

First Citizen:  
Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

All:  
Speak, speak.

First Citizen:  
You are all resolved rather to die than to famish?

All:  
Resolved. resolved.

First Citizen:  
First, you know Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

All:  
We know't, we know't.

First Citizen:  
Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price.  
Is't a verdict?

All:  
No more talking on't; let it be done: away, away!

Second Citizen:  
One word, good citizens.

First Citizen:  
We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good.  
What authority surfeits on would relieve us: if they  
would yield us but the superfluity, while it were  
wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely;  
but they think we are too dear: the leanness that  
afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an  
inventory to particularise their abundance; our  
sufferance is a gain to them Let us revenge this with  
our pikes, ere we become rakes: for the gods know I  
speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge.

Second Citizen:  
Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

All:  
Against him first: he's a very dog to the commonalty.

Second Citizen:  
Consider you what services he has done for his country?

First Citizen:

Very well; and could be content to give him good report for, but that he pays himself with being proud.

Second Citizen:

Nay, but speak not maliciously.

First Citizen:

I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to that end: though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country he did it to please his mother and to be partly proud; which he is, even till the altitude of his virtue.

Second Citizen:

What he cannot help in his nature, you account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is covetous.

First Citizen:

If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations; he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. What shouts are these? The other side o' the city is risen: why stay we prating here? to the Capitol!

All:

Come, come.

First Citizen:

Soft! who comes here?

Second Citizen:

Worthy Menenius Agrippa; one that hath always loved the people.

First Citizen:

He's one honest enough: would all the rest were so!

MENENIUS:

What work's, my countrymen, in hand? where go you With bats and clubs? The matter? speak, I pray you.

First Citizen:

Our business is not unknown to the senate; they have had inkling this fortnight what we intend to do, which now we'll show 'em in deeds. They say poor suitors have strong breaths: they shall know we have strong arms too.

MENENIUS:

Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbours, Will you undo yourselves?

First Citizen:

We cannot, sir, we are undone already.

MENENIUS:

I tell you, friends, most charitable care  
Have the patricians of you. For your wants,  
Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well  
Strike at the heaven with your staves as lift them  
Against the Roman state, whose course will on  
The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs  
Of more strong link asunder than can ever  
Appear in your impediment. For the dearth,  
The gods, not the patricians, make it, and  
Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack,  
You are transported by calamity  
Thither where more attends you, and you slander  
The helms o' the state, who care for you like fathers,  
When you curse them as enemies.

First Citizen:

Care for us! True, indeed! They ne'er cared for us  
yet: suffer us to famish, and their store-houses  
crammed with grain; make edicts for usury, to  
support usurers; repeal daily any wholesome act  
established against the rich, and provide more  
piercing statutes daily, to chain up and restrain  
the poor. If the wars eat us not up, they will; and  
there's all the love they bear us.

MENENIUS:

Either you must  
Confess yourselves wondrous malicious,  
Or be accused of folly. I shall tell you  
A pretty tale: it may be you have heard it;  
But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture  
To stale 't a little more.

First Citizen:

Well, I'll hear it, sir: yet you must not think to  
fob off our disgrace with a tale: but, an 't please  
you, deliver.

MENENIUS:

There was a time when all the body's members  
Rebell'd against the belly, thus accused it:  
That only like a gulf it did remain  
I' the midst o' the body, idle and unactive,  
Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing  
Like labour with the rest, where the other instruments

Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,  
And, mutually participate, did minister  
Unto the appetite and affection common  
Of the whole body. The belly answer'd--

First Citizen:  
Well, sir, what answer made the belly?

MENENIUS:  
Sir, I shall tell you. With a kind of smile,  
Which ne'er came from the lungs, but even thus--  
For, look you, I may make the belly smile  
As well as speak--it tauntingly replied  
To the discontented members, the mutinous parts  
That envied his receipt; even so most fitly  
As you malign our senators for that  
They are not such as you.

First Citizen:  
Your belly's answer? What!  
The kingly-crowned head, the vigilant eye,  
The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier,  
Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter.  
With other muniments and petty helps  
In this our fabric, if that they--

MENENIUS:  
What then?  
'Fore me, this fellow speaks! What then? what then?

First Citizen:  
Should by the cormorant belly be restrain'd,  
Who is the sink o' the body,--

MENENIUS:  
Well, what then?

First Citizen:  
The former agents, if they did complain,  
What could the belly answer?

MENENIUS:  
I will tell you  
If you'll bestow a small--of what you have little--  
Patience awhile, you'll hear the belly's answer.

First Citizen:  
Ye're long about it.

MENENIUS:

Note me this, good friend;  
Your most grave belly was deliberate,  
Not rash like his accusers, and thus answer'd:  
'True is it, my incorporate friends,' quoth he,  
'That I receive the general food at first,  
Which you do live upon; and fit it is,  
Because I am the store-house and the shop  
Of the whole body: but, if you do remember,  
I send it through the rivers of your blood,  
Even to the court, the heart, to the seat o' the brain;  
And, through the cranks and offices of man,  
The strongest nerves and small inferior veins  
From me receive that natural competency  
Whereby they live: and though that all at once,  
You, my good friends,'--this says the belly, mark me,--

First Citizen:  
Ay, sir; well, well.

MENENIUS:  
'Though all at once cannot  
See what I do deliver out to each,  
Yet I can make my audit up, that all  
From me do back receive the flour of all,  
And leave me but the bran.' What say you to't?

First Citizen:  
It was an answer: how apply you this?

MENENIUS:  
The senators of Rome are this good belly,  
And you the mutinous members; for examine  
Their counsels and their cares, digest things rightly  
Touching the weal o' the common, you shall find  
No public benefit which you receive  
But it proceeds or comes from them to you  
And no way from yourselves. What do you think,  
You, the great toe of this assembly?

First Citizen:  
I the great toe! why the great toe?

MENENIUS:  
For that, being one o' the lowest, basest, poorest,  
Of this most wise rebellion, thou go'st foremost:  
Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,  
Lead'st first to win some vantage.  
But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs:  
Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;  
The one side must have bale.

Hail, noble Marcius!

MARCIUS:

Thanks. What's the matter, you dissentious rogues,  
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,  
Make yourselves scabs?

First Citizen:

We have ever your good word.

MARCIUS:

He that will give good words to thee will flatter  
Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,  
That like nor peace nor war? the one affrights you,  
The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,  
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;  
Where foxes, geese: you are no surer, no,  
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,  
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is  
To make him worthy whose offence subdues him  
And curse that justice did it.  
Who deserves greatness  
Deserves your hate; and your affections are  
A sick man's appetite, who desires most that  
Which would increase his evil. He that depends  
Upon your favours swims with fins of lead  
And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye! Trust Ye?  
With every minute you do change a mind,  
And call him noble that was now your hate,  
Him vile that was your garland. What's the matter,  
That in these several places of the city  
You cry against the noble senate, who,  
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else  
Would feed on one another? What's their seeking?

MENENIUS:

For corn at their own rates; whereof, they say,  
The city is well stored.

MARCIUS:

Hang 'em! They say!  
They'll sit by the fire, and presume to know  
What's done i' the Capitol; who's like to rise,  
Who thrives and who declines; side factions  
and give out  
Conjectural marriages; making parties strong  
And feebling such as stand not in their liking  
Below their cobbled shoes. They say there's  
grain enough!  
Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,

And let me use my sword, I'll make a quarry  
With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high  
As I could pick my lance.

MENENIUS:

Nay, these are almost thoroughly persuaded;  
For though abundantly they lack discretion,  
Yet are they passing cowardly. But, I beseech you,  
What says the other troop?

MARCIUS:

They are dissolved: hang 'em!  
They said they were an-hungry; sigh'd forth proverbs,  
That hunger broke stone walls, that dogs must eat,  
That meat was made for mouths, that the gods sent not  
Corn for the rich men only: with these shreds  
They vented their complainings; which being answer'd,  
And a petition granted them, a strange one--  
To break the heart of generosity,  
And make bold power look pale--they threw their caps  
As they would hang them on the horns o' the moon,  
Shouting their emulation.

MENENIUS:

What is granted them?

MARCIUS:

Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,  
Of their own choice: one's Junius Brutus,  
Sicinius Velutus, and I know not--'Sdeath!  
The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,  
Ere so prevail'd with me: it will in time  
Win upon power and throw forth greater themes  
For insurrection's arguing.

MENENIUS:

This is strange.

MARCIUS:

Go, get you home, you fragments!

Messenger:

Where's Caius Marcius?

MARCIUS:

Here: what's the matter?

Messenger:

The news is, sir, the Volscies are in arms.

MARCIUS:

I am glad on 't: then we shall ha' means to vent  
Our musty superfluity. See, our best elders.

First Senator:

Marcus, 'tis true that you have lately told us;  
The Volsces are in arms.

MARCIUS:

They have a leader,  
Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to 't.  
I sin in envying his nobility,  
And were I any thing but what I am,  
I would wish me only he.

COMINIUS:

You have fought together.

MARCIUS:

Were half to half the world by the ears and he.  
Upon my party, I'd revolt to make  
Only my wars with him: he is a lion  
That I am proud to hunt.

First Senator:

Then, worthy Marcus,  
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.

COMINIUS:

It is your former promise.

MARCIUS:

Sir, it is;  
And I am constant. Titus Lartius, thou  
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.  
What, art thou stiff? stand'st out?

TITUS:

No, Caius Marcus;  
I'll lean upon one crutch and fight with t'other,  
Ere stay behind this business.

MENENIUS:

O, true-bred!

First Senator:

Your company to the Capitol; where, I know,  
Our greatest friends attend us.

TITUS:



COMINIUS:  
Noble Marcus!

First Senator:

MARCUS:  
Nay, let them follow:  
The Volsces have much corn; take these rats thither  
To gnaw their garners. Worshipful mutiners,  
Your valour puts well forth: pray, follow.

SICINIUS:  
Was ever man so proud as is this Marcus?

BRUTUS:  
He has no equal.

SICINIUS:  
When we were chosen tribunes for the people,--

BRUTUS:  
Mark'd you his lip and eyes?

SICINIUS:  
Nay. but his taunts.

BRUTUS:  
Being moved, he will not spare to gird the gods.

SICINIUS:  
Be-mock the modest moon.

BRUTUS:  
The present wars devour him: he is grown  
Too proud to be so valiant.

SICINIUS:  
Such a nature,  
Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow  
Which he treads on at noon: but I do wonder  
His insolence can brook to be commanded  
Under Cominius.

BRUTUS:  
Fame, at the which he aims,  
In whom already he's well graced, can not  
Better be held nor more attain'd than by  
A place below the first: for what miscarries  
Shall be the general's fault, though he perform

To the utmost of a man, and giddy censure  
Will then cry out of Marcius 'O if he  
Had borne the business!'

SICINIUS:  
Besides, if things go well,  
Opinion that so sticks on Marcius shall  
Of his demerits rob Cominius.

BRUTUS:  
Come:  
Half all Cominius' honours are to Marcius.  
Though Marcius earned them not, and all his faults  
To Marcius shall be honours, though indeed  
In aught he merit not.

SICINIUS:  
Let's hence, and hear  
How the dispatch is made, and in what fashion,  
More than his singularity, he goes  
Upon this present action.

BRUTUS:  
Let's along.

First Senator:  
So, your opinion is, Aufidius,  
That they of Rome are entered in our counsels  
And know how we proceed.

AUFIDIUS:  
Is it not yours?  
What ever have been thought on in this state,  
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome  
Had circumvention? 'Tis not four days gone  
Since I heard thence; these are the words: I think  
I have the letter here; yes, here it is.  
'They have press'd a power, but it is not known  
Whether for east or west: the dearth is great;  
The people mutinous; and it is rumour'd,  
Cominius, Marcius your old enemy,  
Who is of Rome worse hated than of you,  
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,  
These three lead on this preparation  
Whither 'tis bent: most likely 'tis for you:  
Consider of it.'

First Senator:  
Our army's in the field  
We never yet made doubt but Rome was ready

To answer us.

AUFIDIUS:

Nor did you think it folly  
To keep your great pretences veil'd till when  
They needs must show themselves; which  
in the hatching,  
It seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery.  
We shall be shorten'd in our aim, which was  
To take in many towns ere almost Rome  
Should know we were afoot.

Second Senator:

Noble Aufidius,  
Take your commission; hie you to your bands:  
Let us alone to guard Corioli:  
If they set down before 's, for the remove  
Bring your army; but, I think, you'll find  
They've not prepared for us.

AUFIDIUS:

O, doubt not that;  
I speak from certainties. Nay, more,  
Some parcels of their power are forth already,  
And only hitherward. I leave your honours.  
If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet,  
'Tis sworn between us we shall ever strike  
Till one can do no more.

All:

The gods assist you!

AUFIDIUS:

And keep your honours safe!

First Senator:

Farewell.

Second Senator:

Farewell.

All:

Farewell.

VOLUMNIA:

I pray you, daughter, sing; or express yourself in a  
more comfortable sort: if my son were my husband, I  
should freelier rejoice in that absence wherein he  
won honour than in the embracements of his bed where  
he would show most love. When yet he was but

tender-bodied and the only son of my womb, when youth with comeliness plucked all gaze his way, when for a day of kings' entreaties a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding, I, considering how honour would become such a person. that it was no better than picture-like to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir, was pleased to let him seek danger where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him; from whence he returned, his brows bound with oak. I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man.

VIRGILIA:

But had he died in the business, madam; how then?

VOLUMNIA:

Then his good report should have been my son; I therein would have found issue. Hear me profess sincerely: had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

Gentlewoman:

Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

VIRGILIA:

Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.

VOLUMNIA:

Indeed, you shall not.

Methinks I hear hither your husband's drum,  
See him pluck Aufidius down by the hair,  
As children from a bear, the Volscies shunning him:  
Methinks I see him stamp thus, and call thus:  
'Come on, you cowards! you were got in fear,  
Though you were born in Rome:' his bloody brow  
With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes,  
Like to a harvest-man that's task'd to mow  
Or all or lose his hire.

VIRGILIA:

His bloody brow! O Jupiter, no blood!

VOLUMNIA:

Away, you fool! it more becomes a man  
Than gilt his trophy: the breasts of Hecuba,  
When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier

Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood  
At Grecian sword, contemning. Tell Valeria,  
We are fit to bid her welcome.

VIRGILIA:  
Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius!

VOLUMNIA:  
He'll beat Aufidius 'head below his knee  
And tread upon his neck.

VALERIA:  
My ladies both, good day to you.

VOLUMNIA:  
Sweet madam.

