that you are well, too.

**SECOND LORD**

We care as much about you as a bird that flies south cares  
for summer weather.

**TIMON**

*[To himself]* And you and other men have left me with the  
readiness that the bird flees from winter weather.

*[To the others]* Dinner is getting cold, gentlemen! Enjoy the  
music, if you like such humble playing. Let's go.

**FIRST LORD**

I hope you are not bitter that I could not lend you money.

**TIMON**

Don't worry about it.

**SECOND LORD**

My noble lord—

**TIMON**

*[As the banquet is being prepared]* What a party!

**SECOND LORD**

Timon, I feel so bad that I had no money left to give you  
when you asked me.

**TIMON**

Don't worry about it.

**SECOND LORD**

If you had come just two hours earlier—

**TIMON**

Think about happier things.

*The food is served.*

**TIMON**

Come here, the food is ready!

**SECOND LORD**

It must be good food if you cover it this way!

**FIRST LORD**

It looks like food for kings.

**THIRD LORD**

As long as he has enough money and time, I would count  
on it from Timon.

**FIRST LORD**

*[To the THIRD LORD]* Oh how are you? What is new with the  
world?

**THIRD LORD**

Did you hear that Alcibiades is banished?

**SECOND LORD**

What? Alcibiades is banished?

**THIRD LORD**

'Tis so, be sure of it.

**FIRST LORD**

How! how!

**SECOND LORD**

I pray you, upon what?

**TIMON**

My worthy friends, will you draw near?

**THIRD LORD**

60 I'll tell you more anon. Here's a noble feast toward.

**SECOND LORD**

This is the old man still.

**THIRD LORD**

Will 't hold? will 't hold?

**SECOND LORD**

It does: but time will--and so--

**THIRD LORD**

I do conceive.

**TIMON**

65 Each man to his stool, with that spur as he would to the lip of his mistress: your diet shall be in all places alike. Make not a city feast of it, to let the meat cool ere we can agree upon the first place: sit, sit. The gods require our thanks.  
 70 You great benefactors, sprinkle our society with thankfulness. For your own gifts, make yourselves praised: but reserve still to give, lest your deities be despised. Lend to each man enough, that one need not lend to another; for, were your  
 75 godheads to borrow of men, men would forsake the gods. Make the meat be beloved more than the man that gives it. Let no assembly of twenty be without a score of villains: if there sit twelve women at the table, let a dozen of them be--as they are. The  
 80 rest of your fees, O gods--the senators of Athens, together with the common lag of people--what is amiss in them, you gods, make suitable for destruction. For these my present friends, as they are to me nothing, so in nothing bless them, and to  
 85 nothing are they welcome. Uncover, dogs, and lap.

*The dishes are uncovered and seen to be full of warm water*

**SOME SPEAK**

What does his lordship mean?

**SOME OTHERS**

I know not.

**TIMON**

May you a better feast never behold,  
 90 You knot of mouth-friends I smoke and lukewarm water  
 Is your perfection. This is Timon's last;  
 Who, stuck and spangled with your flatteries,  
 Washes it off, and sprinkles in your faces  
 Your reeking villany.

*Throwing the water in their faces*

**TIMON**

95 Live loathed and long,  
 Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites,

**THIRD LORD**

I swear.

**FIRST LORD**

What? How?

**SECOND LORD**

Why?

**TIMON**

Come here, my friends.

**THIRD LORD**

I'll tell you about it later. Let's eat now.

**SECOND LORD**

You speak of the famous Alcibiades?

**THIRD LORD**

Can it be? Will the punishment stick?

**SECOND LORD**

Yes, but time will tell--

**THIRD LORD**

I see.

**TIMON**

Go to your chairs as hungrily as you might kiss the lips of your mistress. There are no assigned seats <sup>1</sup>, when the food gets cold before people find out where they sit. Sit, sit, and thank the gods. I thank you for the gifts you have given, and hope you will keep enough for yourselves so that you can still be so charitable in the future. You should have given enough that no man will have to give his own money to another, because even gods would not be successful in applying for a loan nowadays. Enjoy the meat more than you enjoy the man who provides you with it. Make sure also that twenty out of twenty men are villains, as you might let twelve women at a table be as they are. As for the rest, <sup>2</sup> the senators and the commoners, destroy the worst parts of them.

<sup>1</sup> Seating was typically done by rank at official banquets.

*[Gesturing to the people around him] My friends here, they mean nothing to me, so bless them with nothing. Here they are welcome to nothing. Uncover the dishes so the dogs may lick up the water.*

*They lift the covers off the dishes to reveal warm water.*

**SOME SPEAK**

What is this supposed to mean?

**SOME OTHERS**

I don't know.

**TIMON**

All you bottom-feeders, water and steam is the perfect meal for you, and I hope you never eat a better feast than this for the rest of your lives. I, who endured all your flattery, wash myself of it and return to you your wickedness.

*He throws the water in their faces.*

**TIMON**

I hope you live long and painful lives, you smooth-talking parasites, you wolves in sheep's clothing, you weak fools of

<sup>2</sup> The word "fees" is ambiguous, here. The 1974 Riverside suggests that it could mean "property," or perhaps refers to people who hold themselves at a distance in fee from you.

100 Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears,  
You fools of fortune, trencher-friends, time's flies,  
Cap and knee slaves, vapours, and minute-jacks!  
Of man and beast the infinite malady  
Crust you quite o'er! What, dost thou go?  
Soft! take thy physic first--thou too--and thou;--  
Stay, I will lend thee money, borrow none.

*Throws the dishes at them, and drives them out*

**TIMON**

What, all in motion? Henceforth be no feast,  
105 Whereat a villain's not a welcome guest.  
Burn, house! sink, Athens! henceforth hated be  
Of Timon man and all humanity!

*Exit*

*Re-enter the Lords, Senators, & c*

**FIRST LORD**

How now, my lords!

**SECOND LORD**

Know you the quality of Lord Timon's fury?

**THIRD LORD**

110 Push! did you see my cap?

**FOURTH LORD**

I have lost my gown.

**FIRST LORD**

He's but a mad lord, and nought but humour sways him.  
He gave me a jewel th' other day, and now he has  
beat it out of my hat: did you see my jewel?

**THIRD LORD**

115 Did you see my cap?

**SECOND LORD**

Here 'tis.

**FOURTH LORD**

Here lies my gown.

**FIRST LORD**

Let's make no stay.

**SECOND LORD**

Lord Timon's mad.

**THIRD LORD**

120 I feel 't upon my bones.

**FOURTH LORD**

One day he gives us diamonds, next day stones.

fortune, fake friends, worthless workers! You'll die soon enough! May the worst disease cover you all over in scabs! What, are you leaving? Come now, everyone, take your medicine first! Come on, I'll give you money and ask for nothing back!

*He throws dishes at them, scaring them off.*

**TIMON**

What, everyone's leaving? From now on, let there never be a feast where such villains are not welcome. Burn down the house! Destroy all of Athens! Timon will from now on hate all of humanity!

*He exits.*

*The Lords, Senators, and other victims of TIMON's rage come in again.*

**FIRST LORD**

What the hell was that?

**SECOND LORD**

Have you ever seen someone as furious as Timon just now?

**THIRD LORD**

Psh! Have you seen my hat?

**FOURTH LORD**

I can't find my coat.

**FIRST LORD**

He's a madman, and his insanity is what drives him. He gave me a jewel the other day, and now he has beaten it out of my hat. Have you seen the jewel?

**THIRD LORD**

Have you seen my hat?

**SECOND LORD**

Here it is.

**FOURTH LORD**

And here's my coat.

**FIRST LORD**

Let's get out of here.

**SECOND LORD**

Timon is crazy.

**THIRD LORD**

Yes I am sure of it.

**FOURTH LORD**

One day he gives us diamonds, and the next day he throws stones at us!

*Exeunt*

*They all exit.*

## Act 4, Scene 1

### Shakespeare

*Enter TIMON*

### Shakescleare Translation

*TIMON enters.*

**TIMON**

Let me look back upon thee. O thou wall,  
That girdlest in those wolves, dive in the earth,  
And fence not Athens! Matrons, turn incontinent!  
Obedience fail in children! slaves and fools,  
5 Pluck the grave wrinkled senate from the bench,  
And minister in their steads! to general filths  
Convert o' the instant, green virginity,  
Do 't in your parents' eyes! bankrupts, hold fast;  
Rather than render back, out with your knives,  
10 And cut your trusters' throats! bound servants, steal!  
Large-handed robbers your grave masters are,  
And pill by law. Maid, to thy master's bed;  
Thy mistress is o' the brothel! Son of sixteen,  
pluck the lined crutch from thy old limping sire,  
15 With it beat out his brains! Piety, and fear,  
Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,  
Domestic awe, night-rest, and neighbourhood,  
Instruction, manners, mysteries, and trades,  
Degrees, observances, customs, and laws,  
20 Decline to your confounding contraries,  
And let confusion live! Plagues, incident to men,  
Your potent and infectious fevers heap  
On Athens, ripe for stroke! Thou cold sciatica,  
Cripple our senators, that their limbs may halt  
25 As lamely as their manners. Lust and liberty  
Creep in the minds and marrows of our youth,  
That 'gainst the stream of virtue they may strive,  
And drown themselves in riot! Itches, blains,  
Sow all the Athenian bosoms; and their crop  
30 Be general leprosy! Breath infect breath,  
at their society, as their friendship, may  
merely poison! Nothing I'll bear from thee,  
But nakedness, thou detestable town!  
Take thou that too, with multiplying bans!  
35 Timon will to the woods; where he shall find  
The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.  
The gods confound--hear me, you good gods all--  
The Athenians both within and out that wall!  
And grant, as Timon grows, his hate may grow  
40 To the whole race of mankind, high and low! Amen.

Exit

**TIMON**

Let me back on the city. Your walls that contain those ravenous wolves should sink into the earth instead of protecting you, Athens . I hope your mothers become drunks and that your children grow bad-tempered! I hope that slaves and idiots replace the cranky old senators and rule from their seats, that little girls turn instantly into low whores and lose their virginities right in front of their parents' eyes, that bankrupt debtors pay back their debts by slitting their creditors' throats, and that servants bound to loyalty steal from their masters! The great men of Athens are all greedy robbers and use the law to plunder for their own means. You, maid, go to your master's bed, because your mistress is a whore! You, sixteen-year-old son, steal the cane out of the hands of your old crippled father and use it to beat out his brains! All civic virtues—piety, fear, devotion, peace, justice, truth, respect, tranquility, neighborly love, education, manners, professions, ranks, observance, custom, law—let all your chaotic opposites reign in destruction! You, plague, attack Athens with your powerful and infectious fevers! You, sciata  , cripple all the senators and make their limbs as useless as their manners! You, free lust, crawl into the minds and bodies of teenagers so that they betray virtue and drown themselves in debauchery! I hope every Athenian is infected with horrible itches and boils  , and be struck with leprosy. May each breath spread infection and make society poisonous! Evil city, I will spare you no evil but the sight of my naked body—but no, take that too!

 **Timon's address to the city of Athens** is an example of the literary device known as "apostrophe," in which a speaker addresses someone or something not present (often beginning with an exclamation like "O"). Apostrophe becomes a fundamental part of Timon's speech patterns throughout his exile. It is a technique quite common elsewhere in the play as well.

 **Sciata** refers to pain that affects the back.

 **"Blains"** were an inflamed swelling or sore, usually around a boil.

*[Ripping off his clothes and flashing the city walls]* I, Timon, will go to the woods and find the most savage beast a better friend to mankind. May the gods drive all Athenians within and outside the city walls crazy! And may I grow to hate more and more the whole race of mankind, top to bottom! Amen.

He exits.

**Act 4, Scene 2****Shakespeare**

Enter FLAVIUS, with two or three Servants

**FIRST SERVANT**

Hear you, master steward, where's our master?  
Are we undone? cast off? nothing remaining?

**FLAVIUS**

Alack, my fellows, what should I say to you?  
Let me be recorded by the righteous gods,  
5 I am as poor as you.

**FIRST SERVANT**

Such a house broke!  
So noble a master fall'n! All gone! and not  
One friend to take his fortune by the arm,  
And go along with him!

**SECOND SERVANT**

10 As we do turn our backs  
From our companion thrown into his grave,  
So his familiars to his buried fortunes  
Slink all away, leave their false vows with him,

**Shakescleare Translation**

FLAVIUS enters with two or three Servants in attendance.

**FIRST SERVANT**

Listen, where is our master? Are we done for? Fired? Is there nothing left?

**FLAVIUS**

Guys, what do you want me to say? The gods hear me when I say that I am as broke as you are.

**FIRST SERVANT**

How great a house gone bankrupt! How great a master fallen! Everything's gone! And there's not a single friend to help him in this unfortunate time and accompany him!

**SECOND SERVANT**

As we leave our friend, tossed into his grave, so too do those friends whose fortunes were tied to his now run away, leaving with him only their lies, like purses emptied by a pick-pocket. And the poor man will become a

Like empty purses pick'd; and his poor self,  
 15 A dedicated beggar to the air,  
 With his disease of all-shunn'd poverty,  
 Walks, like contempt, alone. More of our fellows.