VIRGILIA:  
I am glad to see your ladyship.

VALERIA:  
How do you both? you are manifest house-keepers.  
What are you sewing here? A fine spot, in good  
faith. How does your little son?

VIRGILIA:  
I thank your ladyship; well, good madam.

VOLUMNIA:  
He had rather see the swords, and hear a drum, than  
look upon his school-master.

VALERIA:  
O' my word, the father's son: I'll swear, 'tis a  
very pretty boy. O' my troth, I looked upon him o'  
Wednesday half an hour together: has such a  
confirmed countenance. I saw him run after a gilded  
butterfly: and when he caught it, he let it go  
again; and after it again; and over and over he  
comes, and again; caught it again; or whether his  
fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his  
teeth and tear it; O, I warrant it, how he mammocked  
it!

VOLUMNIA:  
One on 's father's moods.

VALERIA:  
Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.

VIRGILIA:  
A crack, madam.

VALERIA:  
Come, lay aside your stitchery; I must have you play  
the idle husewife with me this afternoon.

VIRGILIA:  
No, good madam; I will not out of doors.

VALERIA:  
Not out of doors!

VOLUMNIA:  
She shall, she shall.

VIRGILIA:  
Indeed, no, by your patience; I'll not over the  
threshold till my lord return from the wars.

VALERIA:  
Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably: come,  
you must go visit the good lady that lies in.

VIRGILIA:  
I will wish her speedy strength, and visit her with  
my prayers; but I cannot go thither.

VOLUMNIA:  
Why, I pray you?

VIRGILIA:  
'Tis not to save labour, nor that I want love.

VALERIA:  
You would be another Penelope: yet, they say, all  
the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill  
Ithaca full of moths. Come; I would your cambric  
were sensible as your finger, that you might leave  
pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

VIRGILIA:  
No, good madam, pardon me; indeed, I will not forth.

VALERIA:  
In truth, la, go with me; and I'll tell you  
excellent news of your husband.

VIRGILIA:  
O, good madam, there can be none yet.

VALERIA:

Verily, I do not jest with you; there came news from him last night.

VIRGILIA:

Indeed, madam?

VALERIA:

In earnest, it's true; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is: the Volscies have an army forth; against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power: your lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioli; they nothing doubt prevailing and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honour; and so, I pray, go with us.

VIRGILIA:

Give me excuse, good madam; I will obey you in every thing hereafter.

VOLUMNIA:

Let her alone, lady: as she is now, she will but disease our better mirth.

VALERIA:

In troth, I think she would. Fare you well, then. Come, good sweet lady. Prithee, Virgilia, turn thy solemnness out o' door. and go along with us.

VIRGILIA:

No, at a word, madam; indeed, I must not. I wish you much mirth.

VALERIA:

Well, then, farewell.

MARCIUS:

Yonder comes news. A wager they have met.

LARTIUS:

My horse to yours, no.

MARCIUS:

'Tis done.

LARTIUS:

Agreed.

MARCIUS:

Say, has our general met the enemy?

Messenger:

They lie in view; but have not spoke as yet.

LARTIUS:

So, the good horse is mine.

MARCIUS:

I'll buy him of you.

LARTIUS:

No, I'll nor sell nor give him: lend you him I will  
For half a hundred years. Summon the town.

MARCIUS:

How far off lie these armies?

Messenger:

Within this mile and half.

MARCIUS:

Then shall we hear their 'larum, and they ours.  
Now, Mars, I prithee, make us quick in work,  
That we with smoking swords may march from hence,  
To help our fielded friends! Come, blow thy blast.  
Tutus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

First Senator:

No, nor a man that fears you less than he,  
That's lesser than a little.  
Hark! our drums  
Are bringing forth our youth. We'll break our walls,  
Rather than they shall pound us up: our gates,  
Which yet seem shut, we, have but pinn'd with rushes;  
They'll open of themselves.  
Hark you. far off!  
There is Aufidius; list, what work he makes  
Amongst your cloven army.

MARCIUS:

O, they are at it!

LARTIUS:

Their noise be our instruction. Ladders, ho!

MARCIUS:

They fear us not, but issue forth their city.  
Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight  
With hearts more proof than shields. Advance,



brave Titus:

They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts,  
Which makes me sweat with wrath. Come on, my fellows:  
He that retires I'll take him for a Volsce,  
And he shall feel mine edge.

MARCIUS:

All the contagion of the south light on you,  
You shames of Rome! you herd of--Boils and plagues  
Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorr'd  
Further than seen and one infect another  
Against the wind a mile! You souls of geese,  
That bear the shapes of men, how have you run  
From slaves that apes would beat! Pluto and hell!  
All hurt behind; backs red, and faces pale  
With flight and agued fear! Mend and charge home,  
Or, by the fires of heaven, I'll leave the foe  
And make my wars on you: look to't: come on;  
If you'll stand fast, we'll beat them to their wives,  
As they us to our trenches followed.  
So, now the gates are ope: now prove good seconds:  
'Tis for the followers fortune widens them,  
Not for the fliers: mark me, and do the like.

First Soldier:

Fool-hardiness; not I.

Second Soldier:

Nor I.

First Soldier:

See, they have shut him in.

All:

To the pot, I warrant him.

LARTIUS:

What is become of Marcius?

All:

Slain, sir, doubtless.

First Soldier:

Following the fliers at the very heels,  
With them he enters; who, upon the sudden,  
Clapp'd to their gates: he is himself alone,  
To answer all the city.

LARTIUS:

O noble fellow!

Who sensibly outdares his senseless sword,  
And, when it bows, stands up. Thou art left, Marcius:  
A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,  
Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier  
Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible  
Only in strokes; but, with thy grim looks and  
The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds,  
Thou madst thine enemies shake, as if the world  
Were feverous and did tremble.

First Soldier:  
Look, sir.

LARTIUS:  
O, 'tis Marcius!  
Let's fetch him off, or make remain alike.

First Roman:  
This will I carry to Rome.

Second Roman:  
And I this.

Third Roman:  
A murrain on't! I took this for silver.

MARCIUS:  
See here these movers that do prize their hours  
At a crack'd drachm! Cushions, leaden spoons,  
Irons of a doit, doublets that hangmen would  
Bury with those that wore them, these base slaves,  
Ere yet the fight be done, pack up: down with them!  
And hark, what noise the general makes! To him!  
There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,  
Piercing our Romans: then, valiant Titus, take  
Convenient numbers to make good the city;  
Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste  
To help Cominius.

LARTIUS:  
Worthy sir, thou bleed'st;  
Thy exercise hath been too violent for  
A second course of fight.

MARCIUS:  
Sir, praise me not;  
My work hath yet not warm'd me: fare you well:  
The blood I drop is rather physical  
Than dangerous to me: to Aufidius thus  
I will appear, and fight.

LARTIUS:

Now the fair goddess, Fortune,  
Fall deep in love with thee; and her great charms  
Misguide thy opposers' swords! Bold gentleman,  
Prosperity be thy page!

MARCIUS:

Thy friend no less  
Than those she placeth highest! So, farewell.

LARTIUS:

Thou worthiest Marcius!  
Go, sound thy trumpet in the market-place;  
Call thither all the officers o' the town,  
Where they shall know our mind: away!

COMINIUS:

Breathe you, my friends: well fought;  
we are come off  
Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands,  
Nor cowardly in retire: believe me, sirs,  
We shall be charged again. Whiles we have struck,  
By interims and conveying gusts we have heard  
The charges of our friends. Ye Roman gods!  
Lead their successes as we wish our own,  
That both our powers, with smiling  
fronts encountering,  
May give you thankful sacrifice.  
Thy news?

Messenger:

The citizens of Corioli have issued,  
And given to Lartius and to Marcius battle:  
I saw our party to their trenches driven,  
And then I came away.

COMINIUS:

Though thou speak'st truth,  
Methinks thou speak'st not well.  
How long is't since?

Messenger:

Above an hour, my lord.

COMINIUS:

'Tis not a mile; briefly we heard their drums:  
How couldst thou in a mile confound an hour,  
And bring thy news so late?

Messenger:

Spies of the Volsces  
Held me in chase, that I was forced to wheel  
Three or four miles about, else had I, sir,  
Half an hour since brought my report.

COMINIUS:

Who's yonder,  
That does appear as he were flay'd? O gods  
He has the stamp of Marcius; and I have  
Before-time seen him thus.

MARCIUS:

COMINIUS:

The shepherd knows not thunder from a tabour  
More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue  
From every meaner man.

MARCIUS:

Come I too late?

COMINIUS:

Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,  
But mantled in your own.

MARCIUS:

O, let me clip ye  
In arms as sound as when I woo'd, in heart  
As merry as when our nuptial day was done,  
And tapers burn'd to bedward!

COMINIUS:

Flower of warriors,  
How is it with Titus Lartius?

MARCIUS:

As with a man busied about decrees:  
Condemning some to death, and some to exile;  
Ransoming him, or pitying, threatening the other;  
Holding Corioli in the name of Rome,  
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,  
To let him slip at will.

COMINIUS:

Where is that slave  
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches?  
Where is he? call him hither.

MARCIUS:

Let him alone;  
He did inform the truth: but for our gentlemen,  
The common file--a plague! tribunes for them!--  
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat as they did budge  
From rascals worse than they.

COMINIUS:  
But how prevail'd you?

MARCIUS:  
Will the time serve to tell? I do not think.  
Where is the enemy? are you lords o' the field?  
If not, why cease you till you are so?

COMINIUS:  
Marcius,  
We have at disadvantage fought and did  
Retire to win our purpose.

MARCIUS:  
How lies their battle? know you on which side  
They have placed their men of trust?

COMINIUS:  
As I guess, Marcius,  
Their bands i' the vaward are the Antiates,  
Of their best trust; o'er them Aufidius,  
Their very heart of hope.

MARCIUS:  
I do beseech you,  
By all the battles wherein we have fought,  
By the blood we have shed together, by the vows  
We have made to endure friends, that you directly  
Set me against Aufidius and his Antiates;  
And that you not delay the present, but,  
Filling the air with swords advanced and darts,  
We prove this very hour.

COMINIUS:  
Though I could wish  
You were conducted to a gentle bath  
And balms applied to, you, yet dare I never  
Deny your asking: take your choice of those  
That best can aid your action.

MARCIUS:  
Those are they  
That most are willing. If any such be here--  
As it were sin to doubt--that love this painting

Wherein you see me smear'd; if any fear  
Lesser his person than an ill report;  
If any think brave death outweighs bad life  
And that his country's dearer than himself;  
Let him alone, or so many so minded,  
Wave thus, to express his disposition,  
And follow Marcius.  
O, me alone! make you a sword of me?  
If these shows be not outward, which of you  
But is four Volsces? none of you but is  
Able to bear against the great Aufidius  
A shield as hard as his. A certain number,  
Though thanks to all, must I select  
from all: the rest  
Shall bear the business in some other fight,  
As cause will be obey'd. Please you to march;  
And four shall quickly draw out my command,  
Which men are best inclined.

COMINIUS:

March on, my fellows:  
Make good this ostentation, and you shall  
Divide in all with us.

LARTIUS:

So, let the ports be guarded: keep your duties,  
As I have set them down. If I do send, dispatch  
Those centuries to our aid: the rest will serve  
For a short holding: if we lose the field,  
We cannot keep the town.

Lieutenant:

Fear not our care, sir.

LARTIUS:

Hence, and shut your gates upon's.  
Our guider, come; to the Roman camp conduct us.

MARCIUS:

I'll fight with none but thee; for I do hate thee  
Worse than a promise-breaker.

AUFIDIUS:

We hate alike:  
Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor  
More than thy fame and envy. Fix thy foot.

MARCIUS:

Let the first budger die the other's slave,  
And the gods doom him after!

AUFIDIUS:

If I fly, Marcius,  
Holloa me like a hare.

MARCIUS:

Within these three hours, Tullus,  
Alone I fought in your Corioli walls,  
And made what work I pleased: 'tis not my blood  
Wherein thou seest me mask'd; for thy revenge  
Wrench up thy power to the highest.

AUFIDIUS:

Wert thou the Hector  
That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,  
Thou shouldst not scape me here.  
Officious, and not valiant, you have shamed me  
In your condemned seconds.

COMINIUS:

If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,  
Thou'ldst not believe thy deeds: but I'll report it  
Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles,  
Where great patricians shall attend and shrug,  
I' the end admire, where ladies shall be frightened,  
And, gladly quaked, hear more; where the  
dull tribunes,  
That, with the fusty plebeians, hate thine honours,  
Shall say against their hearts 'We thank the gods  
Our Rome hath such a soldier.'  
Yet camest thou to a morsel of this feast,  
Having fully dined before.

LARTIUS:

O general,  
Here is the steed, we the caparison:  
Hadst thou beheld--

MARCIUS:

Pray now, no more: my mother,  
Who has a charter to extol her blood,  
When she does praise me grieves me. I have done  
As you have done; that's what I can; induced  
As you have been; that's for my country:  
He that has but effected his good will  
Hath overta'en mine act.

COMINIUS:

You shall not be  
The grave of your deserving; Rome must know

The value of her own: 'twere a concealment  
Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,  
To hide your doings; and to silence that,  
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouch'd,  
Would seem but modest: therefore, I beseech you  
In sign of what you are, not to reward  
What you have done--before our army hear me.

MARCIUS:

I have some wounds upon me, and they smart  
To hear themselves remember'd.

COMINIUS:

Should they not,  
Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude,  
And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses,  
Whereof we have ta'en good and good store, of all  
The treasure in this field achieved and city,  
We render you the tenth, to be ta'en forth,  
Before the common distribution, at  
Your only choice.

MARCIUS:

I thank you, general;  
But cannot make my heart consent to take  
A bribe to pay my sword: I do refuse it;  
And stand upon my common part with those  
That have beheld the doing.

MARCIUS:

May these same instruments, which you profane,  
Never sound more! when drums and trumpets shall  
I' the field prove flatterers, let courts and cities be  
Made all of false-faced soothing!  
When steel grows soft as the parasite's silk,  
Let him be made a coverture for the wars!  
No more, I say! For that I have not wash'd  
My nose that bled, or foil'd some debile wretch.--  
Which, without note, here's many else have done,--  
You shout me forth  
In acclamations hyperbolical;  
As if I loved my little should be dieted  
In praises sauced with lies.