*Enter other Servants*

**FLAVIUS**

All broken implements of a ruin'd house.

**THIRD SERVANT**

Yet do our hearts wear Timon's livery;  
 20 That see I by our faces; we are fellows still,  
 Serving alike in sorrow: leak'd is our bark,  
 And we, poor mates, stand on the dying deck,  
 Hearing the surges threat: we must all part  
 Into this sea of air.

**FLAVIUS**

25 Good fellows all,  
 The latest of my wealth I'll share amongst you.  
 Wherever we shall meet, for Timon's sake,  
 Let's yet be fellows; let's shake our heads, and say,  
 As 'twere a knell unto our master's fortunes,  
 30 'We have seen better days.' Let each take some;  
 Nay, put out all your hands. Not one word more:  
 Thus part we rich in sorrow, parting poor.

*Servants embrace, and part several ways*

**FLAVIUS**

O, the fierce wretchedness that glory brings us!  
 Who would not wish to be from wealth exempt,  
 35 Since riches point to misery and contempt?  
 Who would be so mock'd with glory? or to live  
 But in a dream of friendship?  
 To have his pomp and all what state compounds  
 But only painted, like his varnish'd friends?  
 40 Poor honest lord, brought low by his own heart,  
 Undone by goodness! Strange, unusual blood,  
 When man's worst sin is, he does too much good!  
 Who, then, dares to be half so kind again?  
 For bounty, that makes gods, does still mar men.  
 45 My dearest lord, bless'd, to be most accursed,  
 Rich, only to be wretched, thy great fortunes  
 Are made thy chief afflictions. Alas, kind lord!  
 He's flung in rage from this ingrateful seat  
 Of monstrous friends, nor has he with him to  
 50 Supply his life, or that which can command it.  
 I'll follow and inquire him out:  
 I'll ever serve his mind with my best will;  
 Whilst I have gold, I'll be his steward still.

*Exit*

homeless beggar with his disease of poverty, walking alone in contempt. Look, here are more of our friends.

*More Servants enter.*

**FLAVIUS**

All the shattered pieces of a ruined house.

**THIRD SERVANT**

I can see in our sullen faces that all our hearts still wear the uniforms we served Timon in. We are still friends, serving him in sorrow. It is as if our boat had a leak and we were standing on the sinking deck, hearing the water rising all around us. We must all leave each other to drown in this imaginary sea.

 "Sea of air" could refer to the fact that they are all breathing air, not water, or it could refer as this translation indicates to the fact that this is all an illusory image of nothing more than "air."

**FLAVIUS**

Friends, I'll share with you the last bit of money I have. Wherever we next meet, let's still be friends for Timon's sake. Let's shake our heads and say, "We have seen better days," to honor our old master's fortune.

*[He puts out his hands]* Let's each take a bit of what's left. Put out your hands, and without saying one more word, let's all part poor in money, but rich in sadness.

*They all embrace and then exit in different directions.*

**FLAVIUS**

Oh, the terrible sadness that glory can bring! Who wouldn't wish to never be rich, if all that riches lead to is misery and hate? Who would ever accept fame or friendship, if all of the luxury and everything else that comes with it is fake, like those friends of Timon's? Poor man, doing himself in by his own goodness! It's a strange curse when a man's worst sin is that he does too much good! Who will ever dare to be half as kind again? The wealth that makes the gods ruins men. My good lord, blessed only to later be cursed, rich only to later be poor, your great fortune was built upon your greatest weaknesses. Oh what a kind man! He's cast out mad from this group of monsters, with nothing to live on at all and no way to make more money. I'll follow and ask about him. I'll always serve him as well as I can. As long as I have any wealth, I'll be by his side.

*He exits.*

## Act 4, Scene 3

### Shakespeare

*Enter TIMON, from the cave*

**TIMON**

O blessed breeding sun, draw from the earth  
 Rotten humidity; below thy sister's orb  
 Infect the air! Twinn'd brothers of one womb,  
 Whose procreation, residence, and birth,  
 5 Scarce is dividant, touch them with several fortunes;

### Shakescleare Translation

*TIMON enters from a cave.*

**timon**

Oh generous sun, suck all of this rotten dampness from the ground into the air below the moon! In the case of twin brothers , who were identically conceived, housed, and born out of the same womb into a world with different fortunes, it is the one with more who scorns the one with

 Timon is likely at least alluding to the story of Romulus and Remus, twin brothers who turned against one another. Remus was killed by

The greater scorns the lesser: not nature,  
To whom all sores lay siege, can bear great fortune,  
But by contempt of nature.  
Raise me this beggar, and deny 't that lord;  
10 The senator shall bear contempt hereditary,  
The beggar native honour.  
It is the pasture lards the rother's sides,  
The want that makes him lean. Who dares, who dares,  
In purity of manhood stand upright,  
15 And say 'This man's a flatterer?' if one be,  
So are they all; for every grise of fortune  
Is smooth'd by that below: the learned pate  
Ducks to the golden foot: all is oblique;  
There's nothing level in our cursed natures,  
20 But direct villany. Therefore, be abhorrd  
All feasts, societies, and throngs of men!  
His semblable, yea, himself, Timon despairs:  
Destruction fang mankind! Earth, yield me roots!

*Digging***TIMON**

Who seeks for better of thee, sause his palate  
25 With thy most operant poison! What is here?  
Gold? yellow, glittering, precious gold? No, gods,  
I am no idle votarist: roots, you clear heavens!  
Thus much of this will make black white, foul fair,  
Wrong right, base noble, old young, coward valiant.  
30 Ha, you gods! why this? what this, you gods? Why, this  
Will lug your priests and servants from your sides,  
Pluck stout men's pillows from below their heads:  
This yellow slave  
Will knit and break religions, bless the accursed,  
35 Make the hoar leprosy adored, place thieves  
And give them title, knee and approbation  
With senators on the bench: this is it  
That makes the wappend' widow wed again;  
She, whom the spital-house and ulcerous sores  
40 Would cast the gorge at, this embalms and splices  
To the April day again. Come, damned earth,  
Thou common whore of mankind, that put'st odds  
Among the route of nations, I will make thee  
Do thy right nature.

*March afar off***TIMON**

Ha! a drum? Thou'rt quick,  
But yet I'll bury thee: thou'lt go, strong thief,  
When gouty keepers of thee cannot stand.  
Nay, stay thou out for earnest.

*Keeping some gold*

*Enter ALCIBIADES, with drum and fife, in warlike manner; PHRYNIA and TIMANDRA*

**ALCIBIADES**

What art thou there? speak.

**TIMON**

50 A beast, as thou art. The canker gnaw thy heart,  
For showing me again the eyes of man!

**ALCIBIADES**

What is thy name? Is man so hateful to thee,  
That art thyself a man?

less. Human nature is subject to many evils, and cannot bear great riches without reserving contempt for those without such luxuries. I will become a beggar and restrain the lord within me, for the senator will be scorned, the beggar honored. Whether or not one is wealthy is only a matter of luck: if an ox is born into abundant pastures, he will grow fat, whereas if he is born into scarcity, he will grow thin. Who? Who will dare to stand up for what's right and call a man a flatterer? After all, if one man is a flatterer, so is everyone, because every level in a hierarchy is flattered by the one below it. Smart men bow to rich fools. Everything is ridiculous, because we have nothing rational within our nature, just straight villainy. Thus I hate all feasts, society, and groups of people! Timon hates anything that resembles—or is—himself. All men go to hell! Earth, where are your roots?

*Romulus, who then went on to found Rome.*

*He begins to dig into the ground.***TIMON**

Whoever works to rise in the world ought to poison himself!  
What do we have here? Gold? Shiny yellow gold? No, I am  
not a false man—

*[He keeps digging] Where are you, roots?!*

*[Looking at the gold]* Just this much gold will turn the world upside down, making black white, foul fair, wrong right, low high, old young, cowardice valor. Ha, gods! Why this little thing? What is it, even? Why does this steal from you your loyal priests and servants, and steal the pillow from beneath a man's head <sup>2</sup>? This yellow fiend will make and break religions, bless the lowly, and even make the leper liked, the thief as great as a senator! This little thing makes a widow get married a second time, and rejuvenates a woman so ugly that even the grossest men plagued with sores would have rejected her.

<sup>2</sup> Refers to the custom of taking the pillow away from a dying man so that he will pass away more easily.

*[Still digging]* Come on, stupid earth, whoring around beneath the feet of different nations, I will lower myself to your level and take my revenge.

*A marching drum sounds off the stage.***TIMON**

What, a drum? So soon?

*[Talking to some of the gold]* I'll bury you: you will walk about again when your keeper cannot stand because of his gout <sup>3</sup>. Actually, no, stay out here for leverage.

<sup>3</sup> Gout is a painful disease characterized by the inflammation of the joints, much like what we refer to as arthritis more commonly today.

*He keeps some of the gold.*

*ALCIBIADES enters with a marching drummer and flute player, prepared for war. PHRYNIA and TIMANDRA follow him.*

**ALCIBIADES**

What are you doing there? Speak up.

**TIMON**

An animal, the same as you! Damn you for showing me again the eyes of a human!

**ALCIBIADES**

What is your name? Has mankind been so awful to you? You are a man, after all.

**TIMON**

I am Misanthropos, and hate mankind.  
 55 For thy part, I do wish thou wert a dog,  
 That I might love thee something.

**ALCIBIADES**

I know thee well;  
 But in thy fortunes am unlearn'd and strange.

**TIMON**

I know thee too; and more than that I know thee,  
 60 I not desire to know. Follow thy drum;  
 With man's blood paint the ground, gules, gules:  
 Religious canons, civil laws are cruel;  
 Then what should war be? This fell whore of thine  
 Hath in her more destruction than thy sword,  
 65 For all her cherubim look.

**PHRYNIA**

Thy lips rot off!

**TIMON**

I will not kiss thee; then the rot returns  
 To thine own lips again.

**ALCIBIADES**

How came the noble Timon to this change?

**TIMON**

70 As the moon does, by wanting light to give:  
 But then renew I could not, like the moon;  
 There were no suns to borrow of.

**ALCIBIADES**

Noble Timon,  
 What friendship may I do thee?

**TIMON**

75 None, but to  
 Maintain my opinion.

**ALCIBIADES**

What is it, Timon?

**TIMON**

Promise me friendship, but perform none: if thou  
 wilt not promise, the gods plague thee, for thou art  
 80 a man! if thou dost perform, confound thee, for  
 thou art a man!

**ALCIBIADES**

I have heard in some sort of thy miseries.

**TIMON**

Thou saw'st them, when I had prosperity.

**ALCIBIADES**

I see them now; then was a blessed time.

**TIMON**

85 As thine is now, held with a brace of harlots.

**TIMANDRA**

Is this the Athenian minion, whom the world  
 Voiced so regardfully?

**TIMON**

I am a man-hater, who hates mankind. I wish you were a  
 dog, for your good as well as mine. Then I could love you at  
 least a little.

**ALCIBIADES**

I understand what you are saying, but do not know how you  
 have arrived at these conclusions.

**TIMON**

I know you as well, more than I'd like to know. Go follow  
 your drum and paint the ground with the red, red, red  
 blood of men. Religious and civil laws are cruel—why  
 shouldn't war be cruel too?

*[Speaking of PHRYNIA]* This whore of yours right here has  
 more power to destroy than your sword, despite her angelic  
 appearance.

**PHRYNIA**

Shut your filthy mouth!

**TIMON**

Then I will not kiss you, so as not to dirty your mouth too.

**ALCIBIADES**

How has the noble Timon fallen to this place?

**TIMON**

Like the moon, which falls as it loses its light to give. But I  
 cannot renew myself and start again like the moon. There  
 are no suns out there to borrow light from.

**ALCIBIADES**

Timon, what can I do for you?

**TIMON**

Nothing, except follow my demands.

**ALCIBIADES**

What is it you want, Timon?

**TIMON**

Promise me your friendship, but don't do anything that  
 would make you seem like my friend. That way, whether  
 you refuse or keep this promise, and whether you follow  
 through or not, the gods may damn you, because you are  
 like all these other men!

**ALCIBIADES**

I have heard a bit about your bad luck.

**TIMON**

You saw my bad luck even when I had my wealth.

**ALCIBIADES**

No, I see your bad luck now. Those were great times when  
 you had your wealth.

**TIMON**

*[Referring to TIMANDRA and PHRYNIA]* Like your good times  
 now with these whores.

**TIMANDRA**

Is this the darling of Athens everyone spoke so well of?

**TIMON**

Art thou Timandra?

**TIMANDRA**

Yes.

**TIMON**

90 Be a whore still: they love thee not that use thee;  
Give them diseases, leaving with thee their lust.  
Make use of thy salt hours: season the slaves  
For tubs and baths; bring down rose-cheeked youth  
To the tub-fast and the diet.

**TIMANDRA**

95 Hang thee, monster!

**ALCIBIADES**

Pardon him, sweet Timandra; for his wits  
Are drown'd and lost in his calamities.  
I have but little gold of late, brave Timon,  
The want whereof doth daily make revolt  
100 In my pernicious band: I have heard, and grieved,  
How cursed Athens, mindless of thy worth,  
Forgetting thy great deeds, when neighbour states,  
But for thy sword and fortune, trod upon them,--

**TIMON**

I prithee, beat thy drum, and get thee gone.

**ALCIBIADES**

105 I am thy friend, and pity thee, dear Timon.

**TIMON**

How dost thou pity him whom thou dost trouble?  
I had rather be alone.

**ALCIBIADES**

Why, fare thee well:  
Here is some gold for thee.

**TIMON**

110 Keep it, I cannot eat it.

**ALCIBIADES**

When I have laid proud Athens on a heap,--

**TIMON**

Warr'st thou 'gainst Athens?

**ALCIBIADES**

Ay, Timon, and have cause.

**TIMON**

The gods confound them all in thy conquest;  
115 And thee after, when thou hast conquer'd!

**ALCIBIADES**

Why me, Timon?

**TIMON**

That, by killing of villains,  
Thou wast born to conquer my country.  
Put up thy gold: go on,--here's gold,--go on;  
120 Be as a planetary plague, when Jove  
Will o'er some high-vice'd city hang his poison  
In the sick air: let not thy sword skip one:  
Pity not honour'd age for his white beard;  
He is an usurer: strike me the counterfeit matron;  
It is her habit only that is honest,

**TIMON**

You are Timandra?

**TIMANDRA**

Yes.

**TIMON**

Keep whoring around. Those who use you don't love you, so you might as well give them diseases, because they give you their lust. Use these dirty hours well and prepare these villains for tubs and baths. Bring those bright youths down to their rightful place, trying to cure their venereal diseases with diets and salt-baths.

**TIMANDRA**

Go kill yourself you monster!

**ALCIBIADES**

Forgive him, Timandra. His mind has been muddled and lost in his troubles.

*[To TIMON]* I have only a little money left, Timon, and the lack of it makes the possibility of revolt greater and greater each day in my poor band of soldiers. I have heard and felt sorry for how Athens left you high and dry, completely forgetting you and your great deeds when neighboring states would have defeated the city had you not protected it with your sword and your wealth.

**TIMON**

Please, play yourself out.

**ALCIBIADES**

I'm your friend Timon. I feel for you.

**TIMON**

Do you feel for the person whom you hurt? I'd rather be alone.

**ALCIBIADES**

Well goodbye. Here is some gold.

**TIMON**

Keep it. It won't feed me.

**ALCIBIADES**

When I destroy Athens in war--

**TIMON**

You're waging war on Athens?

**ALCIBIADES**

Yes, Timon, and for a good reason.

**TIMON**

May the gods strike those you war against, and after you win, you as well!

**ALCIBIADES**

Why me too, Timon?

**TIMON**

Because you were born to conquer my country by killing villains. Keep your gold and go, take it. Be like a plague that ravages the entire world, or like Zeus throwing poison over some wicked city. Do not spare any with your sword, and give no mercy to the elderly man, as he is a money-lender. Give no mercy to false women, because they only look honest and are all whores. Give no mercy to young virgins, because those breasts that break through the lines of her bodies and into men's eyes are horrible traitors and do not

Herself's a bawd: let not the virgin's cheek  
Make soft thy trenchant sword; for those milk-paps,  
That through the window-bars bore at men's eyes,  
Are not within the leaf of pity writ,  
130 But set them down horrible traitors: spare not the  
babe,  
Whose dimpled smiles from fools exhaust their mercy;  
Think it a bastard, whom the oracle  
Hath doubtfully pronounced thy throat shall cut,  
135 And mince it sans remorse: swear against objects;  
Put armour on thine ears and on thine eyes;  
Whose proof, nor yell of mothers, maids, nor babes,  
Nor sight of priests in holy vestments bleeding,  
Shall pierce a jot. There's gold to pay soldiers:  
140 Make large confusion; and, thy fury spent,  
Confounded be thyself! Speak not, be gone.

**ALCIBIADES**

Hast thou gold yet? I'll take the gold thou  
givest me,  
Not all thy counsel.

**TIMON**

145 Dost thou, or dost thou not, heaven's curse  
upon thee!

**TIMANDRA**

Give us some gold, good Timon: hast thou more?

**TIMON**

Enough to make a whore forswear her trade,  
And to make whores, a bawd. Hold up, you sluts,  
150 Your aprons mountant: you are not oathable,  
Although, I know, you 'll swear, terribly swear  
Into strong shudders and to heavenly argues  
The immortal gods that hear you, --spare your oaths,  
I'll trust to your conditions: be whores still;  
155 And he whose pious breath seeks to convert you,  
Be strong in whore, allure him, burn him up;  
Let your close fire predominate his smoke,  
And be no turncoats: yet may your pains, six months,  
Be quite contrary: and thatch your poor thin roofs  
160 With burthens of the dead;--some that were hang'd,  
No matter:--wear them, betray with them: whore still;  
Paint till a horse may mire upon your face,  
A pox of wrinkles!

**TIMANDRA**

Well, more gold: what then?  
165 Believe't, that we'll do any thing for gold.

**TIMON**

Consumptions sow  
In hollow bones of man; strike their sharp shins,  
And mar men's spurring. Crack the lawyer's voice,  
That he may never more false title plead,  
170 Nor sound his quilllets shrilly: hoar the flamen,  
That scolds against the quality of flesh,  
And not believes himself: down with the nose,  
Down with it flat; take the bridge quite away  
Of him that, his particular to foresee,  
175 Smells from the general weal: make curl'd-pate  
ruffians bald;  
And let the unscarr'd braggarts of the war  
Derive some pain from you: plague all;  
That your activity may defeat and quell  
180 The source of all erection. There's more gold:  
Do you damn others, and let this damn you,  
And ditches grave you all!

**TIMANDRA**

More counsel with more money, bounteous Timon.

deserve pity. Do not spare any babies, whose smiling only  
earns the mercy of fools. Think of them as bastards, whom  
an oracle has foreseen will cut your throat, and crush it  
without any guilt. Swear not to listen to any objections, and  
arm your ears and your eyes so they shall not yield to the  
yells of mothers, maids, or babies, or the sight of priests  
bleeding in their holy clothes. Here's some gold to pay your  
soldiers. Make a riot, and after all your rage is gone, damn  
you! Don't speak to me. Just go.

**ALCIBIADES**

You still have gold? I'll take that, but not your advice.

**TIMON**

Do or don't, damn you.

**TIMANDRA**

Give us some gold, too, Timon. Do you have any more?

**TIMON**

Enough to get a whore to retire, as well as enough to turn  
women into whores too. Stop bothering me and holding  
your skirts up, you sluts. You are not trustworthy, though I  
do know you will swear shaking with supposed divinity  
onto the immortal gods. Spare your prayers, and I'll trust  
your characters. Keep whoring, and the man that tries to  
tell you to do otherwise, be sure to stay true to your  
profession, seduce him, and infect him with your venereal  
diseases. Let that hidden fire overpower his piety, and do  
not betray your craft so that you may keep laboring. Cover  
your heads with wigs plucked from the hairs of the dead<sup>4</sup>  
—even if they were hanged. Wear them and sin with them.  
Keep whoring around, with that thick makeup hiding all  
your wrinkles!

<sup>4</sup> A reference to the loss of hair that could follow the contraction of a sexually transmitted disease, and the common methods of hiding it.

**TIMANDRA**

Tell us more with more gold. We'll do anything for gold!

**TIMON**

Plant syphilis into the hollow bones of men. Kick their shins  
and cripple them. Steal the voice of the lawyer, so he will  
never ever defend a false case or voice his small  
disagreements. Give diseases to the priest who scolds  
against carnal pleasures, but doesn't behave himself. Make  
it so his nose rots off<sup>5</sup>, so that for his private pleasures he  
loses the scent of public welfare. Make curly-haired  
scoundrels bald, and have the silly macho men in the army  
finally feel some pain from you. Give diseases to everyone,  
so that in your profession you defeat all of men's power.  
Here's some more gold, so that you damn even more. But  
let it damn you, too, and send you to your graves!

<sup>5</sup> The withering away of the nasal bone was an obvious sign of syphilis.

**TIMANDRA**

We'll keep listening to you if you keep giving us money,  
Timon.

**TIMON**

More whore, more mischief first; I have given you  
earnest.

185

**ALCIBIADES**

Strike up the drum towards Athens! Farewell, Timon:  
If I thrive well, I'll visit thee again.

**TIMON**

If I hope well, I'll never see thee more.

**ALCIBIADES**

I never did thee harm.

**TIMON**

190 Yes, thou spokest well of me.

**ALCIBIADES**

Call'st thou that harm?

**TIMON**

Men daily find it. Get thee away, and take  
Thy beagles with thee.

**ALCIBIADES**

We but offend him. Strike!

195

*Drum beats. Exeunt ALCIBIADES, PHRYNIA, and TIMANDRA*

**TIMON**

That nature, being sick of man's unkindness,  
Should yet be hungry! Common mother, thou,

*Digging*

**TIMON**

Whose womb unmeasurable, and infinite breast,

200

Teems, and feeds all; whose self-same mettle,  
Whereof thy proud child, arrogant man, is puff'd,  
Engenders the black toad and adder blue,  
The gilded newt and eyeless venom'd worm,  
With all the abhorred births below crisp heaven  
205 Whereon Hyperion's quickening fire doth shine;  
Yield him, who all thy human sons doth hate,  
From forth thy plenteous bosom, one poor root!  
Ensear thy fertile and conceptionous womb,  
Let it no more bring out ingrateful man!

210

Go great with tigers, dragons, wolves, and bears;  
Teem with new monsters, whom thy upward face  
Hath to the marbled mansion all above  
Never presented! --O, a root,--dear thanks!--  
Dry up thy marrows, vines, and plough-torn leas;  
215 Whereof ungrateful man, with liquorish draughts  
And morsels unctuous, greases his pure mind,  
That from it all consideration slips!

*Enter APEMANTUS*

**TIMON**

More man? plague, plague!

**APEMANTUS**

220 I was directed hither: men report  
Thou dost affect my manners, and dost use them.

**TIMON**

'Tis, then, because thou dost not keep a dog,  
Whom I would imitate: consumption catch thee!

**TIMON**

With more whoring, and more mischief first. This payment  
is just a token.

**ALCIBIADES**

Strike up the march to Athens! Bye, Timon. If I am  
successful, I'll come back for you.

**TIMON**

And I hope I never see you again.

**ALCIBIADES**

I never did you any harm.

**TIMON**

Yes, you spoke well of me.

**ALCIBIADES**

And that's harm?

**TIMON**

Some men think so. Go now and take your dogs with you.

**ALCIBIADES**

We're just making him more angry. Let's go!

*The drum starts the march, and ALCIBIADES, PHRYNIA, and TIMANDRA exit.*

**TIMON**

I cannot believe that those outraged at wicked men should  
still ask for money!

*He keeps digging.*

**TIMON**

You, earth, your fertile ground births and feeds everything.  
You are made of the same hard stuff that puffs out the  
chests of proud men, though is also the same stuff that  
produces disgusting critters like the black toad, the blue  
snake, the golden newt, and the blind, poisonous worm.  
The sun  shines its life-giving fire equally on all of these  
horrid births. Earth, give me just one poor root, which all  
men hate! Dry up your fertile womb so that it never gives  
life to another man! Bring forth tigers, dragons, wolves, and  
bears. Produce new monsters, never before presented to  
the world from your face which looks up into the heavens!

*[He finds a root] Finally! A root! Dry up your marrow, vines,  
and grassy lands, which yield the sweet drinks and tasty  
food that grease the sides of ungrateful mens' minds, so  
that all that was considerate within them slips out!*

*APEMANTUS enters.*

**TIMON**

Another man? The plague, the plague!

**APEMANTUS**

I was directed here by men who tell me you have gone crazy  
and insult them.

**TIMON**

It is true, and because you do not have a dog which I could  
imitate so as to flatter you, I hope you catch a disease!

 In Greek mythology, Hyperion was a Titan who fathered Helios (the sun), Selene (the moon), and Eos (dawn).

**APEMANTUS**

This is in thee a nature but infected;  
 225 A poor unmanly melancholy sprung  
 From change of fortune. Why this spade? this place?  
 This slave-like habit? and these looks of care?  
 Thy flatterers yet wear silk, drink wine, lie soft;  
 Hug their diseased perfumes, and have forgot  
 230 That ever Timon was. Shame not these woods,  
 By putting on the cunning of a carper.  
 Be thou a flatterer now, and seek to thrive  
 By that which has undone thee: hinge thy knee,  
 And let his very breath, whom thou'lt observe,  
 235 Blow off thy cap; praise his most vicious strain,  
 And call it excellent: thou wast told thus;  
 Thou gavest thine ears like tapsters that bid welcome  
 To knaves and all approachers: 'tis most just  
 That thou turn rascal; hadst thou wealth again,  
 240 Rascals should have 't. Do not assume my likeness.