COMINIUS:

Too modest are you;  
More cruel to your good report than grateful  
To us that give you truly: by your patience,  
If 'gainst yourself you be incensed, we'll put you,  
Like one that means his proper harm, in manacles,



Then reason safely with you. Therefore, be it known,  
As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius  
Wears this war's garland: in token of the which,  
My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him,  
With all his trim belonging; and from this time,  
For what he did before Corioli, call him,  
With all the applause and clamour of the host,  
CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS! Bear  
The addition nobly ever!

All:  
Caius Marcius Coriolanus!

CORIOLANUS:  
I will go wash;  
And when my face is fair, you shall perceive  
Whether I blush or no: howbeit, I thank you.  
I mean to stride your steed, and at all times  
To undercrest your good addition  
To the fairness of my power.

COMINIUS:  
So, to our tent;  
Where, ere we do repose us, we will write  
To Rome of our success. You, Titus Lartius,  
Must to Corioli back: send us to Rome  
The best, with whom we may articulate,  
For their own good and ours.

LARTIUS:  
I shall, my lord.

CORIOLANUS:  
The gods begin to mock me. I, that now  
Refused most princely gifts, am bound to beg  
Of my lord general.

COMINIUS:  
Take't; 'tis yours. What is't?

CORIOLANUS:  
I sometime lay here in Corioli  
At a poor man's house; he used me kindly:  
He cried to me; I saw him prisoner;  
But then Aufidius was within my view,  
And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity: I request you  
To give my poor host freedom.

COMINIUS:  
O, well begg'd!

Were he the butcher of my son, he should  
Be free as is the wind. Deliver him, Titus.

LARTIUS:  
Marcius, his name?

CORIOLANUS:  
By Jupiter! forgot.  
I am weary; yea, my memory is tired.  
Have we no wine here?

COMINIUS:  
Go we to our tent:  
The blood upon your visage dries; 'tis time  
It should be look'd to: come.

AUFIDIUS:  
The town is ta'en!

First Soldier:  
'Twill be deliver'd back on good condition.

AUFIDIUS:  
Condition!  
I would I were a Roman; for I cannot,  
Being a Volsce, be that I am. Condition!  
What good condition can a treaty find  
I' the part that is at mercy? Five times, Marcius,  
I have fought with thee: so often hast thou beat me,  
And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter  
As often as we eat. By the elements,  
If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,  
He's mine, or I am his: mine emulation  
Hath not that honour in't it had; for where  
I thought to crush him in an equal force,  
True sword to sword, I'll potch at him some way  
Or wrath or craft may get him.

First Soldier:  
He's the devil.

AUFIDIUS:  
Bolder, though not so subtle. My valour's poison'd  
With only suffering stain by him; for him  
Shall fly out of itself: nor sleep nor sanctuary,  
Being naked, sick, nor fane nor Capitol,  
The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,  
Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up  
Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst  
My hate to Marcius: where I find him, were it

At home, upon my brother's guard, even there,  
Against the hospitable canon, would I  
Wash my fierce hand in's heart. Go you to the city;  
Learn how 'tis held; and what they are that must  
Be hostages for Rome.

First Soldier:  
Will not you go?

AUFIDIUS:  
I am attended at the cypress grove: I pray you--  
'Tis south the city mills--bring me word thither  
How the world goes, that to the pace of it  
I may spur on my journey.

First Soldier:  
I shall, sir.

MENENIUS:  
The augurer tells me we shall have news to-night.

BRUTUS:  
Good or bad?

MENENIUS:  
Not according to the prayer of the people, for they  
love not Marcius.

SICINIUS:  
Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

MENENIUS:  
Pray you, who does the wolf love?

SICINIUS:  
The lamb.

MENENIUS:  
Ay, to devour him; as the hungry plebeians would the  
noble Marcius.

BRUTUS:  
He's a lamb indeed, that baes like a bear.

MENENIUS:  
He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb. You two  
are old men: tell me one thing that I shall ask you.

Both:  
Well, sir.

MENENIUS:

In what enormity is Marcius poor in, that you two have not in abundance?

BRUTUS:

He's poor in no one fault, but stored with all.

SICINIUS:

Especially in pride.

BRUTUS:

And topping all others in boasting.

MENENIUS:

This is strange now: do you two know how you are censured here in the city, I mean of us o' the right-hand file? do you?

Both:

Why, how are we censured?

MENENIUS:

Because you talk of pride now,--will you not be angry?

Both:

Well, well, sir, well.

MENENIUS:

Why, 'tis no great matter; for a very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of patience: give your dispositions the reins, and be angry at your pleasures; at the least if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Marcius for being proud?

BRUTUS:

We do it not alone, sir.

MENENIUS:

I know you can do very little alone; for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single: your abilities are too infant-like for doing much alone. You talk of pride: O that you could turn your eyes toward the napes of your necks, and make but an interior survey of your good selves! O that you could!

BRUTUS:

What then, sir?

MENENIUS:

Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates, alias fools, as any in Rome.

SICINIUS:

Menenius, you are known well enough too.

MENENIUS:

I am known to be a humorous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a drop of allaying Tiber in't; said to be something imperfect in favouring the first complaint; hasty and tinder-like upon too trivial motion; one that converses more with the buttock of the night than with the forehead of the morning: what I think I utter, and spend my malice in my breath. Meeting two such wealsmen as you are--I cannot call you Lycurguses--if the drink you give me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I can't say your worships have delivered the matter well, when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables: and though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly that tell you you have good faces. If you see this in the map of my microcosm, follows it that I am known well enough too? what barm can your bisson conspectuities glean out of this character, if I be known well enough too?

BRUTUS:

Come, sir, come, we know you well enough.

MENENIUS:

You know neither me, yourselves nor any thing. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs: you wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange wife and a fosset-seller; and then rejourn the controversy of three pence to a second day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinched with the colic, you make faces like mummers; set up the bloody flag against all patience; and, in roaring for a chamber-pot, dismiss the controversy bleeding the more entangled by your hearing: all the peace you make in their cause is, calling both the parties knaves. You are a pair of strange ones.

BRUTUS:

Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary bencher in the Capitol.

MENENIUS:

Our very priests must become mockers, if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entombed in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying, Marcus is proud; who in a cheap estimation, is worth predecessors since Deucalion, though peradventure some of the best of 'em were hereditary hangmen. God-den to your worships: more of your conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians: I will be bold to take my leave of you. How now, my as fair as noble ladies,--and the moon, were she earthly, no nobler,--whither do you follow your eyes so fast?

VOLUMNIA:

Honourable Menenius, my boy Marcus approaches; for the love of Juno, let's go.

MENENIUS:

Ha! Marcus coming home!

VOLUMNIA:

Ay, worthy Menenius; and with most prosperous approbation.

MENENIUS:

Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee. Hoo! Marcus coming home!

VOLUMNIA:

Nay, 'tis true.

VOLUMNIA:

Look, here's a letter from him: the state hath another, his wife another; and, I think, there's one at home for you.

MENENIUS:

I will make my very house reel tonight: a letter for me!

VIRGILIA:

Yes, certain, there's a letter for you; I saw't.

MENENIUS:

A letter for me! it gives me an estate of seven years' health; in which time I will make a lip at the physician: the most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiricute, and, to this preservative, of no better report than a horse-drench. Is he not wounded? he was wont to come home wounded.

VIRGILIA:

O, no, no, no.

VOLUMNIA:

O, he is wounded; I thank the gods for't.

MENENIUS:

So do I too, if it be not too much: brings a' victory in his pocket? the wounds become him.

VOLUMNIA:

On's brows: Menenius, he comes the third time home with the oaken garland.

MENENIUS:

Has he disciplined Aufidius soundly?

VOLUMNIA:

Titus Lartius writes, they fought together, but Aufidius got off.

MENENIUS:

And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant him that: an he had stayed by him, I would not have been so fidiused for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold that's in them. Is the senate possessed of this?

VOLUMNIA:

Good ladies, let's go. Yes, yes, yes; the senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war: he hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly

VALERIA:

In troth, there's wondrous things spoke of him.

MENENIUS:

Wondrous! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

VIRGILIA:

The gods grant them true!

VOLUMNIA:

True! pow, wow.

MENENIUS:

True! I'll be sworn they are true.

Where is he wounded?

God save your good worships! Marcius is coming home: he has more cause to be proud. Where is he wounded?

VOLUMNIA:

I' the shoulder and i' the left arm there will be large cicatrices to show the people, when he shall stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin seven hurts i' the body.

MENENIUS:

One i' the neck, and two i' the thigh,--there's nine that I know.

VOLUMNIA:

He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him.

MENENIUS:

Now it's twenty-seven: every gash was an enemy's grave. Hark! the trumpets.

VOLUMNIA:

These are the ushers of Marcius: before him he carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears: Death, that dark spirit, in 's nervy arm doth lie; Which, being advanced, declines, and then men die.

Herald:

Know, Rome, that all alone Marcius did fight  
Within Corioli gates: where he hath won,  
With fame, a name to Caius Marcius; these  
In honour follows Coriolanus.  
Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus!

All:

Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus!

CORIOLANUS:

No more of this; it does offend my heart:  
Pray now, no more.



COMINIUS:

Look, sir, your mother!

CORIOLANUS:

O,

You have, I know, petition'd all the gods  
For my prosperity!

VOLUMNIA:

Nay, my good soldier, up;  
My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and  
By deed-achieving honour newly named,--  
What is it?--Coriolanus must I call thee?--  
But O, thy wife!

CORIOLANUS:

My gracious silence, hail!  
Wouldst thou have laugh'd had I come coffin'd home,  
That weep'st to see me triumph? Ay, my dear,  
Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,  
And mothers that lack sons.

MENENIUS:

Now, the gods crown thee!

CORIOLANUS:

And live you yet?  
O my sweet lady, pardon.

VOLUMNIA:

I know not where to turn: O, welcome home:  
And welcome, general: and ye're welcome all.

MENENIUS:

A hundred thousand welcomes. I could weep  
And I could laugh, I am light and heavy. Welcome.  
A curse begin at very root on's heart,  
That is not glad to see thee! You are three  
That Rome should dote on: yet, by the faith of men,  
We have some old crab-trees here  
at home that will not  
Be grafted to your relish. Yet welcome, warriors:  
We call a nettle but a nettle and  
The faults of fools but folly.

COMINIUS:

Ever right.

CORIOLANUS:

Menenius ever, ever.

Herald:  
Give way there, and go on!

CORIOLANUS:

VOLUMNIA:  
I have lived  
To see inherited my very wishes  
And the buildings of my fancy: only  
There's one thing wanting, which I doubt not but  
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

CORIOLANUS:  
Know, good mother,  
I had rather be their servant in my way,  
Than sway with them in theirs.

COMINIUS:  
On, to the Capitol!

BRUTUS:  
All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights  
Are spectacled to see him: your prattling nurse  
Into a rapture lets her baby cry  
While she chats him: the kitchen malkin pins  
Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,  
Clambering the walls to eye him: stalls, bulks, windows,  
Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges horsed  
With variable complexions, all agreeing  
In earnestness to see him: seld-shown flamens  
Do press among the popular throngs and puff  
To win a vulgar station: or veil'd dames  
Commit the war of white and damask in  
Their nicely-gawded cheeks to the wanton spoil  
Of Phoebus' burning kisses: such a pothier  
As if that whatsoever god who leads him  
Were slyly crept into his human powers  
And gave him graceful posture.

SICINIUS:  
On the sudden,  
I warrant him consul.

BRUTUS:  
Then our office may,  
During his power, go sleep.

SICINIUS:

He cannot temperately transport his honours  
From where he should begin and end, but will  
Lose those he hath won.

BRUTUS:  
In that there's comfort.

SICINIUS:  
Doubt not  
The commoners, for whom we stand, but they  
Upon their ancient malice will forget  
With the least cause these his new honours, which  
That he will give them make I as little question  
As he is proud to do't.

BRUTUS:  
I heard him swear,  
Were he to stand for consul, never would he  
Appear i' the market-place nor on him put  
The napless vesture of humility;  
Nor showing, as the manner is, his wounds  
To the people, beg their stinking breaths.

SICINIUS:  
'Tis right.

BRUTUS:  
It was his word: O, he would miss it rather  
Than carry it but by the suit of the gentry to him,  
And the desire of the nobles.

SICINIUS:  
I wish no better  
Than have him hold that purpose and to put it  
In execution.

BRUTUS:  
'Tis most like he will.

SICINIUS:  
It shall be to him then as our good wills,  
A sure destruction.

BRUTUS:  
So it must fall out  
To him or our authorities. For an end,  
We must suggest the people in what hatred  
He still hath held them; that to's power he would  
Have made them mules, silenced their pleaders and  
Disproportioned their freedoms, holding them,

In human action and capacity,  
Of no more soul nor fitness for the world  
Than camels in the war, who have their provand  
Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows  
For sinking under them.

SICINIUS:

This, as you say, suggested  
At some time when his soaring insolence  
Shall touch the people--which time shall not want,  
If he be put upon 't; and that's as easy  
As to set dogs on sheep--will be his fire  
To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze  
Shall darken him for ever.

BRUTUS:

What's the matter?

Messenger:

You are sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought  
That Marcius shall be consul:  
I have seen the dumb men throng to see him and  
The blind to bear him speak: matrons flung gloves,  
Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchers,  
Upon him as he pass'd: the nobles bended,  
As to Jove's statue, and the commons made  
A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts:  
I never saw the like.

BRUTUS:

Let's to the Capitol;  
And carry with us ears and eyes for the time,  
But hearts for the event.

SICINIUS:

Have with you.

First Officer:

Come, come, they are almost here. How many stand  
for consulships?

Second Officer:

Three, they say: but 'tis thought of every one  
Coriolanus will carry it.

First Officer:

That's a brave fellow; but he's vengeance proud, and  
loves not the common people.

Second Officer:

Faith, there had been many great men that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved them; and there be many that they have loved, they know not wherefore: so that, if they love they know not why, they hate upon no better a ground: therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care whether they love or hate him manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition; and out of his noble carelessness lets them plainly see't.

First Officer:

If he did not care whether he had their love or no, he waved indifferently 'twixt doing them neither good nor harm: but he seeks their hate with greater devotion than can render it him; and leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love.

Second Officer:

He hath deserved worthily of his country: and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those who, having been supple and courteous to the people, bonneted, without any further deed to have them at an into their estimation and report: but he hath so planted his honours in their eyes, and his actions in their hearts, that for their tongues to be silent, and not confess so much, were a kind of ingrateful injury; to report otherwise, were a malice, that, giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it.

First Officer:

No more of him; he is a worthy man: make way, they are coming.

MENENIUS:

Having determined of the Volscies and  
To send for Titus Lartius, it remains,  
As the main point of this our after-meeting,  
To gratify his noble service that  
Hath thus stood for his country: therefore,  
please you,  
Most reverend and grave elders, to desire  
The present consul, and last general  
In our well-found successes, to report  
A little of that worthy work perform'd  
By Caius Marcius Coriolanus, whom  
We met here both to thank and to remember

With honours like himself.

First Senator:

Speak, good Cominius:

Leave nothing out for length, and make us think

Rather our state's defective for requital

Than we to stretch it out.

Masters o' the people,

We do request your kindest ears, and after,

Your loving motion toward the common body,

To yield what passes here.

SICINIUS:

We are convented

Upon a pleasing treaty, and have hearts

Inclinable to honour and advance

The theme of our assembly.

BRUTUS:

Which the rather

We shall be blest to do, if he remember

A kinder value of the people than

He hath hereto prized them at.

MENENIUS:

That's off, that's off;

I would you rather had been silent. Please you

To hear Cominius speak?

BRUTUS:

Most willingly;

But yet my caution was more pertinent

Than the rebuke you give it.

MENENIUS:

He loves your people

But tie him not to be their bedfellow.

Worthy Cominius, speak.

Nay, keep your place.

First Senator:

Sit, Coriolanus; never shame to hear

What you have nobly done.

CORIOLANUS:

Your horror's pardon:

I had rather have my wounds to heal again

Than hear say how I got them.

BRUTUS:

Sir, I hope  
My words disbench'd you not.

CORIO LANUS:

No, sir: yet oft,  
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words.  
You soothed not, therefore hurt not: but  
your people,  
I love them as they weigh.

MENENIUS:

Pray now, sit down.

CORIO LANUS:

I had rather have one scratch my head i' the sun  
When the alarum were struck than idly sit  
To hear my nothings monster'd.

MENENIUS:

Masters of the people,  
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter--  
That's thousand to one good one--when you now see  
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour  
Than one on's ears to hear it? Proceed, Cominius.

COMINIUS:

I shall lack voice: the deeds of Coriolanus  
Should not be utter'd feebly. It is held  
That valour is the chiefest virtue, and  
Most dignifies the haver: if it be,  
The man I speak of cannot in the world  
Be singly counterpoised. At sixteen years,  
When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought  
Beyond the mark of others: our then dictator,  
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight,  
When with his Amazonian chin he drove  
The bristled lips before him: he bestrid  
An o'er-press'd Roman and i' the consul's view  
Slew three opposers: Tarquin's self he met,  
And struck him on his knee: in that day's feats,  
When he might act the woman in the scene,  
He proved best man i' the field, and for his meed  
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil age  
Man-enter'd thus, he waxed like a sea,  
And in the brunt of seventeen battles since  
He lurch'd all swords of the garland. For this last,  
Before and in Corioli, let me say,  
I cannot speak him home: he stopp'd the fliers;  
And by his rare example made the coward  
Turn terror into sport: as weeds before

A vessel under sail, so men obey'd  
And fell below his stem: his sword, death's stamp,  
Where it did mark, it took; from face to foot  
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion  
Was timed with dying cries: alone he enter'd  
The mortal gate of the city, which he painted  
With shunless destiny; aidless came off,  
And with a sudden reinforcement struck  
Corioli like a planet: now all's his:  
When, by and by, the din of war gan pierce  
His ready sense; then straight his doubled spirit  
Re-quicken'd what in flesh was fatigate,  
And to the battle came he; where he did  
Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if  
'Twere a perpetual spoil: and till we call'd  
Both field and city ours, he never stood  
To ease his breast with panting.

MENENIUS:  
Worthy man!

First Senator:  
He cannot but with measure fit the honours  
Which we devise him.

COMINIUS:  
Our spoils he kick'd at,  
And look'd upon things precious as they were  
The common muck of the world: he covets less  
Than misery itself would give; rewards  
His deeds with doing them, and is content  
To spend the time to end it.

MENENIUS:  
He's right noble:  
Let him be call'd for.

First Senator:  
Call Coriolanus.

Officer:  
He doth appear.

MENENIUS:  
The senate, Coriolanus, are well pleased  
To make thee consul.

CORIOLANUS:  
I do owe them still  
My life and services.



MENENIUS:

It then remains  
That you do speak to the people.

CORIOLANUS:

I do beseech you,  
Let me o'erleap that custom, for I cannot  
Put on the gown, stand naked and entreat them,  
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage: please you  
That I may pass this doing.

SICINIUS:

Sir, the people  
Must have their voices; neither will they bate  
One jot of ceremony.

MENENIUS:

Put them not to't:  
Pray you, go fit you to the custom and  
Take to you, as your predecessors have,  
Your honour with your form.

CORIOLANUS:

It is apart  
That I shall blush in acting, and might well  
Be taken from the people.

BRUTUS:

Mark you that?

CORIOLANUS:

To brag unto them, thus I did, and thus;  
Show them the unaching scars which I should hide,  
As if I had received them for the hire  
Of their breath only!

MENENIUS:

Do not stand upon't.  
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,  
Our purpose to them: and to our noble consul  
Wish we all joy and honour.

Senators:

To Coriolanus come all joy and honour!

BRUTUS:

You see how he intends to use the people.

SICINIUS:

May they perceive's intent! He will require them,  
As if he did condemn what he requested  
Should be in them to give.

BRUTUS:

Come, we'll inform them  
Of our proceedings here: on the marketplace,  
I know, they do attend us.

First Citizen:

Once, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

Second Citizen:

We may, sir, if we will.

Third Citizen:

We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a  
power that we have no power to do; for if he show us  
his wounds and tell us his deeds, we are to put our  
tongues into those wounds and speak for them; so, if  
he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him  
our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is  
monstrous, and for the multitude to be ingrateful,  
were to make a monster of the multitude: of the  
which we being members, should bring ourselves to be  
monstrous members.

First Citizen:

And to make us no better thought of, a little help  
will serve; for once we stood up about the corn, he  
himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

Third Citizen:

We have been called so of many; not that our heads  
are some brown, some black, some auburn, some bald,  
but that our wits are so diversely coloured: and  
truly I think if all our wits were to issue out of  
one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south,  
and their consent of one direct way should be at  
once to all the points o' the compass.

Second Citizen:

Think you so? Which way do you judge my wit would  
fly?

Third Citizen:

Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another man's  
will; 'tis strongly wedged up in a block-head, but  
if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

Second Citizen:  
Why that way?

Third Citizen:  
To lose itself in a fog, where being three parts  
melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return  
for conscience sake, to help to get thee a wife.

Second Citizen:  
You are never without your tricks: you may, you may.

Third Citizen:  
Are you all resolved to give your voices? But  
that's no matter, the greater part carries it. I  
say, if he would incline to the people, there was  
never a worthier man.  
Here he comes, and in the gown of humility: mark his  
behavior. We are not to stay all together, but to  
come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and  
by threes. He's to make his requests by  
particulars; wherein every one of us has a single  
honour, in giving him our own voices with our own  
tongues: therefore follow me, and I direct you how  
you shall go by him.

All:  
Content, content.

MENENIUS:  
O sir, you are not right: have you not known  
The worthiest men have done't?

CORIOLANUS:  
What must I say?  
'I Pray, sir'--Plague upon't! I cannot bring  
My tongue to such a pace:--'Look, sir, my wounds!  
I got them in my country's service, when  
Some certain of your brethren roar'd and ran  
From the noise of our own drums.'

MENENIUS:  
O me, the gods!  
You must not speak of that: you must desire them  
To think upon you.

CORIOLANUS:  
Think upon me! hang 'em!  
I would they would forget me, like the virtues  
Which our divines lose by 'em.

MENENIUS:

You'll mar all:

I'll leave you: pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,  
In wholesome manner.

CORIOLANUS:

Bid them wash their faces

And keep their teeth clean.

So, here comes a brace.

You know the cause, air, of my standing here.

Third Citizen:

We do, sir; tell us what hath brought you to't.

CORIOLANUS:

Mine own desert.

Second Citizen:

Your own desert!

CORIOLANUS:

Ay, but not mine own desire.

Third Citizen:

How not your own desire?

CORIOLANUS:

No, sir, 'twas never my desire yet to trouble the  
poor with begging.

Third Citizen:

You must think, if we give you any thing, we hope to  
gain by you.

CORIOLANUS:

Well then, I pray, your price o' the consulship?

First Citizen:

The price is to ask it kindly.

CORIOLANUS:

Kindly! Sir, I pray, let me ha't: I have wounds to  
show you, which shall be yours in private. Your  
good voice, sir; what say you?

Second Citizen:

You shall ha' it, worthy sir.

CORIOLANUS:

A match, sir. There's in all two worthy voices

begged. I have your alms: adieu.

Third Citizen:

But this is something odd.

Second Citizen:

An 'twere to give again,--but 'tis no matter.

CORIOLANUS:

Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of your voices that I may be consul, I have here the customary gown.

Fourth Citizen:

You have deserved nobly of your country, and you have not deserved nobly.

CORIOLANUS:

Your enigma?

Fourth Citizen:

You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends; you have not indeed loved the common people.

CORIOLANUS:

You should account me the more virtuous that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them; 'tis a condition they account gentle: and since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod and be off to them most counterfeitly; that is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man and give it bountiful to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you, I may be consul.

Fifth Citizen:

We hope to find you our friend; and therefore give you our voices heartily.

Fourth Citizen:

You have received many wounds for your country.

CORIOLANUS:

I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices, and so trouble you no further.

Both Citizens:

The gods give you joy, sir, heartily!

CORIOLANUS:

Most sweet voices!

Better it is to die, better to starve,  
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.  
Why in this woolvish toge should I stand here,  
To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear,  
Their needless vouches? Custom calls me to't:  
What custom wills, in all things should we do't,  
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,  
And mountainous error be too highly heapt  
For truth to o'er-peer. Rather than fool it so,  
Let the high office and the honour go  
To one that would do thus. I am half through;  
The one part suffer'd, the other will I do.  
Here come more voices.

Your voices: for your voices I have fought;  
Watch'd for your voices; for Your voices bear  
Of wounds two dozen odd; battles thrice six  
I have seen and heard of; for your voices have  
Done many things, some less, some more your voices:  
Indeed I would be consul.

Sixth Citizen:

He has done nobly, and cannot go without any honest  
man's voice.

Seventh Citizen:

Therefore let him be consul: the gods give him joy,  
and make him good friend to the people!

All Citizens:

Amen, amen. God save thee, noble consul!

CORIOLANUS:

Worthy voices!

MENENIUS:

You have stood your limitation; and the tribunes  
Endue you with the people's voice: remains  
That, in the official marks invested, you  
Anon do meet the senate.

CORIOLANUS:

Is this done?

SICINIUS:

The custom of request you have discharged:  
The people do admit you, and are summon'd

To meet anon, upon your approbation.

CORIOLANUS:

Where? at the senate-house?

SICINIUS:

There, Coriolanus.

CORIOLANUS:

May I change these garments?

SICINIUS:

You may, sir.

CORIOLANUS:

That I'll straight do; and, knowing myself again,  
Repair to the senate-house.

MENENIUS:

I'll keep you company. Will you along?

BRUTUS:

We stay here for the people.

SICINIUS:

Fare you well.

He has it now, and by his looks methink  
'Tis warm at 's heart.

BRUTUS:

With a proud heart he wore his humble weeds.  
will you dismiss the people?

SICINIUS:

How now, my masters! have you chose this man?

First Citizen:

He has our voices, sir.

BRUTUS:

We pray the gods he may deserve your loves.

Second Citizen:

Amen, sir: to my poor unworthy notice,  
He mock'd us when he begg'd our voices.

Third Citizen:

Certainly  
He flouted us downright.

First Citizen:

No, 'tis his kind of speech: he did not mock us.

Second Citizen:

Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says  
He used us scornfully: he should have show'd us  
His marks of merit, wounds received for's country.

SICINIUS:

Why, so he did, I am sure.

Citizens:

No, no; no man saw 'em.

Third Citizen:

He said he had wounds, which he could show  
in private;  
And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn,  
'I would be consul,' says he: 'aged custom,  
But by your voices, will not so permit me;  
Your voices therefore.' When we granted that,  
Here was 'I thank you for your voices: thank you:  
Your most sweet voices: now you have left  
your voices,  
I have no further with you.' Was not this mockery?

SICINIUS:

Why either were you ignorant to see't,  
Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness  
To yield your voices?

BRUTUS:

Could you not have told him  
As you were lesson'd, when he had no power,  
But was a petty servant to the state,  
He was your enemy, ever spake against  
Your liberties and the charters that you bear  
I' the body of the weal; and now, arriving  
A place of potency and sway o' the state,  
If he should still malignantly remain  
Fast foe to the plebeii, your voices might  
Be curses to yourselves? You should have said  
That as his worthy deeds did claim no less  
Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature  
Would think upon you for your voices and  
Translate his malice towards you into love,  
Standing your friendly lord.

SICINIUS:

Thus to have said,



As you were fore-advised, had touch'd his spirit  
And tried his inclination; from him pluck'd  
Either his gracious promise, which you might,  
As cause had call'd you up, have held him to  
Or else it would have gall'd his surly nature,  
Which easily endures not article  
Tying him to aught; so putting him to rage,  
You should have ta'en the advantage of his choler  
And pass'd him unelected.

BRUTUS:  
Did you perceive  
He did solicit you in free contempt  
When he did need your loves, and do you think  
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you,  
When he hath power to crush? Why, had your bodies  
No heart among you? or had you tongues to cry  
Against the rectorship of judgment?

SICINIUS:  
Have you  
Ere now denied the asker? and now again  
Of him that did not ask, but mock, bestow  
Your sued-for tongues?

Third Citizen:  
He's not confirm'd; we may deny him yet.

Second Citizen:  
And will deny him:  
I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.

First Citizen:  
I twice five hundred and their friends to piece 'em.

BRUTUS:  
Get you hence instantly, and tell those friends,  
They have chose a consul that will from them take  
Their liberties; make them of no more voice  
Than dogs that are as often beat for barking  
As therefore kept to do so.

SICINIUS:  
Let them assemble,  
And on a safer judgment all revoke  
Your ignorant election; enforce his pride,  
And his old hate unto you; besides, forget not  
With what contempt he wore the humble weed,  
How in his suit he scorn'd you; but your loves,  
Thinking upon his services, took from you

The apprehension of his present portance,  
Which most gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion  
After the inveterate hate he bears you.

BRUTUS:

Lay  
A fault on us, your tribunes; that we laboured,  
No impediment between, but that you must  
Cast your election on him.