**TIMON**

Were I like thee, I'd throw away myself.

**APEMANTUS**

Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself;  
 A madman so long, now a fool. What, think'st  
 That the bleak air, thy boisterous chamberlain,  
 245 Will put thy shirt on warm? will these moss'd trees,  
 That have outlived the eagle, page thy heels,  
 And skip where thou point'st out? will the  
 cold brook,  
 Candied with ice, caudle thy morning taste,  
 250 To cure thy o'er-night's surfeit? Call the creatures  
 Whose naked natures live in an the spite  
 Of wreakful heaven, whose bare unhoused trunks,  
 To the conflicting elements exposed,  
 Answer mere nature; bid them flatter thee;  
 255 O, thou shalt find--

**TIMON**

A fool of thee: depart.

**APEMANTUS**

I love thee better now than e'er I did.

**TIMON**

I hate thee worse.

**APEMANTUS**

Why?

**TIMON**

260 Thou flatter'st misery.

**APEMANTUS**

I flatter not; but say thou art a caitiff.

**TIMON**

Why dost thou seek me out?

**APEMANTUS**

To vex thee.

**TIMON**

Always a villain's office or a fool's.  
 265 Dost please thyself in't?

**APEMANTUS**

Ay.

**TIMON**

What! a knave too?

**APEMANTUS**

This behavior is a symptom of your infected nature, which  
 has caught an unmanly melancholy due to bad luck. Why  
 this shovel? In this place? In these tattered clothes? With  
 these sad looks? Those who flattered you still wear silk,  
 drink wine, and lie down on soft beds. They hug their  
 perfumed, diseased women, and have totally forgotten that  
 Timon even existed. Do not curse these woods by becoming  
 a cynic. Be a flatterer and look to live off what once undid  
 you. Bow your knee and heed every word of the men you  
 would flatter as genius. Praise the worst parts of a man and  
 call them excellent. That is what you used to be told. You  
 once gave your ears to men like bartenders give their ears  
 to the worst villains and rascals. It is only fair that you  
 become a rascal. If you had your money again, rascals  
 would have it. Do not act as I did to you, act like them!

**TIMON**

If I were like you I'd throw myself away.

**APEMANTUS**

You already have thrown yourself away, being the madman  
 you were, and now an idiot. Do you really think that this  
 cold air will act like a manservant and put on a warm shirt  
 for you? Do you really think that these mossy trees, which  
 have outlived eagles, will follow your every step? That the  
 cold brook crusted in ice will give you a warm drink to cure  
 a hangover? Call out to the animals who live naked despite  
 the fall of man, who expose their bodies to the harsh  
 elements and contend with nature. Call them to flatter you  
 and, oh, you will find—

**TIMON**

You're an idiot. Go away.

**APEMANTUS**

I love you more than I ever did.

**TIMON**

I hate you worse.

**APEMANTUS**

Why?

**TIMON**

You flatter my misery.

**APEMANTUS**

I am not flattering you. I am calling you a wretch.

**TIMON**

Why did you look for me?

**APEMANTUS**

To anger you.

**TIMON**

That was always the job of a villain or a fool. Do you like it?

**APEMANTUS**

Sure.

**TIMON**

Ah! So you're scoundrel too!

**APEMANTUS**

If thou didst put this sour-cold habit on  
To castigate thy pride, 'twere well: but thou  
270 Dost it enforcedly; thou'ldst courtier be again,  
Wert thou not beggar. Willing misery  
Outlives uncertain pomp, is crown'd before:  
The one is filling still, never complete;  
The other, at high wish: best state, contentless,  
275 Hath a distracted and most wretched being,  
Worse than the worst, content.  
Thou shouldst desire to die, being miserable.

**TIMON**

Not by his breath that is more miserable.  
Thou art a slave, whom Fortune's tender arm  
280 With favour never clasp'd; but bred a dog.  
Hadst thou, like us from our first swath, proceeded  
The sweet degrees that this brief world affords  
To such as may the passive drugs of it  
Freely command, thou wouldest have plunged thyself  
285 In general riot; melted down thy youth  
In different beds of lust; and never learn'd  
The icy precepts of respect, but follow'd  
The sugar'd game before thee. But myself,  
Who had the world as my confectionary,  
290 The mouths, the tongues, the eyes and hearts of men  
At duty, more than I could frame employment,  
That numberless upon me stuck as leaves  
Do on the oak, hive with one winter's brush  
Fell from their boughs and left me open, bare  
295 For every storm that blows: I, to bear this,  
That never knew but better, is some burden:  
Thy nature did commence in sufferance, time  
Hath made thee hard in't. Why shouldst thou hate men?  
They never flatter'd thee: what hast thou given?  
300 If thou wilt curse, thy father, that poor rag,  
Must be thy subject, who in spite put stuff  
To some she beggar and compounded thee  
Poor rogue hereditary. Hence, be gone!  
If thou hadst not been born the worst of men,  
305 Thou hadst been a knave and flatterer.

**APEMANTUS**

Art thou proud yet?

**TIMON**

Ay, that I am not thee.

**APEMANTUS**

I, that I was  
No prodigal.

**TIMON**

310 I, that I am one now:  
Were all the wealth I have shut up in thee,  
I'd give thee leave to hang it. Get thee gone.  
That the whole life of Athens were in this!  
Thus would I eat it.

*Eating a root*

**APEMANTUS**

315 Here; I will mend thy feast.

*Offering him a root*

**TIMON**

First mend my company, take away thyself.

**APEMANTUS**

So I shall mend mine own, by the lack of thine.

**APEMANTUS**

If you assumed this disposition to punish yourself for our pride, that was a good idea. But you are forcing it! If you weren't a beggar, you could be a courtier again. Willful poverty is safer than uncertain luxury, and achieves what it wants sooner. One is always seeking more and never fulfilled. The other will accept no better situation, but has a crazy and miserable existence and is happy with the worst of the worst. You should kill yourself, as miserable as you are.

**TIMON**

Not under the advice of a man even more miserable. You are a slave, a dog, who was always unlucky. If you were born like I was into a sweet life this world gives to whoever it likes, you would have gone crazy and wasted your youth in lusty beds. You would never have learned hard reason, but instead followed all temptations before you. But I, who was born right in the place where all sweet things are made, and where countless mouths, tongues, eyes, and hearts of men waited at my command, stuck to me like leaves stick to an oak, I was abandoned by all them, as if those leaves had all dropped at the first sight of winter and left me bare to feel every storm. Trust me, you who never knew any better, bearing this tragedy is a great burden. Your life began in suffering, and you have grown used to it. Why should you hate men? They never flattered you? What did you give them? If you will curse anyone it should be your father, because he had sex with some poor woman out of spite and conceived you. So just go away! If you had not been born in the worst position, you would have been a false flatterer.

**APEMANTUS**

Ha! You are still proud?

**TIMON**

Yes, proud of the fact that I'm not you.

**APEMANTUS**

And I'm proud of the fact that I was never a wasteful man like you.

**TIMON**

Yes and I'm still proud that I am a wasteful man still. I would still give all the wealth I have—nothing—to you. Get away from me.

*[Gesturing to a root] I wish all of Athens were in this! I would eat it!*

*He eats a root.*

**APEMANTUS**

Here, improve your feast.

*He offers him another root.*

**TIMON**

First improve my company and get away from me.

**APEMANTUS**

That way I would improve my own company for the lack of yours.

**TIMON**

'Tis not well mended so, it is but botch'd;  
if not, I would it were.

320

**APEMANTUS**

What wouldest thou have to Athens?

**TIMON**

Thee thither in a whirlwind. If thou wilt,  
Tell them there I have gold; look, so I have.

**APEMANTUS**

Here is no use for gold.

**TIMON**

325 The best and truest;  
For here it sleeps, and does no hired harm.

**APEMANTUS**

Where liest o' nights, Timon?

**TIMON**

Under that's above me.  
Where feed'st thou o' days, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

330 Where my stomach finds meat; or, rather, where I eat  
it.

**TIMON**

Would poison were obedient and knew my mind!

**APEMANTUS**

Where wouldest thou send it?

**TIMON**

To sauce thy dishes.

**APEMANTUS**

335 The middle of humanity thou never knewest, but the  
extremity of both ends: when thou wast in thy gilt  
and thy perfume, they mocked thee for too much  
curiosity; in thy rags thou knowest none, but art  
despised for the contrary. There's a medlar for  
thee, eat it.

340

**TIMON**

On what I hate I feed not.

**APEMANTUS**

Dost hate a medlar?

**TIMON**

Ay, though it look like thee.

**APEMANTUS**

An thou hadst hated meddlers sooner, thou shouldst  
have loved thyself better now. What man didst thou  
ever know unthrift that was beloved after his means?

345

**TIMON**

Who, without those means thou talkest of, didst thou  
ever know beloved?

**APEMANTUS**

Myself.

**TIMON**

It would not be better that way, because you'd still be with  
yourself.

**APEMANTUS**

What report would you like me to bring Athens for you?

**TIMON**

A tornado, if you could, and tell them that I have more gold  
here. Look, right here.

**APEMANTUS**

Gold is useless here.

**TIMON**

And so it is here the best, where it sleeps and doesn't do  
any harm.

**APEMANTUS**

Where do you sleep here Timon?

**TIMON**

Under what's above me. Where do you eat these days,  
Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

Wherever I can find meat, or rather, where I eat meat.

**TIMON**

I wish poison would go wherever my mind sent it!

**APEMANTUS**

Where would you send it?

**TIMON**

To your plates.

**APEMANTUS**

You never inhabited the middle ranks of humanity, only the  
very rich and the very poor. When you were basking in gold  
in perfume, they all mocked you for your meticulousness. In  
your tattered rags you don't have any of that left, but are  
despised for being messy and dirty. Here's a little fruit for  
you, eat it.

**TIMON**

I don't eat what I hate.

**APEMANTUS**

You hate medlar  ?

 A medlar is the name of a small tree, and the fruit that grows on it, which has been cultivated since the time of the Romans.

**TIMON**

Yes. It looks rotten like you.

**APEMANTUS**

If you had hated meddlers  sooner, you would have loved  
your station better now. What wasteful man did you ever  
meet that was well-liked after his money was gone?

 Apemantus puns on the similar sounding nature of the words "medlar" (meaning a tree/fruit) and "meddler."

**TIMON**

Who have you ever known that was well-liked without any  
means at all?

**APEMANTUS**

Me.

**TIMON**

350 I understand thee; thou hadst some means to keep a dog.

**APEMANTUS**

What things in the world canst thou nearest compare to thy flatterers?

**TIMON**

355 Women nearest; but men, men are the things themselves. What wouldest thou do with the world, Apemantus, if it lay in thy power?

**APEMANTUS**

Give it the beasts, to be rid of the men.

**TIMON**

Wouldst thou have thyself fall in the confusion of men, and remain a beast with the beasts?

**APEMANTUS**

360 Ay, Timon.

**TIMON**

A beastly ambition, which the gods grant thee t' attain to! If thou wert the lion, the fox would beguile thee; if thou wert the lamb, the fox would eat thee; if thou wert the fox, the lion would suspect thee, when peradventure thou wert accused by the ass: if thou wert the ass, thy dulness would torment thee, and still thou livedst but as a breakfast to the wolf: if thou wert the wolf, thy greediness would afflict thee, and oft thou shouldst hazard thy life for thy dinner: wert thou the unicorn, pride and wrath would confound thee and make thine own self the conquest of thy fury: wert thou a bear, thou wouldest be killed by the horse: wert thou a horse, thou wouldest be seized by the leopard: wert thou a leopard, thou wert german to the lion and the spots of thy kindred were jurors on thy life: all thy safety were remotion and thy defence absence. What beast couldst thou be, that were not subject to a beast? and what a beast art thou already, that seest not thy loss in transformation!

**APEMANTUS**

If thou couldst please me with speaking to me, thou mightst have hit upon it here: the commonwealth of Athens is become a forest of beasts.

**TIMON**

385 How has the ass broke the wall, that thou art out of the city?

**APEMANTUS**

Yonder comes a poet and a painter: the plague of company light upon thee! I will fear to catch it and give way: when I know not what else to do, I'll see thee again.

**TIMON**

When there is nothing living but thee, thou shalt be welcome. I had rather be a beggar's dog than Apemantus.

**APEMANTUS**

Thou art the cap of all the fools alive.

**TIMON**

Would thou wert clean enough to spit upon!

**APEMANTUS**

395 A plague on thee! thou art too bad to curse.

**TIMON**

True. The dogs love you because you only have enough means to keep a dog.

**APEMANTUS**

What would you compare your flatterers to?

**TIMON**

Women, probably. But men too, because they are men themselves. What would you do with the world if you were all-powerful, Apemantus?

**APEMANTUS**

Give it to the animals and get rid of all men.

**TIMON**

Would you fall with the rest of the men and remain an animal?

**APEMANTUS**

Yes, Timon.

**TIMON**

What a beastly thing for the gods to have you wish! If you were a lion, the fox would trick you; if you were a lamb, the fox would deceive three of you; if you were a fox, the lion would be suspicious of you when you were accused by the donkey; if you were a donkey, your stupidity would torment you, and you would only be the breakfast of the wolf; if you were a wolf, your greed would plague you, and you would have to risk your life just for dinner; if you were a unicorn, pride and anger would end you and when in your anger you rammed your horn and got stuck in a tree; if you were a bear, you would be killed by the horse; if you were a horse, you would be attacked by the leopard; if you were a leopard, you would be related to the lion and the crimes of your relatives would condemn you to death. Your only safety would lie in leaving one place for another, so what beast could you be that you would not fall prey to some other beast? What kind of animal are you already that you cannot see what you would lose in changing into an animal!?

**APEMANTUS**

If your speech could ever please me, it would be these observations. The state of Athens has become a forest of beasts.

**TIMON**

How? Has a donkey broken down the wall, so you find yourself outside the city?

**APEMANTUS**

Look, here comes a poet and a painter. I hope you catch the plague of their company! For fear of catching it I'll leave now. I'll see you again when I have nothing better to do.

**TIMON**

When you're the last man on earth, you'll be welcome here. I would rather be a beggar's dog than you.

**APEMANTUS**

You are the captain of all fools.

**TIMON**

I wish you were clean enough to spit on.

**APEMANTUS**

Get bit! You aren't even good enough to curse.

**TIMON**

All villains that do stand by thee are pure.

**APEMANTUS**

There is no leprosy but what thou speak'st.

**TIMON**

If I name thee.  
I'll beat thee, but I should infect my hands.

**APEMANTUS**

400 I would my tongue could rot them off!

**TIMON**

Away, thou issue of a mangy dog!  
Choler does kill me that thou art alive;  
I swound to see thee.

**APEMANTUS**

Would thou wouldest burst!

**TIMON**

405 Away,  
Thou tedious rogue! I am sorry I shall lose  
A stone by thee.

*Throws a stone at him*

**APEMANTUS**

Beast!

**TIMON**

410 Slave!

**APEMANTUS**

Toad!

**TIMON**

Rogue, rogue, rogue!  
I am sick of this false world, and will love nought  
But even the mere necessities upon 't.  
415 Then, Timon, presently prepare thy grave;  
Lie where the light foam the sea may beat  
Thy grave-stone daily: make thine epitaph,  
That death in me at others' lives may laugh.

*To the gold*

**TIMON**

420 O thou sweet king-killer, and dear divorce  
'Twixt natural son and sire! thou bright defiler  
Of Hymen's purest bed! thou valiant Mars!  
Thou ever young, fresh, loved and delicate wooer,  
Whose blush doth thaw the consecrated snow  
That lies on Dian's lap! thou visible god,  
425 That solder'st close impossibilities,  
And makest them kiss! that speak'st with  
every tongue,  
To every purpose! O thou touch of hearts!  
Think, thy slave man rebels, and by thy virtue  
430 Set them into confounding odds, that beasts  
May have the world in empire!

**APEMANTUS**

Would 'twere so!  
But not till I am dead. I'll say thou'st gold:  
Thou wilt be throng'd to shortly.

**TIMON**

435 Throng'd to!

**TIMON**

Villains look good in your company.

**APEMANTUS**

Your speech is worse than leprosy.

**TIMON**

When I say your name. I'll beat you up, if only touching you  
wouldn't infect my hands!

**APEMANTUS**

I wish my tongue could rot them off!

**TIMON**

Get away, you son of a bitch! Your life makes me angry  
enough to die. I swoon just looking at you!

**APEMANTUS**

Maybe you'll explode!

**TIMON**

Get away you dumb peasant! It's sad I have to waste a stone  
on you.

*He throws a stone at APEMANTUS.*

**APEMANTUS**

Beast!

**TIMON**

Slave!

**APEMANTUS**

Toad!

**TIMON**

You worthless, worthless man! I am sick of this lying world  
and will not love anything but the most basic necessities.  
So, Timon, prepare your own grave, lie down here where  
the light foam of the sea might lap against your grave stone  
every single day. Make your own epitaph, so my death will  
laugh at the lives of others.

*He speaks to the gold.*

**TIMON**

Oh you sweet little king-killer, which can set even a son and  
father at odds! You that can defile the bed of Hymen like  
Mars <sup>9</sup>! You forever young, fresh, beloved, and delicate  
wooer, that can ruin the chastity of Diana <sup>10</sup> with just a  
blush! You beautiful god, which can sew together  
impossible events and make them kiss! That can speak in  
every language and for any purpose! You tester of hearts,  
that think your slave man rebels against you and, with your  
power, set him at odds with himself so that beasts may rule  
the world!

<sup>9</sup> This alludes to Venus's adultery with Mars in Greek mythology.

<sup>10</sup> Diana (or Artemis) was the Greek goddess of the moon and of chastity.

**APEMANTUS**

If only it were so! But not until I am dead. I'll say to gold that  
it will be rushed to before long.

**TIMON**

Rushed to!?

**APEMANTUS**

Ay.

**TIMON**

Thy back, I prithee.

**APEMANTUS**

Live, and love thy misery.

**TIMON**

Long live so, and so die.

440

*Exit APEMANTUS*

**TIMON**

I am quit.

Moe things like men! Eat, Timon, and abhor them.

*Enter Banditti*

**FIRST BANDIT**

Where should he have this gold? It is some poor  
445 fragment, some slender sort of his remainder: the  
mere want of gold, and the falling-from of his  
friends, drove him into this melancholy.

**SECOND BANDIT**

It is noised he hath a mass of treasure.

**THIRD BANDIT**

Let us make the assay upon him: if he care not  
450 for't, he will supply us easily; if he covetously  
reserve it, how shall's get it?

**SECOND BANDIT**

True; for he bears it not about him, 'tis hid.

**FIRST BANDIT**

Is not this he?

**BANDITI**

Where?

**SECOND BANDIT**

455 'Tis his description.

**THIRD BANDIT**

He; I know him.

**BANDITI**

Save thee, Timon.

**TIMON**

Now, thieves?

**BANDITI**

Soldiers, not thieves.

**TIMON**

460 Both too; and women's sons.

**BANDITI**

We are not thieves, but men that much do want.

**TIMON**

Your greatest want is, you want much of meat.  
Why should you want? Behold, the earth hath roots;  
Within this mile break forth a hundred springs;  
465 The oaks bear mast, the briars scarlet hips;  
The bounteous housewife, nature, on each bush

**APEMANTUS**

Yes.

**TIMON**

Show me your back and leave.

**APEMANTUS**

May you live in misery and love it too.

**TIMON**

May you live long and miserable too, then die.

*APEMANTUS leaves.*

**TIMON**

I am rid of him, and yet more men! Hate them, Timon, and  
eat your food.

*The bandits enter.*

**FIRST BANDIT**

Where could his gold be? It is the last scrap of his life of  
wealth. It was the mere desire for gold and the betrayal of  
his friends which drove him to this depression.

**SECOND BANDIT**

I have heard he has a huge treasure.

**THIRD BANDIT**

Let's test that. If he doesn't care about it, he'll give it to us  
without a care. If he covets it, how will we get it?

**SECOND BANDIT**

That's a good question, because he doesn't have it with  
him. It's hidden.

**FIRST BANDIT**

Is that not him?

**BANDITI**

Where?

**SECOND BANDIT**

That's what he's supposed to look like.

**THIRD BANDIT**

Him? I recognize him.

**BANDITI**

God bless you, Timon?

**TIMON**

What do you want, thieves?

**BANDITI**

We're soldiers, not thieves.

**TIMON**

Both, and women's sons too.

**BANDITI**

We are not thieves, just poor men.

**TIMON**

The greatest thing you lack is brought about by your great  
desire to eat a lot—why else would you feel poor? Look  
here, the earth has roots, and within a mile are a hundred  
springs. The oaks have nuts, the briars red berries. Nature is

Lays her full mess before you. Want! why want?

#### FIRST BANDIT

We cannot live on grass, on berries, water,  
As beasts and birds and fishes.

#### TIMON

470 Nor on the beasts themselves, the birds, and fishes;  
You must eat men. Yet thanks I must you con  
That you are thieves profess'd, that you work not  
In holier shapes: for there is boundless theft  
In limited professions. Rascal thieves,  
475 Here's gold. Go, suck the subtle blood o' the grape,  
Till the high fever seethe your blood to froth,  
And so 'scape hanging: trust not the physician;  
His antidotes are poison, and he slays  
Moe than you rob: take wealth and lives together;  
480 Do villany, do, since you protest to do't,  
Like workmen. I'll example you with thievery.  
The sun's a thief, and with his great attraction  
Robs the vast sea: the moon's an arrant thief,  
And her pale fire she snatches from the sun:  
485 The sea's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves  
The moon into salt tears: the earth's a thief,  
That feeds and breeds by a composture stolen  
From general excrement: each thing's a thief:  
The laws, your curb and whip, in their rough power  
490 Have uncheque'd theft. Love not yourselves: away,  
Rob one another. There's more gold. Cut throats:  
All that you meet are thieves: to Athens go,  
Break open shops; nothing can you steal,  
But thieves do lose it: steal no less for this  
495 I give you; and gold confound you howsoe'er! Amen.

#### THIRD BANDIT

Has almost charmed me from my profession, by  
persuading me to it.

#### FIRST BANDIT

'Tis in the malice of mankind that he thus advises  
us; not to have us thrive in our mystery.

#### SECOND BANDIT

500 I'll believe him as an enemy, and give over my trade.

#### FIRST BANDIT

Let us first see peace in Athens: there is no time  
so miserable but a man may be true.

*Exeunt Banditti*

*Enter FLAVIUS*

#### FLAVIUS

O you gods!  
505 Is yond despised and ruinous man my lord?  
Full of decay and failing? O monument  
And wonder of good deeds evilly bestow'd!  
What an alteration of honour  
Has desperate want made!  
510 What viler thing upon the earth than friends  
Who can bring noblest minds to basest ends!  
How rarely does it meet with this time's guise,  
When man was wish'd to love his enemies!  
Grant I may ever love, and rather woo  
515 Those that would mischiefe me than those that do!  
Has caught me in his eye: I will present  
My honest grief unto him; and, as my lord,  
Still serve him with my life. My dearest master!

#### TIMON

Away! what art thou?

a generous housewife, who gives a great meal on each bush. Poor! How could you feel poor?

#### FIRST BANDIT

We are not animals, birds, nor fish. We cannot live on just  
grass, berries, and water.

#### TIMON

No you cannot even live on animals like birds and fish yourselves. You must eat men. Though I ought to thank you for at least being honest thieves who do not hide behind some more respectable disguise, for there is thievery in other professions as well. Here's some gold, you dirty thieves. Go now and drink all the wine you can until you catch a deadly fever that makes your blood foam. Do not trust the doctor, though, because his cures are poisonous and he kills men even more often than you rob them, taking both money and lives. Wreak havoc as your occupation dictates, and like one being instructed in his occupation, I'll give you good examples of thieves. The sun is a thief for robbing water from the vast sea; the moon is a thief for snatching light off the sun; the sea is a thief as its tides surge forth, dissolve the moon into salty tears; the earth is a thief as it steals and feeds off the manure of animals. Everything is a thief, from the laws to its enforcement, which use their unlimited power to steal. And do not make yourselves the exception, go away and rob one another. Here's some more gold. Go cut some throats, because everyone you meet is a thief. Go to Athens, pillage shops, because nothing you steal will not come from a thief's pocket. Do not steal any less because I'm giving you this, more gold, which I hope may curse you! Amen.

#### THIRD BANDIT

He almost makes me want to give up my profession by  
talking me into it.

#### FIRST BANDIT

His hatred of mankind is what gives us advice, not his  
concern for our craft.

#### SECOND BANDIT

I'd trust him about as much as my enemy and just give up  
thieving altogether.

#### FIRST BANDIT

Let's at least wait until the war is over. There is no worse  
time to be honest than a war.

*The bandits exit.*

*Flavius enters.*

#### FLAVIUS

Good god! Is that hateful man in tatters, looking so down  
and out, really my lord? Oh he is a memorial of what  
happens when good deeds are received ungratefully!  
Poverty has made such a remarkable change to his  
honorable appearance! How vile his friends were to bring  
down such a great man! It really shows the accuracy of that  
saying, "Love your enemies!" I would indeed much rather  
love those who wish me harm to my face than those who  
pretend to be my friends and stab me in the back.

*[Noticing TIMON]* He has seen me, and I will show him how  
much I grieve for him, and how I promise still to serve him.  
My fine master!

#### TIMON

Go away! Who are you?

**FLAVIUS**

520 Have you forgot me, sir?

**TIMON**

Why dost ask that? I have forgot all men;  
Then, if thou grant'st thou'rt a man, I have forgot  
thee.

**FLAVIUS**

An honest poor servant of yours.

**TIMON**

525 Then I know thee not:  
I never had honest man about me, I; all  
I kept were knaves, to serve in meat to villains.

**FLAVIUS**

The gods are witness,  
Ne'er did poor steward wear a truer grief  
530 For his undone lord than mine eyes for you.