SICINIUS:

Say, you chose him  
More after our commandment than as guided  
By your own true affections, and that your minds,  
Preoccupied with what you rather must do  
Than what you should, made you against the grain  
To voice him consul: lay the fault on us.

BRUTUS:

Ay, spare us not. Say we read lectures to you.  
How youngly he began to serve his country,  
How long continued, and what stock he springs of,  
The noble house o' the Marcians, from whence came  
That Ancus Marcius, Numa's daughter's son,  
Who, after great Hostilius, here was king;  
Of the same house Publius and Quintus were,  
That our beat water brought by conduits hither;  
And  
Twice being  
Was his great ancestor.

SICINIUS:

One thus descended,  
That hath beside well in his person wrought  
To be set high in place, we did commend  
To your remembrances: but you have found,  
Scaling his present bearing with his past,  
That he's your fixed enemy, and revoke  
Your sudden approbation.

BRUTUS:

Say, you ne'er had done't--  
Harp on that still--but by our putting on;  
And presently, when you have drawn your number,  
Repair to the Capitol.

All:

We will so: almost all  
Repent in their election.

BRUTUS:

Let them go on;  
This mutiny were better put in hazard,  
Than stay, past doubt, for greater:  
If, as his nature is, he fall in rage  
With their refusal, both observe and answer  
The vantage of his anger.

SICINIUS:

To the Capitol, come:  
We will be there before the stream o' the people;  
And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,  
Which we have goaded onward.

CORIOLANUS:

Tullus Aufidius then had made new head?

LARTIUS:

He had, my lord; and that it was which caused  
Our swifter composition.

CORIOLANUS:

So then the Volsces stand but as at first,  
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road.  
Upon's again.

COMINIUS:

They are worn, lord consul, so,  
That we shall hardly in our ages see  
Their banners wave again.

CORIOLANUS:

Saw you Aufidius?

LARTIUS:

On safe-guard he came to me; and did curse  
Against the Volsces, for they had so vilely  
Yielded the town: he is retired to Antium.

CORIOLANUS:

Spoke he of me?

LARTIUS:

He did, my lord.

CORIOLANUS:

How? what?

LARTIUS:

How often he had met you, sword to sword;

That of all things upon the earth he hated  
Your person most, that he would pawn his fortunes  
To hopeless restitution, so he might  
Be call'd your vanquisher.

CORIOLANUS:  
At Antium lives he?

LARTIUS:  
At Antium.

CORIOLANUS:  
I wish I had a cause to seek him there,  
To oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home.  
Behold, these are the tribunes of the people,  
The tongues o' the common mouth: I do despise them;  
For they do prank them in authority,  
Against all noble sufferance.

SICINIUS:  
Pass no further.

CORIOLANUS:  
Ha! what is that?

BRUTUS:  
It will be dangerous to go on: no further.

CORIOLANUS:  
What makes this change?

MENENIUS:  
The matter?

COMINIUS:  
Hath he not pass'd the noble and the common?

BRUTUS:  
Cominius, no.

CORIOLANUS:  
Have I had children's voices?

First Senator:  
Tribunes, give way; he shall to the market-place.

BRUTUS:  
The people are incensed against him.

SICINIUS:

Stop,  
Or all will fall in broil.

CORIOLANUS:

Are these your herd?  
Must these have voices, that can yield them now  
And straight disclaim their tongues? What are  
your offices?  
You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth?  
Have you not set them on?

MENENIUS:

Be calm, be calm.

CORIOLANUS:

It is a purposed thing, and grows by plot,  
To curb the will of the nobility:  
Suffer't, and live with such as cannot rule  
Nor ever will be ruled.

BRUTUS:

Call't not a plot:  
The people cry you mock'd them, and of late,  
When corn was given them gratis, you repined;  
Scandal'd the suppliants for the people, call'd them  
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

CORIOLANUS:

Why, this was known before.

BRUTUS:

Not to them all.

CORIOLANUS:

Have you inform'd them sithence?

BRUTUS:

How! I inform them!

CORIOLANUS:

You are like to do such business.

BRUTUS:

Not unlike,  
Each way, to better yours.

CORIOLANUS:

Why then should I be consul? By yond clouds,  
Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me  
Your fellow tribune.

SICINIUS:

You show too much of that  
For which the people stir: if you will pass  
To where you are bound, you must inquire your way,  
Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit,  
Or never be so noble as a consul,  
Nor yoke with him for tribune.

MENENIUS:

Let's be calm.

COMINIUS:

The people are abused; set on. This paltering  
Becomes not Rome, nor has Coriolanus  
Deserved this so dishonour'd rub, laid falsely  
I' the plain way of his merit.

CORIOLANUS:

Tell me of corn!  
This was my speech, and I will speak't again--

MENENIUS:

Not now, not now.

First Senator:

Not in this heat, sir, now.

CORIOLANUS:

Now, as I live, I will. My nobler friends,  
I crave their pardons:  
For the mutable, rank-scented many, let them  
Regard me as I do not flatter, and  
Therein behold themselves: I say again,  
In soothing them, we nourish 'gainst our senate  
The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition,  
Which we ourselves have plough'd for, sow'd,  
and scatter'd,  
By mingling them with us, the honour'd number,  
Who lack not virtue, no, nor power, but that  
Which they have given to beggars.

MENENIUS:

Well, no more.

First Senator:

No more words, we beseech you.

CORIOLANUS:

How! no more!

As for my country I have shed my blood,  
Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs  
Coin words till their decay against those measles,  
Which we disdain should tatter us, yet sought  
The very way to catch them.

BRUTUS:  
You speak o' the people,  
As if you were a god to punish, not  
A man of their infirmity.

SICINIUS:  
'Twere well  
We let the people know't.

MENENIUS:  
What, what? his choler?

CORIOLANUS:  
Choler!  
Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,  
By Jove, 'twould be my mind!

SICINIUS:  
It is a mind  
That shall remain a poison where it is,  
Not poison any further.

CORIOLANUS:  
Shall remain!  
Hear you this Triton of the minnows? mark you  
His absolute 'shall'?

COMINIUS:  
'Twas from the canon.

CORIOLANUS:  
'Shall'!  
O good but most unwise patricians! why,  
You grave but reckless senators, have you thus  
Given Hydra here to choose an officer,  
That with his peremptory 'shall,' being but  
The horn and noise o' the monster's, wants not spirit  
To say he'll turn your current in a ditch,  
And make your channel his? If he have power  
Then vail your ignorance; if none, awake  
Your dangerous lenity. If you are learn'd,  
Be not as common fools; if you are not,  
Let them have cushions by you. You are plebeians,  
If they be senators: and they are no less,

When, both your voices blended, the great'st taste  
Most palates theirs. They choose their magistrate,  
And such a one as he, who puts his 'shall,'  
His popular 'shall' against a graver bench  
Than ever frown in Greece. By Jove himself!  
It makes the consuls base: and my soul aches  
To know, when two authorities are up,  
Neither supreme, how soon confusion  
May enter 'twixt the gap of both and take  
The one by the other.

COMINIUS:

Well, on to the market-place.

CORIOLANUS:

Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth  
The corn o' the storehouse gratis, as 'twas used  
Sometime in Greece,--

MENENIUS:

Well, well, no more of that.

CORIOLANUS:

Though there the people had more absolute power,  
I say, they nourish'd disobedience, fed  
The ruin of the state.

BRUTUS:

Why, shall the people give  
One that speaks thus their voice?

CORIOLANUS:

I'll give my reasons,  
More worthier than their voices. They know the corn  
Was not our recompense, resting well assured  
That ne'er did service for't: being press'd to the war,  
Even when the navel of the state was touch'd,  
They would not thread the gates. This kind of service  
Did not deserve corn gratis. Being i' the war  
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they show'd  
Most valour, spoke not for them: the accusation  
Which they have often made against the senate,  
All cause unborn, could never be the motive  
Of our so frank donation. Well, what then?  
How shall this bisson multitude digest  
The senate's courtesy? Let deeds express  
What's like to be their words: 'we did request it;  
We are the greater poll, and in true fear  
They gave us our demands.' Thus we debase  
The nature of our seats and make the rabble



Call our cares fears; which will in time  
Break ope the locks o' the senate and bring in  
The crows to peck the eagles.

MENENIUS:  
Come, enough.

BRUTUS:  
Enough, with over-measure.

CORIOLANUS:  
No, take more:  
What may be sworn by, both divine and human,  
Seal what I end withal! This double worship,  
Where one part does disdain with cause, the other  
Insult without all reason, where gentry, title, wisdom,  
Cannot conclude but by the yea and no  
Of general ignorance,--it must omit  
Real necessities, and give way the while  
To unstable slightness: purpose so barr'd,  
it follows,  
Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore, beseech you,--  
You that will be less fearful than discreet,  
That love the fundamental part of state  
More than you doubt the change on't, that prefer  
A noble life before a long, and wish  
To jump a body with a dangerous physic  
That's sure of death without it, at once pluck out  
The multitudinous tongue; let them not lick  
The sweet which is their poison: your dishonour  
Mangles true judgment and bereaves the state  
Of that integrity which should become't,  
Not having the power to do the good it would,  
For the in which doth control't.

BRUTUS:  
Has said enough.

SICINIUS:  
Has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer  
As traitors do.

CORIOLANUS:  
Thou wretch, despite o'erwhelm thee!  
What should the people do with these bald tribunes?  
On whom depending, their obedience fails  
To the greater bench: in a rebellion,  
When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,  
Then were they chosen: in a better hour,  
Let what is meet be said it must be meet,

And throw their power i' the dust.

BRUTUS:  
Manifest treason!

SICINIUS:  
This a consul? no.

BRUTUS:  
The aediles, ho!  
Let him be apprehended.

SICINIUS:  
Go, call the people:  
in whose name myself  
Attach thee as a traitorous innovator,  
A foe to the public weal: obey, I charge thee,  
And follow to thine answer.

CORIOLANUS:  
Hence, old goat!

Senators, &C:  
We'll surety him.

COMINIUS:  
Aged sir, hands off.

CORIOLANUS:  
Hence, rotten thing! or I shall shake thy bones  
Out of thy garments.

SICINIUS:  
Help, ye citizens!

MENENIUS:  
On both sides more respect.

SICINIUS:  
Here's he that would take from you all your power.

BRUTUS:  
Seize him, AEdiles!

Citizens:  
Down with him! down with him!

Senators, &C:  
Weapons, weapons, weapons!  
'Tribunes!' 'Patricians!' 'Citizens!' 'What, ho!'

'Sicinius!' 'Brutus!' 'Coriolanus!' 'Citizens!'  
'Peace, peace, peace!' 'Stay, hold, peace!'

MENENIUS:

What is about to be? I am out of breath;  
Confusion's near; I cannot speak. You, tribunes  
To the people! Coriolanus, patience!  
Speak, good Sicinius.

SICINIUS:

Hear me, people; peace!

Citizens:

Let's hear our tribune: peace Speak, speak, speak.

SICINIUS:

You are at point to lose your liberties:  
Marcius would have all from you; Marcius,  
Whom late you have named for consul.

MENENIUS:

Fie, fie, fie!  
This is the way to kindle, not to quench.

First Senator:

To unbuild the city and to lay all flat.

SICINIUS:

What is the city but the people?

Citizens:

True,  
The people are the city.

BRUTUS:

By the consent of all, we were establish'd  
The people's magistrates.

Citizens:

You so remain.

MENENIUS:

And so are like to do.

COMINIUS:

That is the way to lay the city flat;  
To bring the roof to the foundation,  
And bury all, which yet distinctly ranges,  
In heaps and piles of ruin.

SICINIUS:  
This deserves death.

BRUTUS:  
Or let us stand to our authority,  
Or let us lose it. We do here pronounce,  
Upon the part o' the people, in whose power  
We were elected theirs, Marcius is worthy  
Of present death.

SICINIUS:  
Therefore lay hold of him;  
Bear him to the rock Tarpeian, and from thence  
Into destruction cast him.

BRUTUS:  
AEdiles, seize him!

Citizens:  
Yield, Marcius, yield!

MENENIUS:  
Hear me one word;  
Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word.

AEdile:  
Peace, peace!

MENENIUS:

BRUTUS:  
Sir, those cold ways,  
That seem like prudent helps, are very poisonous  
Where the disease is violent. Lay hands upon him,  
And bear him to the rock.

CORIOLANUS:  
No, I'll die here.  
There's some among you have beheld me fighting:  
Come, try upon yourselves what you have seen me.

MENENIUS:  
Down with that sword! Tribunes, withdraw awhile.

BRUTUS:  
Lay hands upon him.

COMINIUS:  
Help Marcius, help,  
You that be noble; help him, young and old!

Citizens:  
Down with him, down with him!

MENENIUS:  
Go, get you to your house; be gone, away!  
All will be naught else.

Second Senator:  
Get you gone.

COMINIUS:  
Stand fast;  
We have as many friends as enemies.

MENENIUS:  
Sham it be put to that?

First Senator:  
The gods forbid!  
I prithee, noble friend, home to thy house;  
Leave us to cure this cause.

MENENIUS:  
For 'tis a sore upon us,  
You cannot tent yourself: be gone, beseech you.

COMINIUS:  
Come, sir, along with us.

CORIOLANUS:  
I would they were barbarians--as they are,  
Though in Rome litter'd--not Romans--as they are not,  
Though calved i' the porch o' the Capitol--

MENENIUS:  
Be gone;  
Put not your worthy rage into your tongue;  
One time will owe another.

CORIOLANUS:  
On fair ground  
I could beat forty of them.

COMINIUS:  
I could myself  
Take up a brace o' the best of them; yea, the  
two tribunes:  
But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic;  
And manhood is call'd foolery, when it stands

Against a falling fabric. Will you hence,  
Before the tag return? whose rage doth rend  
Like interrupted waters and o'erbear  
What they are used to bear.

MENENIUS:

Pray you, be gone:  
I'll try whether my old wit be in request  
With those that have but little: this must be patch'd  
With cloth of any colour.

COMINIUS:

Nay, come away.

A Patrician:

This man has marr'd his fortune.

MENENIUS:

His nature is too noble for the world:  
He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,  
Or Jove for's power to thunder. His heart's his mouth:  
What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent;  
And, being angry, does forget that ever  
He heard the name of death.  
Here's goodly work!

Second Patrician:

I would they were abed!

MENENIUS:

I would they were in Tiber! What the vengeance!  
Could he not speak 'em fair?

SICINIUS:

Where is this viper  
That would depopulate the city and  
Be every man himself?