**TIMON**

What, dost thou weep? Come nearer. Then I  
love thee,  
Because thou art a woman, and disclaim'st  
535 Flinty mankind; whose eyes do never give  
But thorough lust and laughter. Pity's sleeping:  
Strange times, that weep with laughing, not with  
weeping!

**FLAVIUS**

I beg of you to know me, good my lord,  
To accept my grief and whilst this poor wealth lasts  
540 To entertain me as your steward still.

**TIMON**

Had I a steward  
So true, so just, and now so comfortable?  
It almost turns my dangerous nature mild.  
Let me behold thy face. Surely, this man  
545 Was born of woman.  
Forgive my general and exceptless rashness,  
You perpetual-sober gods! I do proclaim  
One honest man—mistake me not—but one;  
No more, I pray,—and he's a steward.  
550 How fain would I have hated all mankind!  
And thou redeem'st thyself: but all, save thee,  
I fell with curses.  
Methinks thou art more honest now than wise;  
For, by oppressing and betraying me,  
555 Thou mightst have sooner got another service:  
For many so arrive at second masters,  
Upon their first lord's neck. But tell me true--  
For I must ever doubt, though ne'er so sure--  
Is not thy kindness subtle, covetous,  
560 If not a usuring kindness, and, as rich men deal gifts,  
Expecting in return twenty for one?

**FLAVIUS**

No, my most worthy master; in whose breast  
Doubt and suspect, alas, are placed too late:  
You should have fear'd false times when you did feast:  
565 Suspect still comes where an estate is least.  
That which I show, heaven knows, is merely love,  
Duty and zeal to your unmatched mind,  
Care of your food and living; and, believe it,  
My most honour'd lord,  
570 For any benefit that points to me,  
Either in hope or present, I'd exchange  
For this one wish, that you had power and wealth  
To requite me, by making rich yourself.

**FLAVIUS**

Have you forgotten who I am?

**TIMON**

Why bother asking that? I have forgotten all men. If you  
agree that you are indeed a man, then I have forgotten you  
too.

**FLAVIUS**

I was your poor and loyal servant.

**TIMON**

Then I definitely do not know you, because I never had an  
honest man around me. All those I kept around me were  
liars, because I wanted to serve meat to villains.

**FLAVIUS**

The gods know that there has never been an assistant  
racked with sadness for his lord the way I am looking at  
you.

**TIMON**

What, are you crying? Come closer. I do love you, now,  
because these tears show you to be a woman. You give up  
your manhood, because no man's eyes ever did tear up,  
except for lust or laughter. Pity may as well be asleep, for  
these are strange times, in which people weep for laughter  
and not in sadness.

**FLAVIUS**

I beg you, please recognize me, my good lord. That way you  
can accept my sadness and let me serve as your assistant  
while this bad luck continues.

**TIMON**

Did I really have an assistant so honest, fair, and  
comforting? It almost cures me of my dangerous and  
violent thoughts. Let me see your face: you are definitely a  
man born of a woman. Forgive me gods, for assuming the  
worst of all men. I admit now that there is one honest man,  
only one. No more, I swear—and he's just an assistant. How  
I dared to hate all of mankind!

*[To FLAVIUS] You do redeem yourself, but the rest I did lay  
flat with insults. I think you are more honest than wise,  
because you might have been better off betraying me. Many  
do have second masters at the expense of their first. But tell  
me, please, is your kindness not a subtle, greedy, and self-  
serving kind of kindness, which hopes to get what it gives  
twenty-to-one?*

**FLAVIUS**

No, master, in whom doubt and suspicion have taken hold  
too late. You should have feared lies when you threw feasts  
with your wealth, but your suspicion comes when you are  
most poor. What I show you is true love, duty, and  
enthusiasm for your outstanding mind, along with care for  
your wellbeing. Believe me, my lord, that any advantage I  
could gain now I would exchange for one wish: that you had  
the power and wealth to make yourself rich. That would be  
the return for my admiration.

**TIMON**

Look thee, 'tis so! Thou singly honest man,  
 575 Here, take: the gods out of my misery  
 Have sent thee treasure. Go, live rich and happy;  
 But thus condition'd: thou shalt build from men;  
 Hate all, curse all, show charity to none,  
 But let the famish'd flesh slide from the bone,  
 580 Ere thou relieve the beggar; give to dogs  
 What thou deny'st to men; let prisons swallow 'em,  
 Debts wither 'em to nothing; be men like  
 blasted woods,  
 And may diseases lick up their false bloods!  
 585 And so farewell and thrive.

**FLAVIUS**

O, let me stay,  
 And comfort you, my master.

**TIMON**

If thou hatest curses,  
 Stay not; fly, whilst thou art blest and free:  
 590 Ne'er see thou man, and let me ne'er see thee.

*Exit FLAVIUS. TIMON retires to his cave*

**TIMON**

Look here, it is true! You uniquely honest man, take this.  
 The gods have given you a gift out of my misery.

*[Offering FLAVIUS gold]* Go be rich and happy, but under one condition: you take advantage of other men, hate all of them, curse all of them, and show charity to none of them. Let the starving flesh slide off the bones of a beggar before you give him any money. Give to dogs what you do not give to men, whom you should let go to prison in debt. Let men be like dying woods, with diseases eating at their lying blood. Live this way, and goodbye.

**FLAVIUS**

Let me stay and comfort you, master.

**TIMON**

If you hate to be insulted, do not stay. Go away, and while you are blessed and free, never meet with another man, and never let me see you here again.

*FLAVIUS leaves, and TIMON goes back into his cave.*

## Act 5, Scene 1

### Shakespeare

*Enter POET and PAINTER; TIMON watching them from his cave*

**PAINTER**

As I took note of the place, it cannot be far where he abides.

**POET**

What's to be thought of him? does the rumour hold for true, that he's so full of gold?

**PAINTER**

5 Certain: Alcibiades reports it; Phrynia and Timandra had gold of him: he likewise enriched poor straggling soldiers with great quantity: 'tis said he gave unto his steward a mighty sum.

**POET**

Then this breaking of his has been but a try for his friends.

**PAINTER**

Nothing else: you shall see him a palm in Athens again, and flourish with the highest. Therefore 'tis not amiss we tender our loves to him, in this supposed distress of his: it will show honestly in us; and is very likely to load our purposes with what they travail for, if it be a just true report that goes of his having.

**POET**

What have you now to present unto him?

**PAINTER**

Nothing at this time but my visitation: only I will 20 promise him an excellent piece.

**POET**

I must serve him so too, tell him of an intent that's coming toward him.

### Shakescleare Translation

*The POET and PAINTER enter, and TIMON watches them from his cave.*

**PAINTER**

As I recall, he can't be far from here.

**POET**

What do you think? Do you think it's true that he's got a hidden stash of gold?

**PAINTER**

Definitely. Alcibiades says so, and Phrynia and Timandra got gold from him. He also gave the poor soldiers a ton. I also heard he gave his assistant a lot too.

**POET**

So his bankruptcy has just been a test for his friends.

**PAINTER**

It can't be anything else. You'll see him high and mighty in Athens again, to be sure. For that reason it's not crazy to appeal to him in his supposed distress. It'll look good for us, and it is likely to end in us receiving what the others got, if it is in fact true that he has money.

**POET**

What do you have to give to him?

**PAINTER**

Nothing but my presence for now. I will promise him an excellent work of art.

**POET**

Me too, and to promise him something in the future.

**PAINTER**

Good as the best. Promising is the very air o' the time: it opens the eyes of expectation:  
 25 performance is ever the duller for his act; and, but in the plainer and simpler kind of people, the deed of saying is quite out of use. To promise is most courtly and fashionable: performance is a kind of will or testament which argues a great sickness  
 30 in his judgment that makes it.

*TIMON comes from his cave, behind*

**TIMON**

*[Aside]* Excellent workman! thou canst not paint a man so bad as is thyself.

**POET**

I am thinking what I shall say I have provided for him: it must be a personating of himself; a satire  
 35 against the softness of prosperity, with a discovery of the infinite flatteries that follow youth and opulence.

**TIMON**

*[Aside]* Must thou needs stand for a villain in thine own work? wilt thou whip thine own faults in  
 40 other men? Do so, I have gold for thee.

**POET**

Nay, let's seek him:  
 Then do we sin against our own estate,  
 When we may profit meet, and come too late.

**PAINTER**

True;  
 45 When the day serves, before black-corner'd night,  
 Find what thou want'st by free and offer'd light. Come.

**TIMON**

*[Aside]* I'll meet you at the turn. What a god's gold,  
 That he is worshipp'd in a baser temple  
 50 Than where swine feed!  
 'Tis thou that rigg'st the bark and plough'st the foam,  
 Settest admired reverence in a slave:  
 To thee be worship! and thy saints for aye  
 Be crown'd with plagues that thee alone obey!  
 55 Fit I meet them.

*Coming forward*

**POET**

Hail, worthy Timon!

**PAINTER**

Our late noble master!

**TIMON**

Have I once lived to see two honest men?

**POET**

Sir,  
 60 Having often of your open bounty tasted,  
 Hearing you were retired, your friends fall'n off,  
 Whose thankless natures--O abhorred spirits!--  
 Not all the whips of heaven are large enough:  
 What! to you,  
 65 Whose star-like nobleness gave life and influence  
 To their whole being! I am rapt and cannot cover  
 The monstrous bulk of this ingratitude  
 With any size of words.

**PAINTER**

Good idea. Promises are all the rage right now. They open the door for expectation, whereas actions themselves are merely done once they happen. With the exception of the plainer and simpler sort, the fulfillment of promises has gone out of fashion. But still promising itself is current and stylish. The actual doing of the thing is a kind of statement that shows a lack of judgment in the person who made the promise in the first place.

*TIMON sneaks up behind them out of his cave.*

**TIMON**

*[To himself]* What an artist! You couldn't paint a man worse than yourself.

**POET**

I am thinking about what I will say I have brought him. It must be some kind of portrait of himself, maybe a satire about the flightiness of wealth, with an exposition about the many flatteries that youth and opulence brings with it.

**TIMON**

*[To himself]* Do you really need to model a villain in your work? Would you chastise your own vices in other men? Do it, and I've got gold for you.

**POET**

Let's go look for him. We would do wrong to our own prosperity if we were to arrive to late to such an opportunity.

**PAINTER**

For sure. Before night falls, we ought to find what is offered freely in the light of day. Follow me.

**TIMON**

*[To himself]* I'll play your own little game. What a magnificent god is gold, that it is worshipped in a place grosser than a pigpen. It is the thing that rigs the ship and sets it on its journey, the thing that makes a slave honor his master. May people continue to worship it! May its disciples forever be chased with its own unique plagues. It's about time to talk to them.

*TIMON approaches them.*

**POET**

Hey, Timon!

**PAINTER**

Our great master!

**TIMON**

Have I ever seen two such honest men?

**POET**

Sir, after having received so many of your gifts, and then hearing you were retired, abandoned by friends so ungrateful that all the whips of heaven are not large enough to punish them. Incredible! To you, whose stellar generosity gave life to them! It drives me mad, and I cannot conceive of any way to describe this level of ingratitude.

**TIMON**

Let it go naked, men may see't the better:  
 70 You that are honest, by being what you are,  
 Make them best seen and known.

**PAINTER**

He and myself  
 Have travail'd in the great shower of your gifts,  
 And sweetly felt it.

**TIMON**

75 Ay, you are honest men.

**PAINTER**

We are hither come to offer you our service.

**TIMON**

Most honest men! Why, how shall I requite you?  
 Can you eat roots, and drink cold water? no.

**BOTH**

What we can do, we'll do, to do you service.

**TIMON**

80 Ye're honest men: ye've heard that I have gold;  
 I am sure you have: speak truth; ye're honest men.

**PAINTER**

So it is said, my noble lord; but therefore  
 Came not my friend nor I.

**TIMON**

Good honest men! Thou draw'st a counterfeit  
 85 Best in all Athens: thou'rt, indeed, the best;  
 Thou counterfeit'st most lively.

**PAINTER**

So, so, my lord.

**TIMON**

E'en so, sir, as I say. And, for thy fiction,  
 Why, thy verse swells with stuff so fine and smooth  
 90 That thou art even natural in thine art.  
 But, for all this, my honest-natured friends,  
 I must needs say you have a little fault:  
 Marry, 'tis not monstrous in you, neither wish I  
 You take much pains to mend.

**BOTH**

95 Beseech your honour  
 To make it known to us.

**TIMON**

You'll take it ill.

**BOTH**

Most thankfully, my lord.

**TIMON**

Will you, indeed?

**BOTH**

100 Doubt it not, worthy lord.

**TIMON**

There's never a one of you but trusts a knave,  
 That mightily deceives you.

**BOTH**

Do we, my lord?

**TIMON**

Let it go. Some men might be more optimistic. Your  
 truthfulness, your being what you proclaim to be, make  
 ungrateful men more noticeable.

**PAINTER**

He and I have triumphed in the great shower of your gifts  
 and enjoyed it so much!

**TIMON**

Yes, you are honest men.

**PAINTER**

We have come to offer you our service.

**TIMON**

Such honest men! How could I ever repay you? Can you eat  
 roots or drink cold water? No.

**BOTH**

We'll do what we can for you.

**TIMON**

You are both honest men and have heard that I have gold. I  
 am sure that you have. Tell me the truth, honest men.

**PAINTER**

We have heard that. But that is not why we've come.

**TIMON**

Good honest men! You draw the best portrait in all of  
 Athens. Yes, you are the best, your counterfeits are the most  
 lifelike.

**PAINTER**

So it is, my lord.

**TIMON**

Yes, it is as I said.

*[To the POET]* And as for your fiction, the lines swell with  
 material so fine and smooth that your art comes to equal  
 nature. But in spite of all this, my truthful friends, I must say  
 that you do have one vice. It's not such a bad thing, and you  
 shouldn't try too hard to fix it.

**BOTH**

Please, Timon, tell us what it is.

**TIMON**

You won't like it.

**BOTH**

We'll appreciate it, my lord.

**TIMON**

Will you really?

**BOTH**

Definitely.

**TIMON**

Both of you are too trustful of scoundrels who wish to  
 deceive you.

**BOTH**

Are we really?

**TIMON**

Ay, and you hear him cog, see him dissemble,  
 105 Know his gross patchery, love him, feed him,  
 Keep in your bosom: yet remain assured  
 That he's a made-up villain.

**PAINTER**

I know none such, my lord.

**POET**

Nor I.

**TIMON**

110 Look you, I love you well; I'll give you gold,  
 Rid me these villains from your companies:  
 Hang them or stab them, drown them in a draught,  
 Confound them by some course, and come to me,  
 I'll give you gold enough.

**BOTH**

115 Name them, my lord, let's know them.

**TIMON**

You that way and you this, but two in company;  
 Each man apart, all single and alone,  
 Yet an arch-villain keeps him company.  
 If where thou art two villains shall not be,  
 120 Come not near him. If thou wouldest not reside  
 But where one villain is, then him abandon.  
 Hence, pack! there's gold; you came for gold, ye  
 slaves:

*To Painter*

**TIMON**

You have work'd for me; there's payment for you: hence!  
 125

*To Poet*

**TIMON**

You are an alchemist; make gold of that.  
 Out, rascal dogs!

*Beats them out, and then retires to his cave*

*Enter FLAVIUS and two Senators*

**FLAVIUS**

It is in vain that you would speak with Timon;  
 130 For he is set so only to himself  
 That nothing but himself which looks like man  
 Is friendly with him.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Bring us to his cave:  
 It is our part and promise to the Athenians  
 135 To speak with Timon.

**SECOND SENATOR**

At all times alike  
 Men are not still the same: 'twas time and griefs  
 That framed him thus: time, with his fairer hand,  
 Offering the fortunes of his former days,  
 140 The former man may make him. Bring us to him,  
 And chance it as it may.

**TIMON**

Definitely. You hear him cheat, see him pretend, and watch  
 him commit crimes, and all the while you love him, feed  
 him, and keep him close, knowing full well that he's a total  
 villain.

**PAINTER**

I know no one like this.

**POET**

Me neither.

**TIMON**

Hey, guys, I like you a lot. I'll give you some gold, and in  
 return you may rid the world of some evil men. Hang them,  
 stab them, drown them in a toilet, I don't care. Get rid of  
 them some way, and then come to me and I'll give you even  
 more gold.

**BOTH**

Name your enemies, Timon, we'd like to know.

**TIMON**

You, that man, and you the other, each of you still in the  
 company of the other. Each of you is single and alone when  
 apart from the other, but now an enemy keeps you  
 company.

*[To one of the men]* If you promise to rid the world of  
 villains, do not go near the other guy.

*[To the other]* If you swear you will not stand where one  
 villain is, abandon him.

*[To both]* So go away! Here's the gold you came for, you  
 slaves.

*To the PAINTER.*

**TIMON**

Here's payment for the work you owe me. Now go!

*To the POET.*

**TIMON**

You make gold from metal. Here, make gold from this! Get  
 out of here you dogs!

*He beats the two out of his sight and then returns to his  
 cave.*

*FLAVIUS enters with two Senators.*

**FLAVIUS**

It's useless to speak with Timon. He only trusts himself, and  
 nobody that looks anything like a man appears friendly to  
 him.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Bring us to the cave. We promised the Athenians we would  
 speak to Timon.

**SECOND SENATOR**

Men are not the same all the time. It was time and sadness  
 that made him this way. Time presents to him the riches of  
 his former days, the opportunity to become the man he  
 was. Bring us to him and we'll take our chances.

**FLAVIUS**

Here is his cave.  
Peace and content be here! Lord Timon! Timon!  
Look out, and speak to friends: the Athenians,  
145 By two of their most reverend senate, greet thee:  
Speak to them, noble Timon.

*TIMON comes from his cave*

**TIMON**

Thou sun, that comfort'st, burn! Speak, and  
be hang'd:  
For each true word, a blister! and each false  
150 Be as cauterizing to the root o' the tongue,  
Consuming it with speaking!

**FIRST SENATOR**

Worthy Timon,—

**TIMON**

Of none but such as you, and you of Timon.

**FIRST SENATOR**

The senators of Athens greet thee, Timon.

**TIMON**

155 I thank them; and would send them back the plague,  
Could I but catch it for them.

**FIRST SENATOR**

O, forget  
What we are sorry for ourselves in thee.  
The senators with one consent of love  
160 Entreat thee back to Athens; who have thought  
On special dignities, which vacant lie  
For thy best use and wearing.

**SECOND SENATOR**

They confess  
Toward thee forgetfulness too general, gross:  
165 Which now the public body, which doth seldom  
Play the recanter, feeling in itself  
A lack of Timon's aid, hath sense withal  
Of its own fail, restraining aid to Timon;  
And send forth us, to make their sorrow'd render,  
170 Together with a recompense more fruitful  
Than their offence can weigh down by the dram;  
Ay, even such heaps and sums of love and wealth  
As shall to thee blot out what wrongs were theirs  
And write in thee the figures of their love,  
175 Ever to read them thine.

**TIMON**

You witch me in it;  
Surprise me to the very brink of tears:  
Lend me a fool's heart and a woman's eyes,  
And I'll beweep these comforts, worthy senators.

**FIRST SENATOR**

180 Therefore, so please thee to return with us  
And of our Athens, thine and ours, to take  
The captainship, thou shalt be met with thanks,  
Allow'd with absolute power and thy good name  
Live with authority: so soon we shall drive back  
185 Of Alcibiades the approaches wild,  
Who, like a boar too savage, doth root up  
His country's peace.

**SECOND SENATOR**

And shakes his threatening sword  
Against the walls of Athens.

**FLAVIUS**

Here is his cave. We come in peace and friendship! Timon!  
Timon! Come out and speak to two friends. The Athenians  
send their best to you in two honored senators. Speak to  
them, Timon.

*TIMON emerges from his cave.*

**TIMON**

You, sun which comforts the world, burn them! Speak to me  
and then be hanged! Because each true word must to you  
be like a blister, and each lie burn you to the root of your  
tongue, eating it away with your own talk!

**FIRST SENATOR**

Great Timon—

**TIMON**

Great to no one but those like yourself, and you but to  
Timon.

**FIRST SENATOR**

The Senators of Athens send their regards.

**TIMON**

I thank them, and would send them a disease if only I could  
catch it for them.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Forget the things that have happened to you, which we are  
very sorry for. The senators unanimously agreed to ask you  
to come back to Athens. There are many honors there,  
totally ready for you to take up.

**SECOND SENATOR**

They admit they had were too quick to forget your good  
deeds, which they take back now that you have stopped  
aiding them, knowing full well that it is their fault for not  
extending their hands to you in your time of need. They  
sent us to tell you about our sadness, along with a  
repayment greater than their crime could possibly weigh on  
you. Indeed they promise such heaps of wealth and  
friendship that it should make you entirely forget how they  
wronged you, feeling within yourself instead such  
sentiments of love that you will always consider them your  
friends.

**TIMON**

You cast a spell on me. You've beaten me to the brink of  
tears, giving me a fool's heart and a woman's eyes, crying  
before these comforting words.

**FIRST SENATOR**

So come back with us to Athens, a city yours as well as ours,  
to become a captain. You will be met with thanks and  
allowed absolute power and authority to your name. Soon  
enough we will drive back Alcibiades and his wild attacks.  
He is like a savage boar, rooting up the peace in his own  
country.

**SECOND SENATOR**

He threatens the walls of Athens with his own sword.

**FIRST SENATOR**

190 Therefore, Timon,--

**TIMON**

Well, sir, I will; therefore, I will, sir; thus:  
If Alcibiades kill my countrymen,  
Let Alcibiades know this of Timon,  
That Timon cares not. But if be sack fair Athens,  
195 And take our goodly aged men by the beards,  
Giving our holy virgins to the stain  
Of contumelious, beastly, mad-brain'd war,  
Then let him know, and tell him Timon speaks it,  
In pity of our aged and our youth,  
200 I cannot choose but tell him, that I care not,  
And let him take't at worst; for their knives care not,  
While you have throats to answer: for myself,  
There's not a whittle in the unruly camp  
But I do prize it at my love before  
205 The reverend'st throat in Athens. So I leave you  
To the protection of the prosperous gods,  
As thieves to keepers.

**FLAVIUS**

Stay not, all's in vain.

**TIMON**

Why, I was writing of my epitaph;  
210 it will be seen to-morrow: my long sickness  
Of health and living now begins to mend,  
And nothing brings me all things. Go, live still;  
Be Alcibiades your plague, you his,  
And last so long enough!

**FIRST SENATOR**

215 We speak in vain.

**TIMON**

But yet I love my country, and am not  
One that rejoices in the common wreck,  
As common bruit doth put it.

**FIRST SENATOR**

That's well spoke.

**TIMON**

220 Command me to my loving countrymen,--

**FIRST SENATOR**

These words become your lips as they pass  
thorough them.

**SECOND SENATOR**

And enter in our ears like great triumphers  
In their applauding gates.

**TIMON**

225 Command me to them,  
And tell them that, to ease them of their griefs,  
Their fears of hostile strokes, their aches, losses,  
Their pangs of love, with other incident throes  
That nature's fragile vessel doth sustain  
230 In life's uncertain voyage, I will some kindness do  
them:  
I'll teach them to prevent wild Alcibiades' wrath.

**FIRST SENATOR**

I like this well; he will return again.

**TIMON**

I have a tree, which grows here in my close,  
235 That mine own use invites me to cut down,  
And shortly must I fell it: tell my friends,  
Tell Athens, in the sequence of degree

**FIRST SENATOR**

So Timon—

**TIMON**

I will say this. If Alcibiades wants to kill my fellow citizens,  
let Alcibiades know that Timon does not care. But if he  
wants to pillage Athens, grabbing old men by the beards  
and sacrificing holy virgins to the horrors of war, then let  
him know that even as I pity the old and the young, I cannot  
help but say still that I do not care if he does his worst. Their  
blades do not care that your throats suffer the  
consequences of their actions. And as for me, I put the  
smallest switchblade in their rebel barracks before the most  
honored throat in all of Athens. I leave you to the protection  
of the gods, the way I might leave thieves to their jailers.

**FLAVIUS**

Let's go. It's hopeless.

**TIMON**

I was writing the epitaph for my tombstone, which will be  
seen tomorrow. My blight of health and living well is  
now being cured, and death will bring everything with it. Go  
and keep living. Let Alcibiades be your blight, and you his.  
Live that way as long as you can!

**FIRST SENATOR**

It's useless.

**TIMON**

I do love my country, and contrary to what rumors may say,  
am not glad to see total destruction.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Well said.

**TIMON**

Give my best to my fellow Athenians—

**FIRST SENATOR**

These words do the person who speaks them justice.

**SECOND SENATOR**

And enter our ears like trumpeters celebrating at the gates.

**TIMON**

Give them my best, and tell them that, to ease their  
sadness, their fear of war, their pains, their losses, their  
pangs of love, and all the other difficulties common to life, I  
send some kindness their way. I'll teach them how to  
defend themselves against the wild Alcibiades's wrath.

**FIRST SENATOR**

This sounds good. He will return soon enough.

**TIMON**

I have a tree that grows around here that I need to cut  
down, and I need to do that soon. Tell my friends in Athens  
of all stations that whoever wants to stop these pains  
should hurry here before my axe touches the tree, so

From high to low throughout, that whoso please  
To stop affliction, let him take his haste,  
240 Come hither, ere my tree hath felt the axe,  
And hang himself. I pray you, do my greeting.

**FLAVIUS**

Trouble him no further; thus you still shall find him.

**TIMON**

Come not to me again: but say to Athens,  
Timon hath made his everlasting mansion  
245 Upon the beached verge of the salt flood;  
Who once a day with his embossed froth  
The turbulent surge shall cover: thither come,  
And let my grave-stone be your oracle.  
Lips, let sour words go by and language end:  
250 What is amiss plague and infection mend!  
Graves only be men's works and death their gain!  
Sun, hide thy beams! Timon hath done his reign.