MENENIUS:

You worthy tribunes,--

SICINIUS:

He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock  
With rigorous hands: he hath resisted law,  
And therefore law shall scorn him further trial  
Than the severity of the public power  
Which he so sets at nought.

First Citizen:

He shall well know

The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,  
And we their hands.

Citizens:  
He shall, sure on't.

MENENIUS:  
Sir, sir,--

SICINIUS:  
Peace!

MENENIUS:  
Do not cry havoc, where you should but hunt  
With modest warrant.

SICINIUS:  
Sir, how comes't that you  
Have help to make this rescue?

MENENIUS:  
Hear me speak:  
As I do know the consul's worthiness,  
So can I name his faults,--

SICINIUS:  
Consul! what consul?

MENENIUS:  
The consul Coriolanus.

BRUTUS:  
He consul!

Citizens:  
No, no, no, no, no.

MENENIUS:  
If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good people,  
I may be heard, I would crave a word or two;  
The which shall turn you to no further harm  
Than so much loss of time.

SICINIUS:  
Speak briefly then;  
For we are peremptory to dispatch  
This viperous traitor: to eject him hence  
Were but one danger, and to keep him here  
Our certain death: therefore it is decreed  
He dies to-night.

MENENIUS:

Now the good gods forbid  
That our renowned Rome, whose gratitude  
Towards her deserved children is enroll'd  
In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam  
Should now eat up her own!

SICINIUS:

He's a disease that must be cut away.

MENENIUS:

O, he's a limb that has but a disease;  
Mortal, to cut it off; to cure it, easy.  
What has he done to Rome that's worthy death?  
Killing our enemies, the blood he hath lost--  
Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath,  
By many an ounce--he dropp'd it for his country;  
And what is left, to lose it by his country,  
Were to us all, that do't and suffer it,  
A brand to the end o' the world.

SICINIUS:

This is clean kam.

BRUTUS:

Merely awry: when he did love his country,  
It honour'd him.

MENENIUS:

The service of the foot  
Being once gangrened, is not then respected  
For what before it was.

BRUTUS:

We'll hear no more.  
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence:  
Lest his infection, being of catching nature,  
Spread further.

MENENIUS:

One word more, one word.  
This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find  
The harm of unscann'd swiftness, will too late  
Tie leaden pounds to's heels. Proceed by process;  
Lest parties, as he is beloved, break out,  
And sack great Rome with Romans.

BRUTUS:

If it were so,--



SICINIUS:

What do ye talk?

Have we not had a taste of his obedience?

Our aediles smote? ourselves resisted? Come.

MENENIUS:

Consider this: he has been bred i' the wars  
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill school'd  
In bolted language; meal and bran together  
He throws without distinction. Give me leave,  
I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him  
Where he shall answer, by a lawful form,  
In peace, to his utmost peril.

First Senator:

Noble tribunes,

It is the humane way: the other course  
Will prove too bloody, and the end of it  
Unknown to the beginning.

SICINIUS:

Noble Menenius,

Be you then as the people's officer.

Masters, lay down your weapons.

BRUTUS:

Go not home.

SICINIUS:

Meet on the market-place. We'll attend you there:  
Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed  
In our first way.

MENENIUS:

I'll bring him to you.

Let me desire your company: he must come,

Or what is worst will follow.

First Senator:

Pray you, let's to him.

CORIOLANUS:

Let them puff all about mine ears, present me  
Death on the wheel or at wild horses' heels,  
Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,  
That the precipitation might down stretch  
Below the beam of sight, yet will I still  
Be thus to them.

A Patrician:  
You do the nobler.

CORIOLANUS:  
I muse my mother  
Does not approve me further, who was wont  
To call them woollen vassals, things created  
To buy and sell with groats, to show bare heads  
In congregations, to yawn, be still and wonder,  
When one but of my ordinance stood up  
To speak of peace or war.  
I talk of you:  
Why did you wish me milder? would you have me  
False to my nature? Rather say I play  
The man I am.

VOLUMNIA:  
O, sir, sir, sir,  
I would have had you put your power well on,  
Before you had worn it out.

CORIOLANUS:  
Let go.

VOLUMNIA:  
You might have been enough the man you are,  
With striving less to be so; lesser had been  
The thwartings of your dispositions, if  
You had not show'd them how ye were disposed  
Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

CORIOLANUS:  
Let them hang.

A Patrician:  
Ay, and burn too.

MENENIUS:  
Come, come, you have been too rough, something  
too rough;  
You must return and mend it.

First Senator:  
There's no remedy;  
Unless, by not so doing, our good city  
Cleave in the midst, and perish.

VOLUMNIA:  
Pray, be counsell'd:  
I have a heart as little apt as yours,

But yet a brain that leads my use of anger  
To better vantage.

MENENIUS:

Well said, noble woman?  
Before he should thus stoop to the herd, but that  
The violent fit o' the time craves it as physic  
For the whole state, I would put mine armour on,  
Which I can scarcely bear.

CORIOLANUS:

What must I do?

MENENIUS:

Return to the tribunes.

CORIOLANUS:

Well, what then? what then?

MENENIUS:

Repent what you have spoke.

CORIOLANUS:

For them! I cannot do it to the gods;  
Must I then do't to them?

VOLUMNIA:

You are too absolute;  
Though therein you can never be too noble,  
But when extremities speak. I have heard you say,  
Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,  
I' the war do grow together: grant that, and tell me,  
In peace what each of them by the other lose,  
That they combine not there.

CORIOLANUS:

Tush, tush!

MENENIUS:

A good demand.

VOLUMNIA:

If it be honour in your wars to seem  
The same you are not, which, for your best ends,  
You adopt your policy, how is it less or worse,  
That it shall hold companionship in peace  
With honour, as in war, since that to both  
It stands in like request?

CORIOLANUS:

Why force you this?

VOLUMNIA:

Because that now it lies you on to speak  
To the people; not by your own instruction,  
Nor by the matter which your heart prompts you,  
But with such words that are but rooted in  
Your tongue, though but bastards and syllables  
Of no allowance to your bosom's truth.  
Now, this no more dishonours you at all  
Than to take in a town with gentle words,  
Which else would put you to your fortune and  
The hazard of much blood.  
I would dissemble with my nature where  
My fortunes and my friends at stake required  
I should do so in honour: I am in this,  
Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles;  
And you will rather show our general louts  
How you can frown than spend a fawn upon 'em,  
For the inheritance of their loves and safeguard  
Of what that want might ruin.

MENENIUS:

Noble lady!  
Come, go with us; speak fair: you may salve so,  
Not what is dangerous present, but the loss  
Of what is past.

VOLUMNIA:

I prithee now, my son,  
Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand;  
And thus far having stretch'd it--here be with them--  
Thy knee bussing the stones--for in such business  
Action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant  
More learned than the ears--waving thy head,  
Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,  
Now humble as the ripest mulberry  
That will not hold the handling: or say to them,  
Thou art their soldier, and being bred in broils  
Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess,  
Were fit for thee to use as they to claim,  
In asking their good loves, but thou wilt frame  
Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far  
As thou hast power and person.

MENENIUS:

This but done,  
Even as she speaks, why, their hearts were yours;  
For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free  
As words to little purpose.

VOLUMNIA:

Prithee now,  
Go, and be ruled: although I know thou hadst rather  
Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf  
Than flatter him in a bower. Here is Cominius.

COMINIUS:

I have been i' the market-place; and, sir, 'tis fit  
You make strong party, or defend yourself  
By calmness or by absence: all's in anger.

MENENIUS:

Only fair speech.

COMINIUS:

I think 'twill serve, if he  
Can thereto frame his spirit.

VOLUMNIA:

He must, and will  
Prithee now, say you will, and go about it.

CORIOLANUS:

Must I go show them my unbarbed sconce?  
Must I with base tongue give my noble heart  
A lie that it must bear? Well, I will do't:  
Yet, were there but this single plot to lose,  
This mould of Marcius, they to dust should grind it  
And throw't against the wind. To the market-place!  
You have put me now to such a part which never  
I shall discharge to the life.

COMINIUS:

Come, come, we'll prompt you.

VOLUMNIA:

I prithee now, sweet son, as thou hast said  
My praises made thee first a soldier, so,  
To have my praise for this, perform a part  
Thou hast not done before.

CORIOLANUS:

Well, I must do't:  
Away, my disposition, and possess me  
Some harlot's spirit! my throat of war be turn'd,  
Which quired with my drum, into a pipe  
Small as an eunuch, or the virgin voice  
That babies lulls asleep! the smiles of knaves  
Tent in my cheeks, and schoolboys' tears take up

The glasses of my sight! a beggar's tongue  
Make motion through my lips, and my arm'd knees,  
Who bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his  
That hath received an alms! I will not do't,  
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth  
And by my body's action teach my mind  
A most inherent baseness.

VOLUMNIA:

At thy choice, then:  
To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour  
Than thou of them. Come all to ruin; let  
Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear  
Thy dangerous stoutness, for I mock at death  
With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list  
Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me,  
But owe thy pride thyself.

CORIOLANUS:

Pray, be content:  
Mother, I am going to the market-place;  
Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,  
Cog their hearts from them, and come home beloved  
Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going:  
Commend me to my wife. I'll return consul;  
Or never trust to what my tongue can do  
I' the way of flattery further.

VOLUMNIA:

Do your will.

COMINIUS:

Away! the tribunes do attend you: arm yourself  
To answer mildly; for they are prepared  
With accusations, as I hear, more strong  
Than are upon you yet.

CORIOLANUS:

The word is 'mildly.' Pray you, let us go:  
Let them accuse me by invention, I  
Will answer in mine honour.

MENENIUS:

Ay, but mildly.

CORIOLANUS:

Well, mildly be it then. Mildly!

BRUTUS:

In this point charge him home, that he affects

Tyrannical power: if he evade us there,  
Enforce him with his envy to the people,  
And that the spoil got on the Antiates  
Was ne'er distributed.  
What, will he come?

AEdile:  
He's coming.

BRUTUS:  
How accompanied?

AEdile:  
With old Menenius, and those senators  
That always favour'd him.

SICINIUS:  
Have you a catalogue  
Of all the voices that we have procured  
Set down by the poll?

AEdile:  
I have; 'tis ready.

SICINIUS:  
Have you collected them by tribes?

AEdile:  
I have.

SICINIUS:  
Assemble presently the people hither;  
And when they bear me say 'It shall be so  
I' the right and strength o' the commons,' be it either  
For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them  
If I say fine, cry 'Fine;' if death, cry 'Death.'  
Insisting on the old prerogative  
And power i' the truth o' the cause.

AEdile:  
I shall inform them.

BRUTUS:  
And when such time they have begun to cry,  
Let them not cease, but with a din confused  
Enforce the present execution  
Of what we chance to sentence.

AEdile:  
Very well.

SICINIUS:

Make them be strong and ready for this hint,  
When we shall hap to give 't them.

BRUTUS:

Go about it.

Put him to choler straight: he hath been used  
Ever to conquer, and to have his worth  
Of contradiction: being once chafed, he cannot  
Be rein'd again to temperance; then he speaks  
What's in his heart; and that is there which looks  
With us to break his neck.

SICINIUS:

Well, here he comes.

MENENIUS:

Calmly, I do beseech you.

CORIOLANUS:

Ay, as an ostler, that for the poorest piece  
Will bear the knave by the volume. The honour'd gods  
Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice  
Supplied with worthy men! plant love among 's!  
Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,  
And not our streets with war!

First Senator:

Amen, amen.

MENENIUS:

A noble wish.

SICINIUS:

Draw near, ye people.

AE dile:

List to your tribunes. Audience: peace, I say!

CORIOLANUS:

First, hear me speak.

Both Tribunes:

Well, say. Peace, ho!

CORIOLANUS:

Shall I be charged no further than this present?  
Must all determine here?



SICINIUS:

I do demand,  
If you submit you to the people's voices,  
Allow their officers and are content  
To suffer lawful censure for such faults  
As shall be proved upon you?

CORIOLANUS:

I am content.

MENENIUS:

Lo, citizens, he says he is content:  
The warlike service he has done, consider; think  
Upon the wounds his body bears, which show  
Like graves i' the holy churchyard.

CORIOLANUS:

Scratches with briers,  
Scars to move laughter only.

MENENIUS:

Consider further,  
That when he speaks not like a citizen,  
You find him like a soldier: do not take  
His rougher accents for malicious sounds,  
But, as I say, such as become a soldier,  
Rather than envy you.

COMINIUS:

Well, well, no more.

CORIOLANUS:

What is the matter  
That being pass'd for consul with full voice,  
I am so dishonour'd that the very hour  
You take it off again?

SICINIUS:

Answer to us.

CORIOLANUS:

Say, then: 'tis true, I ought so.

SICINIUS:

We charge you, that you have contrived to take  
From Rome all season'd office and to wind  
Yourself into a power tyrannical;  
For which you are a traitor to the people.

CORIOLANUS:

How! traitor!

MENENIUS:

Nay, temperately; your promise.

CORIOLANUS:

The fires i' the lowest hell fold-in the people!  
Call me their traitor! Thou injurious tribune!  
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,  
In thy hand clutch'd as many millions, in  
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say  
'Thou liest' unto thee with a voice as free  
As I do pray the gods.

SICINIUS:

Mark you this, people?

Citizens:

To the rock, to the rock with him!

SICINIUS:

Peace!

We need not put new matter to his charge:  
What you have seen him do and heard him speak,  
Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,  
Opposing laws with strokes and here defying  
Those whose great power must try him; even this,  
So criminal and in such capital kind,  
Deserves the extremest death.

BRUTUS:

But since he hath  
Served well for Rome,--

CORIOLANUS:

What do you prate of service?

BRUTUS:

I talk of that, that know it.

CORIOLANUS:

You?

MENENIUS:

Is this the promise that you made your mother?

COMINIUS:

Know, I pray you,--

CORIOLANUS:

I know no further:  
Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,  
Vagabond exile, raving, pent to linger  
But with a grain a day, I would not buy  
Their mercy at the price of one fair word;  
Nor cheque my courage for what they can give,  
To have't with saying 'Good morrow.'

SICINIUS:  
For that he has,  
As much as in him lies, from time to time  
Envied against the people, seeking means  
To pluck away their power, as now at last  
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence  
Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers  
That do distribute it; in the name o' the people  
And in the power of us the tribunes, we,  
Even from this instant, banish him our city,  
In peril of precipitation  
From off the rock Tarpeian never more  
To enter our Rome gates: i' the people's name,  
I say it shall be so.

Citizens:  
It shall be so, it shall be so; let him away:  
He's banish'd, and it shall be so.