*Retires to his cave*

**FIRST SENATOR**

His discontents are unremoveably  
Coupled to nature.

**SECOND SENATOR**

255 Our hope in him is dead: let us return,  
And strain what other means is left unto us  
In our dear peril.

**FIRST SENATOR**

It requires swift foot.

*Exeunt*

that they might hang themselves. Please, send those regards.

**FLAVIUS**

Stop bothering him. You will find him this way again.

**TIMON**

Don't come back, and instead tell all of Athens that Timon has built his house on the shore, and everyday will cover himself with the surging foam of the sea. Tell them to come here and let my grave-stone be their guide. Oh lips, let these harsh words fall from you and be your last, let everything wrong with the world be healed by ravaging diseases! Graves are just another of men's works, and death another of their benefits! Go away, sun! Timon has finished his time on earth.

*He goes back into his cave.*

**FIRST SENATOR**

His sadness is now a part of himself.

**SECOND SENATOR**

He's hopeless. Let's go back and try whatever else we can do to save ourselves.

**FIRST SENATOR**

We need to hurry.

*They all exit.*

## Act 5, Scene 2

### Shakespeare

*Enter two Senators and a Messenger*

**FIRST SENATOR**

Thou hast painfully discover'd: are his files  
As full as thy report?

**MESSENGER**

I have spoke the least:  
Besides, his expedition promises  
5 Present approach.

**SECOND SENATOR**

We stand much hazard, if they bring not Timon.

**MESSENGER**

I met a courier, one mine ancient friend;  
Whom, though in general part we were opposed,  
Yet our old love made a particular force,  
10 And made us speak like friends: this man was riding  
From Alcibiades to Timon's cave,  
With letters of entreaty, which imported  
His fellowship i' the cause against your city,  
In part for his sake moved.

**FIRST SENATOR**

15 Here come our brothers.

*Enter the Senators from TIMON*

### Shakescleare Translation

*Two Senators enter with a MESSENGER.*

**FIRST SENATOR**

You have retrieved information at great cost. Does he have as many troops as you say?

**MESSENGER**

My estimate is conservative. Plus, he approaches at a great speed.

**SECOND SENATOR**

We are in great danger if the others do not bring Timon with them.

**MESSENGER**

I met with a messenger friend of mine who, despite having argued with me in public, held a strong love for me and approached me like the old friend he is. He was riding from Alcibiades to Timon with letters hoping he would join the cause against Athens, which was inspired partly by his poor treatment here.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Here come our fellow Senators.

*The Senators who had visited TIMON enter.*

**THIRD SENATOR**

No talk of Timon, nothing of him expect.  
The enemies' drum is heard, and fearful scouring  
Doth choke the air with dust: in, and prepare:  
Ours is the fall, I fear; our foes the snare.

20

*Exeunt***THIRD SENATOR**

Let's not talk about Timon. We can't expect any help from him. The drum of the enemy armies can be heard in the city, and their marching lifts dust into the air. We fall right into the enemies' trap.

*They all exit.*

## Act 5, Scene 3

**Shakespeare***Enter a Soldier, seeking TIMON***SOLDIER**

By all description this should be the place.  
Who's here? speak, ho! No answer! What is this?  
Timon is dead, who hath outstretch'd his span:  
Some beast rear'd this; there does not live a man.  
5 Dead, sure; and this his grave. What's on this tomb  
I cannot read; the character I'll take with wax:  
Our captain hath in every figure skill,  
An aged interpreter, though young in days:  
Before proud Athens he's set down by this,  
10 Whose fall the mark of his ambition is.

10

*Exit***Shakescleare Translation***A soldier enters looking for TIMON.***SOLDIER**

This looks like the place as it was described to me. Who's there? Speak up! No Answer! What is going on? Timon has reached his final days. He is dead. Some horrible animal must have done this, for all men seem beasts to me now. He is definitely dead, and there is his grave. I cannot read what's written on his tomb. I'll use wax to mold out the lettering. My captain can read any kind of lettering, for despite being young he's an experienced interpreter. In front of Athens the man whose ambition was his downfall is set down by these words.

It is unclear whether he records the markings in a tablet of wax or whether he melts wax over the tombstone to take the etchings.

*He exits.*

## Act 5, Scene 4

**Shakespeare***Trumpets sound. Enter ALCIBIADES with his powers***ALCIBIADES**

Sound to this coward and lascivious town  
Our terrible approach.

*A parley sounded**Enter Senators on the walls***ALCIBIADES**

Till now you have gone on and fill'd the time  
With all licentious measure, making your wills  
The scope of justice; till now myself and such  
As slept within the shadow of your power  
Have wander'd with our traversed arms and breathed  
Our sufferance vainly: now the time is flush,  
10 When crouching marrow in the bearer strong  
Cries of itself 'No more:' now breathless wrong  
Shall sit and pant in your great chairs of ease,  
And pursy insolence shall break his wind  
With fear and horrid flight.

5

10

20

**FIRST SENATOR**

Noble and young,  
When thy first griefs were but a mere conceit,  
Ere thou hadst power or we had cause of fear,  
We sent to thee, to give thy rages balm,  
To wipe out our ingratitude with loves  
Above their quantity.

20

**SECOND SENATOR**

So did we woo  
Transformed Timon to our city's love

**Shakescleare Translation***The trumpets blast while ALCIBIADES enters with his train.***ALCIBIADES**

Make sure this cowardly and dirty town hears our troops approach.

*Other trumpets sound in response.**The Senators enter upon the walls.***ALCIBIADES**

Previously, you filled your days by using your own power unchecked, making your own personal desires equivalent with justice. Before now I and people like me slept in the shadow of your power, walking about with folded arms and voicing our opinions only in vain. Now is the time for action, when the bones of those bowing down to you finally cry out, "No more!" Now those supposed wrongdoers, voiceless then, will have the opportunity to sit in your positions of power. And those who were supposedly ill-mannered during your time shall be able to say and do whatever they like.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Young, honorable, Alcibiades, when your grievances were just an idea, before you had any power and we had any fear of it, we sent assistance to you to apologize for our ingratitude with endless admiration.

**SECOND SENATOR**

And we also tried to reach out to Timon and express our city's love for him with a message of humility and promised

By humble message and by promised means:  
We were not all unkind, nor all deserve  
The common stroke of war.

25

**FIRST SENATOR**

These walls of ours  
Were not erected by their hands from whom  
You have received your griefs; nor are they such  
That these great towers, trophies and schools  
30 should fall

For private faults in them.

**SECOND SENATOR**

Nor are they living  
Who were the motives that you first went out;  
Shame that they wanted cunning, in excess  
35 Hath broke their hearts. March, noble lord,  
Into our city with thy banners spread:  
By decimation, and a tithed death--  
If thy revenges hunger for that food  
Which nature loathes--take thou the destined tenth,  
40 And by the hazard of the spotted die  
Let die the spotted.

**FIRST SENATOR**

All have not offended;  
For those that were, it is not square to take  
On those that are, revenges: crimes, like lands,  
45 Are not inherited. Then, dear countryman,  
Bring in thy ranks, but leave without thy rage:  
Spare thy Athenian cradle and those kin  
Which in the bluster of thy wrath must fall  
With those that have offended: like a shepherd,  
50 Approach the fold and cull the infected forth,  
But kill not all together.

**SECOND SENATOR**

What thou wilt,  
Thou rather shalt enforce it with thy smile  
Than hew to't with thy sword.

**FIRST SENATOR**

55 Set but thy foot  
Against our rampired gates, and they shall ope;  
So thou wilt send thy gentle heart before,  
To say thou'l enter friendly.

**SECOND SENATOR**

Throw thy glove,  
60 Or any token of thine honour else,  
That thou wilt use the wars as thy redress  
And not as our confusion, all thy powers  
Shall make their harbour in our town, till we  
Have seal'd thy full desire.

**ALCIBIADES**

65 Then there's my glove;  
Descend, and open your uncharged ports:  
Those enemies of Timon's and mine own  
Whom you yourselves shall set out for reproof  
Fall and no more: and, to atone your fears  
70 With my more noble meaning, not a man  
Shall pass his quarter, or offend the stream  
Of regular justice in your city's bounds,  
But shall be render'd to your public laws  
At heaviest answer.

**BOTH**

75 'Tis most nobly spoken.

**ALCIBIADES**

Descend, and keep your words.

riches. We were not unkind, and we do not deserve to fall to war.

**FIRST SENATOR**

These walls of ours were not built by the people who insulted you, nor were they people that deserve their work to fall for the faults of others.

**SECOND SENATOR**

The people who banished you are no longer living. Their shame at their actions broke their hearts. March into our city with your banners, Alcibiades, and if in an unnatural hunger for revenge you'd like to kill one tenth of the entire city, let those unfortunate enough to have gotten such a bad turn of the dice die 1 for all the rest.

1 In Shakespeare's England the word "die" could have indicated the singular as well as the plural form of "dice," and it is for this reason that the original text benefits from a homonymic pun that would not make sense in translation to contemporary English.

**FIRST SENATOR**

It is not everyone's fault that you are offended. It is not fair to avenge yourself on those that are here now for those who offended you then. Crimes should not be inherited like the land. Dear countrymen, bring in your army, but leave without your anger. Spare your hometown of Athens and those people who in your wrath you might otherwise kill. Be like a shepherd and approach the herd and separate the infected parts of it. Do not kill everyone.

**SECOND SENATOR**

Whatever you want, enforce it with mercy and not with violence.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Set your foot against the ramped-up walls and they will open, but you should tell us before you come in peace.

**SECOND SENATOR**

Throw your gauntlet down 2, but do it so that you may use your army to redress the wrongs done to you, and not to destroy everyone here. You can put your entire force here peacefully until you get what you want.

2 Referring to the tradition of throwing one's glove, or "gauntlet," down before a duel.

**ALCIBIADES**

There's my glove, then. Descend now and open your gates. Those who were enemies of Timon and me you will hand over. They, and no one else, will die. And to calm your fear of me, no man of mine shall go beyond an assigned area, or disturb the peace within the city. If they do they will have to answer to harsh punishment.

**BOTH**

Well said.

**ALCIBIADES**

Descend and do what you have promised.

*The Senators descend, and open the gates*

*Enter Soldier*

**SOLDIER**

My noble general, Timon is dead;  
Entomb'd upon the very hem o' the sea;  
80 And on his grave-stone this insculpture, which  
With wax I brought away, whose soft impression  
Interprets for my poor ignorance.

**ALCIBIADES**

[*Reads the epitaph*] "Here lies a  
wretched corse, of wretched soul bereft:  
85 Seek not my name: a plague consume you wicked  
caitiffs left!  
Here lie I, Timon; who, alive, all living men did hate:  
Pass by and curse thy fill, but pass and stay  
not here thy gait."  
90 These well express in thee thy latter spirits:  
Though thou abhor'rst in us our human griefs,  
Scorn'dst our brain's flow and those our  
droplets which  
95 From niggard nature fall, yet rich conceit  
Taught thee to make vast Neptune weep for aye  
On thy low grave, on faults forgiven. Dead  
Is noble Timon: of whose memory  
Hereafter more. Bring me into your city,  
100 And I will use the olive with my sword,  
Make war breed peace, make peace stint war, make each  
Prescribe to other as each other's leech.  
Let our drums strike.

*Exeunt*

*The Senators descend from the walls and open the gates.*

*A SOLDIER enters.*

**SOLDIER**

My noble general, Timon is dead. His grave lies on the  
shore, and on that tombstone there is this epitaph, which I  
brought here on wax which will show you what I cannot in  
ignorance.

**ALCIBIADES**

[*Reading the epitaph*] "Here lies a poor corse and a poor,  
disturbed soul. Do not look for my name, and may a disease  
strike all you remaining cowards! Here I lie, Timon, who  
when alive all living men hated. Pass here and insult me to  
your heart's content, but go and do not stay here too long."

[*Speaking about TIMON*] These words describe you in the  
depression of your later life. Though you hated our human  
grievances, scorned our tears which from our sad  
dispositions fell, still your ingenious mind taught you to  
make the god of the sea cry for you on your low grave, on  
your forgiven faults. The noble Timon is dead, who will be  
remembered from now on. Bring me into your city, and I  
will combine peace with war. I will make war end in peace,  
then make peace stop war, as if each were the doctors  
curing the other. Strike the drums. 

 Reminiscent of the last lines of Hamlet, when Fortinbras says, 'Go, bid the soldiers shoot.' What events are to follow remain ambiguous in both plays.

*They all exit.*

## How to Cite

To cite this Shakescleare translation:

**MLA**

Menna, Michael. "*Timon of Athens: A Shakescleare Translation.*" LitCharts LLC, 19 May 2017. Web. 14 Sep 2017.

**Chicago Manual**

Menna, Michael. "*Timon of Athens: A Shakescleare Translation.*" LitCharts LLC, May 19, 2017. Retrieved September 14, 2017. <http://www.litcharts.com/lit/timon-of-athens>.