COMINIUS:  
Hear me, my masters, and my common friends,--

SICINIUS:  
He's sentenced; no more hearing.

COMINIUS:  
Let me speak:  
I have been consul, and can show for Rome  
Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love  
My country's good with a respect more tender,  
More holy and profound, than mine own life,  
My dear wife's estimate, her womb's increase,  
And treasure of my loins; then if I would  
Speak that,--

SICINIUS:  
We know your drift: speak what?

BRUTUS:  
There's no more to be said, but he is banish'd,  
As enemy to the people and his country:  
It shall be so.

Citizens:

It shall be so, it shall be so.

CORIOLANUS:

You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate  
As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize  
As the dead carcasses of unburied men  
That do corrupt my air, I banish you;  
And here remain with your uncertainty!  
Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts!  
Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,  
Fan you into despair! Have the power still  
To banish your defenders; till at length  
Your ignorance, which finds not till it feels,  
Making not reservation of yourselves,  
Still your own foes, deliver you as most  
Abated captives to some nation  
That won you without blows! Despising,  
For you, the city, thus I turn my back:  
There is a world elsewhere.

AE dile:

The people's enemy is gone, is gone!

Citizens:

Our enemy is banish'd! he is gone! Hoo! hoo!

SICINIUS:

Go, see him out at gates, and follow him,  
As he hath followed you, with all despite;  
Give him deserved vexation. Let a guard  
Attend us through the city.

Citizens:

Come, come; let's see him out at gates; come.  
The gods preserve our noble tribunes! Come.

CORIOLANUS:

Come, leave your tears: a brief farewell: the beast  
With many heads butts me away. Nay, mother,  
Where is your ancient courage? you were used  
To say extremity was the trier of spirits;  
That common chances common men could bear;  
That when the sea was calm all boats alike  
Show'd mastership in floating; fortune's blows,  
When most struck home, being gentle wounded, craves  
A noble cunning: you were used to load me  
With precepts that would make invincible  
The heart that conn'd them.

VIRGILIA:

O heavens! O heavens!

CORIO LANUS:

Nay! prithee, woman,--

VOLUMNIA:

Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,  
And occupations perish!

CORIO LANUS:

What, what, what!

I shall be loved when I am lack'd. Nay, mother.  
Resume that spirit, when you were wont to say,  
If you had been the wife of Hercules,  
Six of his labours you'd have done, and saved  
Your husband so much sweat. Cominius,  
Droop not; adieu. Farewell, my wife, my mother:  
I'll do well yet. Thou old and true Menenius,  
Thy tears are salter than a younger man's,  
And venomous to thine eyes. My sometime general,  
I have seen thee stem, and thou hast oft beheld  
Heart-hardening spectacles; tell these sad women  
'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes,  
As 'tis to laugh at 'em. My mother, you wot well  
My hazards still have been your solace: and  
Believe't not lightly--though I go alone,  
Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen  
Makes fear'd and talk'd of more than seen--your son  
Will or exceed the common or be caught  
With cautelous baits and practise.

VOLUMNIA:

My first son.

Whither wilt thou go? Take good Cominius  
With thee awhile: determine on some course,  
More than a wild exposure to each chance  
That starts i' the way before thee.

CORIO LANUS:

O the gods!

COMINIUS:

I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee  
Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us  
And we of thee: so if the time thrust forth  
A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send  
O'er the vast world to seek a single man,  
And lose advantage, which doth ever cool

I' the absence of the needer.

CORIO LANUS:

Fare ye well:

Thou hast years upon thee; and thou art too full  
Of the wars' surfeits, to go rove with one  
That's yet unbruised: bring me but out at gate.  
Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and  
My friends of noble touch, when I am forth,  
Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you, come.  
While I remain above the ground, you shall  
Hear from me still, and never of me aught  
But what is like me formerly.

MENENIUS:

That's worthily

As any ear can hear. Come, let's not weep.  
If I could shake off but one seven years  
From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,  
I'd with thee every foot.

CORIO LANUS:

Give me thy hand: Come.

SICINIUS:

Bid them all home; he's gone, and we'll no further.  
The nobility are vex'd, whom we see have sided  
In his behalf.

BRUTUS:

Now we have shown our power,  
Let us seem humbler after it is done  
Than when it was a-doing.

SICINIUS:

Bid them home:  
Say their great enemy is gone, and they  
Stand in their ancient strength.

BRUTUS:

Dismiss them home.  
Here comes his mother.

SICINIUS:

Let's not meet her.

BRUTUS:

Why?

SICINIUS:

They say she's mad.

BRUTUS:

They have ta'en note of us: keep on your way.

VOLUMNIA:

O, ye're well met: the hoarded plague o' the gods  
Requite your love!

MENENIUS:

Peace, peace; be not so loud.

VOLUMNIA:

If that I could for weeping, you should hear,--  
Nay, and you shall hear some.  
Will you be gone?

VIRGILIA:

SICINIUS:

Are you mankind?

VOLUMNIA:

Ay, fool; is that a shame? Note but this fool.  
Was not a man my father? Hadst thou foxship  
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome  
Than thou hast spoken words?

SICINIUS:

O blessed heavens!

VOLUMNIA:

More noble blows than ever thou wise words;  
And for Rome's good. I'll tell thee what; yet go:  
Nay, but thou shalt stay too: I would my son  
Were in Arabia, and thy tribe before him,  
His good sword in his hand.

SICINIUS:

What then?

VIRGILIA:

What then!  
He'd make an end of thy posterity.

VOLUMNIA:

Bastards and all.  
Good man, the wounds that he does bear for Rome!

MENENIUS:

Come, come, peace.

SICINIUS:

I would he had continued to his country  
As he began, and not unknit himself  
The noble knot he made.

BRUTUS:

I would he had.

VOLUMNIA:

'I would he had'! 'Twas you incensed the rabble:  
Cats, that can judge as fitly of his worth  
As I can of those mysteries which heaven  
Will not have earth to know.

BRUTUS:

Pray, let us go.

VOLUMNIA:

Now, pray, sir, get you gone:  
You have done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear this:--  
As far as doth the Capitol exceed  
The meanest house in Rome, so far my son--  
This lady's husband here, this, do you see--  
Whom you have banish'd, does exceed you all.

BRUTUS:

Well, well, we'll leave you.

SICINIUS:

Why stay we to be baited  
With one that wants her wits?

VOLUMNIA:

Take my prayers with you.  
I would the gods had nothing else to do  
But to confirm my curses! Could I meet 'em  
But once a-day, it would unclog my heart  
Of what lies heavy to't.

MENENIUS:

You have told them home;  
And, by my troth, you have cause. You'll sup with me?

VOLUMNIA:

Anger's my meat; I sup upon myself,  
And so shall starve with feeding. Come, let's go:  
Leave this faint puling and lament as I do,  
In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come.



MENENIUS:  
Fie, fie, fie!

Roman:  
I know you well, sir, and you know  
me: your name, I think, is Adrian.

Volsce:  
It is so, sir: truly, I have forgot you.

Roman:  
I am a Roman; and my services are,  
as you are, against 'em: know you me yet?

Volsce:  
Nicanor? no.

Roman:  
The same, sir.

Volsce:  
You had more beard when I last saw you; but your  
favour is well approved by your tongue. What's the  
news in Rome? I have a note from the Volscian state,  
to find you out there: you have well saved me a  
day's journey.

Roman:  
There hath been in Rome strange insurrections; the  
people against the senators, patricians, and nobles.

Volsce:  
Hath been! is it ended, then? Our state thinks not  
so: they are in a most warlike preparation, and  
hope to come upon them in the heat of their division.

Roman:  
The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing  
would make it flame again: for the nobles receive  
so to heart the banishment of that worthy  
Coriolanus, that they are in a ripe aptness to take  
all power from the people and to pluck from them  
their tribunes for ever. This lies glowing, I can  
tell you, and is almost mature for the violent  
breaking out.

Volsce:  
Coriolanus banished!

Roman:  
Banished, sir.

Volsce:  
You will be welcome with this intelligence, Nicanor.

Roman:  
The day serves well for them now. I have heard it said, the fittest time to corrupt a man's wife is when she's fallen out with her husband. Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer, Coriolanus, being now in no request of his country.

Volsce:  
He cannot choose. I am most fortunate, thus accidentally to encounter you: you have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home.

Roman:  
I shall, between this and supper, tell you most strange things from Rome; all tending to the good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you?

Volsce:  
A most royal one; the centurions and their charges, distinctly billeted, already in the entertainment, and to be on foot at an hour's warning.

Roman:  
I am joyful to hear of their readiness, and am the man, I think, that shall set them in present action. So, sir, heartily well met, and most glad of your company.

Volsce:  
You take my part from me, sir; I have the most cause to be glad of yours.

Roman:  
Well, let us go together.

CORIOLANUS:  
A goodly city is this Antium. City,  
'Tis I that made thy widows: many an heir  
Of these fair edifices 'fore my wars  
Have I heard groan and drop: then know me not,  
Lest that thy wives with spits and boys with stones  
In puny battle slay me.  
Save you, sir.

Citizen:  
And you.

CORIOLANUS:  
Direct me, if it be your will,  
Where great Aufidius lies: is he in Antium?

Citizen:  
He is, and feasts the nobles of the state  
At his house this night.

CORIOLANUS:  
Which is his house, beseech you?

Citizen:  
This, here before you.

CORIOLANUS:  
Thank you, sir: farewell.  
O world, thy slippery turns! Friends now fast sworn,  
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,  
Whose house, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,  
Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love  
Unseparable, shall within this hour,  
On a dissension of a doit, break out  
To bitterest enmity: so, fellest foes,  
Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep,  
To take the one the other, by some chance,  
Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends  
And interjoin their issues. So with me:  
My birth-place hate I, and my love's upon  
This enemy town. I'll enter: if he slay me,  
He does fair justice; if he give me way,  
I'll do his country service.

First Servingman:  
Wine, wine, wine! What service  
is here! I think our fellows are asleep.

Second Servingman:  
Where's Catus? my master calls  
for him. Catus!

CORIOLANUS:  
A goodly house: the feast smells well; but I  
Appear not like a guest.

First Servingman:  
What would you have, friend? whence are you?  
Here's no place for you: pray, go to the door.

CORIOLANUS:

I have deserved no better entertainment,  
In being Coriolanus.

Second Servingman:

Whence are you, sir? Has the porter his eyes in his  
head; that he gives entrance to such companions?  
Pray, get you out.

CORIOLANUS:

Away!

Second Servingman:

Away! get you away.

CORIOLANUS:

Now thou'rt troublesome.

Second Servingman:

Are you so brave? I'll have you talked with anon.

Third Servingman:

What fellow's this?

First Servingman:

A strange one as ever I looked on: I cannot get him  
out of the house: prithee, call my master to him.

Third Servingman:

What have you to do here, fellow? Pray you, avoid  
the house.

CORIOLANUS:

Let me but stand; I will not hurt your hearth.

Third Servingman:

What are you?

CORIOLANUS:

A gentleman.

Third Servingman:

A marvellous poor one.

CORIOLANUS:

True, so I am.

Third Servingman:

Pray you, poor gentleman, take up some other

station; here's no place for you; pray you, avoid: come.

CORIOLANUS:

Follow your function, go, and batten on cold bits.

Third Servingman:

What, you will not? Prithee, tell my master what a strange guest he has here.

Second Servingman:

And I shall.

Third Servingman:

Where dwellest thou?

CORIOLANUS:

Under the canopy.

Third Servingman:

Under the canopy!

CORIOLANUS:

Ay.

Third Servingman:

Where's that?

CORIOLANUS:

I' the city of kites and crows.

Third Servingman:

I' the city of kites and crows! What an ass it is!  
Then thou dwellest with daws too?

CORIOLANUS:

No, I serve not thy master.

Third Servingman:

How, sir! do you meddle with my master?

CORIOLANUS:

Ay; 'tis an honest service than to meddle with thy mistress. Thou pratest, and pratest; serve with thy trencher, hence!

AUFIDIUS:

Where is this fellow?

Second Servingman:

Here, sir: I'd have beaten him like a dog, but for

disturbing the lords within.

AUFIDIUS:

Whence comest thou? what wouldst thou? thy name?  
Why speak'st not? speak, man: what's thy name?

CORIOLANUS:

If, Tullus,  
Not yet thou knowest me, and, seeing me, dost not  
Think me for the man I am, necessity  
Commands me name myself.

AUFIDIUS:

What is thy name?

CORIOLANUS:

A name unmusical to the Volscians' ears,  
And harsh in sound to thine.

AUFIDIUS:

Say, what's thy name?  
Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face  
Bears a command in't; though thy tackle's torn.  
Thou show'st a noble vessel: what's thy name?

CORIOLANUS:

Prepare thy brow to frown: know'st  
thou me yet?

AUFIDIUS:

I know thee not: thy name?

CORIOLANUS:

My name is Caius Marcius, who hath done  
To thee particularly and to all the Volscies  
Great hurt and mischief; thereto witness may  
My surname, Coriolanus: the painful service,  
The extreme dangers and the drops of blood  
Shed for my thankless country are requited  
But with that surname; a good memory,  
And witness of the malice and displeasure  
Which thou shouldst bear me: only that name remains;  
The cruelty and envy of the people,  
Permitted by our dastard nobles, who  
Have all forsook me, hath devour'd the rest;  
And suffer'd me by the voice of slaves to be  
Whoop'd out of Rome. Now this extremity  
Hath brought me to thy hearth; not out of hope--  
Mistake me not--to save my life, for if  
I had fear'd death, of all the men i' the world

I would have 'voided thee, but in mere spite,  
To be full quit of those my banishers,  
Stand I before thee here. Then if thou hast  
A heart of wreak in thee, that wilt revenge  
Thine own particular wrongs and stop those maims  
Of shame seen through thy country, speed  
thee straight,  
And make my misery serve thy turn: so use it  
That my revengeful services may prove  
As benefits to thee, for I will fight  
Against my canker'd country with the spleen  
Of all the under fiends. But if so be  
Thou darest not this and that to prove more fortunes  
Thou'rt tired, then, in a word, I also am  
Longer to live most weary, and present  
My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice;  
Which not to cut would show thee but a fool,  
Since I have ever follow'd thee with hate,  
Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,  
And cannot live but to thy shame, unless  
It be to do thee service.

AUFIDIUS:

O Marcius, Marcius!

Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my heart  
A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter  
Should from yond cloud speak divine things,  
And say 'Tis true,' I'd not believe them more  
Than thee, all noble Marcius. Let me twine  
Mine arms about that body, where against  
My grained ash an hundred times hath broke  
And scarr'd the moon with splinters: here I clip  
The anvil of my sword, and do contest  
As hotly and as nobly with thy love  
As ever in ambitious strength I did  
Contend against thy valour. Know thou first,  
I loved the maid I married; never man  
Sigh'd truer breath; but that I see thee here,  
Thou noble thing! more dances my rapt heart  
Than when I first my wedded mistress saw  
Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars! I tell thee,  
We have a power on foot; and I had purpose  
Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,  
Or lose mine arm fort: thou hast beat me out  
Twelve several times, and I have nightly since  
Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me;  
We have been down together in my sleep,  
Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,  
And waked half dead with nothing. Worthy Marcius,  
Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that

Thou art thence banish'd, we would muster all  
From twelve to seventy, and pouring war  
Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,  
Like a bold flood o'er-bear. O, come, go in,  
And take our friendly senators by the hands;  
Who now are here, taking their leaves of me,  
Who am prepared against your territories,  
Though not for Rome itself.

CORIOLANUS:

You bless me, gods!

AUFIDIUS:

Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have  
The leading of thine own revenges, take  
The one half of my commission; and set down--  
As best thou art experienced, since thou know'st  
Thy country's strength and weakness,--thine own ways;  
Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,  
Or rudely visit them in parts remote,  
To fright them, ere destroy. But come in:  
Let me commend thee first to those that shall  
Say yea to thy desires. A thousand welcomes!  
And more a friend than e'er an enemy;  
Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand: most welcome!

First Servingman:

Here's a strange alteration!

Second Servingman:

By my hand, I had thought to have stricken him with  
a cudgel; and yet my mind gave me his clothes made a  
false report of him.

First Servingman:

What an arm he has! he turned me about with his  
finger and his thumb, as one would set up a top.

Second Servingman:

Nay, I knew by his face that there was something in  
him: he had, sir, a kind of face, methought,--I  
cannot tell how to term it.

First Servingman:

He had so; looking as it were--would I were hanged,  
but I thought there was more in him than I could think.

Second Servingman:

So did I, I'll be sworn: he is simply the rarest  
man i' the world.



First Servingman:  
I think he is: but a greater soldier than he you wot on.

Second Servingman:  
Who, my master?

First Servingman:  
Nay, it's no matter for that.

Second Servingman:  
Worth six on him.

First Servingman:  
Nay, not so neither: but I take him to be the  
greater soldier.

Second Servingman:  
Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to say that:  
for the defence of a town, our general is excellent.

First Servingman:  
Ay, and for an assault too.

Third Servingman:  
O slaves, I can tell you news,-- news, you rascals!

First Servingman:  
What, what, what? let's partake.

Third Servingman:  
I would not be a Roman, of all nations; I had as  
lieve be a condemned man.

First Servingman:  
Wherefore? wherefore?

Third Servingman:  
Why, here's he that was wont to thwack our general,  
Caius Marcius.

First Servingman:  
Why do you say 'thwack our general '?

Third Servingman:  
I do not say 'thwack our general;' but he was always  
good enough for him.

Second Servingman:  
Come, we are fellows and friends: he was ever too

hard for him; I have heard him say so himself.

First Servingman:

He was too hard for him directly, to say the troth on't: before Corioli he scotched him and notched him like a carbon ado.

Second Servingman:

An he had been cannibally given, he might have broiled and eaten him too.

First Servingman:

But, more of thy news?

Third Servingman:

Why, he is so made on here within, as if he were son and heir to Mars; set at upper end o' the table; no question asked him by any of the senators, but they stand bald before him: our general himself makes a mistress of him: sanctifies himself with's hand and turns up the white o' the eye to his discourse. But the bottom of the news is that our general is cut i' the middle and but one half of what he was yesterday; for the other has half, by the entreaty and grant of the whole table. He'll go, he says, and sowl the porter of Rome gates by the ears: he will mow all down before him, and leave his passage polled.

Second Servingman:

And he's as like to do't as any man I can imagine.

Third Servingman:

Do't! he will do't; for, look you, sir, he has as many friends as enemies; which friends, sir, as it were, durst not, look you, sir, show themselves, as we term it, his friends whilst he's in directitude.

First Servingman:

Directitude! what's that?

Third Servingman:

But when they shall see, sir, his crest up again, and the man in blood, they will out of their burrows, like conies after rain, and revel all with him.

First Servingman:

But when goes this forward?

Third Servingman:

To-morrow; to-day; presently; you shall have the drum struck up this afternoon: 'tis, as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips.

Second Servingman:

Why, then we shall have a stirring world again. This peace is nothing, but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers.

First Servingman:

Let me have war, say I; it exceeds peace as far as day does night; it's spritely, waking, audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy; mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible; a getter of more bastard children than war's a destroyer of men.

Second Servingman:

'Tis so: and as war, in some sort, may be said to be a ravisher, so it cannot be denied but peace is a great maker of cuckolds.

First Servingman:

Ay, and it makes men hate one another.

Third Servingman:

Reason; because they then less need one another. The wars for my money. I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians. They are rising, they are rising.

All:

In, in, in, in!

SICINIUS:

We hear not of him, neither need we fear him;  
His remedies are tame i' the present peace  
And quietness of the people, which before  
Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his friends  
Blush that the world goes well, who rather had,  
Though they themselves did suffer by't, behold  
Dissentious numbers pestering streets than see  
Our tradesmen with in their shops and going  
About their functions friendly.

BRUTUS:

We stood to't in good time.  
Is this Menenius?

SICINIUS:

'Tis he, 'tis he: O, he is grown most kind of late.

Both Tribunes:  
Hail sir!

MENENIUS:  
Hail to you both!

SICINIUS:  
Your Coriolanus  
Is not much miss'd, but with his friends:  
The commonwealth doth stand, and so would do,  
Were he more angry at it.

MENENIUS:  
All's well; and might have been much better, if  
He could have temporized.

SICINIUS:  
Where is he, hear you?

MENENIUS:  
Nay, I hear nothing: his mother and his wife  
Hear nothing from him.

Citizens:  
The gods preserve you both!

SICINIUS:  
God-den, our neighbours.

BRUTUS:  
God-den to you all, god-den to you all.

First Citizen:  
Ourselves, our wives, and children, on our knees,  
Are bound to pray for you both.

SICINIUS:  
Live, and thrive!

BRUTUS:  
Farewell, kind neighbours: we wish'd Coriolanus  
Had loved you as we did.

Citizens:  
Now the gods keep you!

Both Tribunes:  
Farewell, farewell.

SICINIUS:

This is a happier and more comely time  
Than when these fellows ran about the streets,  
Crying confusion.

BRUTUS:

Caius Marcius was  
A worthy officer i' the war; but insolent,  
O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking,  
Self-loving,--

SICINIUS:

And affecting one sole throne,  
Without assistance.

MENENIUS:

I think not so.

SICINIUS:

We should by this, to all our lamentation,  
If he had gone forth consul, found it so.

BRUTUS:

The gods have well prevented it, and Rome  
Sits safe and still without him.

AE dile:

Worthy tribunes,  
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,  
Reports, the Volscies with two several powers  
Are enter'd in the Roman territories,  
And with the deepest malice of the war  
Destroy what lies before 'em.

MENENIUS:

'Tis Aufidius,  
Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment,  
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world;  
Which were inshell'd when Marcius stood for Rome,  
And durst not once peep out.

SICINIUS:

Come, what talk you  
Of Marcius?

BRUTUS:

Go see this rumourer whipp'd. It cannot be  
The Volscies dare break with us.

MENENIUS:

Cannot be!  
We have record that very well it can,  
And three examples of the like have been  
Within my age. But reason with the fellow,  
Before you punish him, where he heard this,  
Lest you shall chance to whip your information  
And beat the messenger who bids beware  
Of what is to be dreaded.

SICINIUS:  
Tell not me:  
I know this cannot be.

BRUTUS:  
Not possible.

Messenger:  
The nobles in great earnestness are going  
All to the senate-house: some news is come  
That turns their countenances.

SICINIUS:  
'Tis this slave;--  
Go whip him, 'fore the people's eyes:--his raising;  
Nothing but his report.

Messenger:  
Yes, worthy sir,  
The slave's report is seconded; and more,  
More fearful, is deliver'd.

SICINIUS:  
What more fearful?

Messenger:  
It is spoke freely out of many mouths--  
How probable I do not know--that Marcius,  
Join'd with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome,  
And vows revenge as spacious as between  
The young'st and oldest thing.

SICINIUS:  
This is most likely!

BRUTUS:  
Raised only, that the weaker sort may wish  
Good Marcius home again.

SICINIUS:  
The very trick on't.

MENENIUS:

This is unlikely:  
He and Aufidius can no more atone  
Than violentest contrariety.

Second Messenger:

You are sent for to the senate:  
A fearful army, led by Caius Marcius  
Associated with Aufidius, rages  
Upon our territories; and have already  
O'erborne their way, consumed with fire, and took  
What lay before them.

COMINIUS:

O, you have made good work!

MENENIUS:

What news? what news?

COMINIUS:

You have help to ravish your own daughters and  
To melt the city leads upon your pates,  
To see your wives dishonour'd to your noses,--

MENENIUS:

What's the news? what's the news?

COMINIUS:

Your temples burned in their cement, and  
Your franchises, whereon you stood, confined  
Into an auger's bore.

MENENIUS:

Pray now, your news?  
You have made fair work, I fear me.--Pray, your news?--  
If Marcius should be join'd with Volscians,--

COMINIUS:

If!  
He is their god: he leads them like a thing  
Made by some other deity than nature,  
That shapes man better; and they follow him,  
Against us brats, with no less confidence  
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies,  
Or butchers killing flies.

MENENIUS:

You have made good work,  
You and your apron-men; you that stood so up much

on the voice of occupation and  
The breath of garlic-eaters!

COMINIUS:

He will shake  
Your Rome about your ears.

MENENIUS:

As Hercules  
Did shake down mellow fruit.  
You have made fair work!

BRUTUS:

But is this true, sir?

COMINIUS:

Ay; and you'll look pale  
Before you find it other. All the regions  
Do smilingly revolt; and who resist  
Are mock'd for valiant ignorance,  
And perish constant fools. Who is't can blame him?  
Your enemies and his find something in him.

MENENIUS:

We are all undone, unless  
The noble man have mercy.

COMINIUS:

Who shall ask it?  
The tribunes cannot do't for shame; the people  
Deserve such pity of him as the wolf  
Does of the shepherds: for his best friends, if they  
Should say 'Be good to Rome,' they charged him even  
As those should do that had deserved his hate,  
And therein show'd like enemies.

MENENIUS:

'Tis true:  
If he were putting to my house the brand  
That should consume it, I have not the face  
To say 'Beseech you, cease.' You have made fair hands,  
You and your crafts! you have crafted fair!

COMINIUS:

You have brought  
A trembling upon Rome, such as was never  
So incapable of help.

Both Tribunes:

Say not we brought it.



MENENIUS:

How! Was it we? we loved him but, like beasts  
And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters,  
Who did hoot him out o' the city.

COMINIUS:

But I fear  
They'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,  
The second name of men, obeys his points  
As if he were his officer: desperation  
Is all the policy, strength and defence,  
That Rome can make against them.

MENENIUS:

Here come the clusters.  
And is Aufidius with him? You are they  
That made the air unwholesome, when you cast  
Your stinking greasy caps in hooting at  
Coriolanus' exile. Now he's coming;  
And not a hair upon a soldier's head  
Which will not prove a whip: as many coxcombs  
As you threw caps up will he tumble down,  
And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter;  
if he could burn us all into one coal,  
We have deserved it.

Citizens:

Faith, we hear fearful news.

First Citizen:

For mine own part,  
When I said, banish him, I said 'twas pity.

Second Citizen:

And so did I.

Third Citizen:

And so did I; and, to say the truth, so did very  
many of us: that we did, we did for the best; and  
though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet  
it was against our will.

COMINIUS:

Ye re goodly things, you voices!

MENENIUS:

You have made  
Good work, you and your cry! Shall's to the Capitol?

COMINIUS:  
O, ay, what else?

SICINIUS:  
Go, masters, get you home; be not dismay'd:  
These are a side that would be glad to have  
This true which they so seem to fear. Go home,  
And show no sign of fear.

First Citizen:  
The gods be good to us! Come, masters, let's home.  
I ever said we were i' the wrong when we banished  
him.

Second Citizen:  
So did we all. But, come, let's home.

BRUTUS:  
I do not like this news.

SICINIUS:  
Nor I.

BRUTUS:  
Let's to the Capitol. Would half my wealth  
Would buy this for a lie!

SICINIUS:  
Pray, let us go.

AUFIDIUS:  
Do they still fly to the Roman?

Lieutenant:  
I do not know what witchcraft's in him, but  
Your soldiers use him as the grace 'fore meat,  
Their talk at table, and their thanks at end;  
And you are darken'd in this action, sir,  
Even by your own.

AUFIDIUS:  
I cannot help it now,  
Unless, by using means, I lame the foot  
Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier,  
Even to my person, than I thought he would  
When first I did embrace him: yet his nature  
In that's no changeling; and I must excuse  
What cannot be amended.

Lieutenant:

Yet I wish, sir,--  
I mean for your particular,--you had not  
Join'd in commission with him; but either  
Had borne the action of yourself, or else  
To him had left it solely.

AUFIDIUS:

I understand thee well; and be thou sure,  
when he shall come to his account, he knows not  
What I can urge against him. Although it seems,  
And so he thinks, and is no less apparent  
To the vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly.  
And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state,  
Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon  
As draw his sword; yet he hath left undone  
That which shall break his neck or hazard mine,  
Whene'er we come to our account.

Lieutenant:

Sir, I beseech you, think you he'll carry Rome?

AUFIDIUS:

All places yield to him ere he sits down;  
And the nobility of Rome are his:  
The senators and patricians love him too:  
The tribunes are no soldiers; and their people  
Will be as rash in the repeal, as hasty  
To expel him thence. I think he'll be to Rome  
As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it  
By sovereignty of nature. First he was  
A noble servant to them; but he could not  
Carry his honours even: whether 'twas pride,  
Which out of daily fortune ever taints  
The happy man; whether defect of judgment,  
To fail in the disposing of those chances  
Which he was lord of; or whether nature,  
Not to be other than one thing, not moving  
From the casque to the cushion, but commanding peace  
Even with the same austerity and garb  
As he controll'd the war; but one of these--  
As he hath spices of them all, not all,  
For I dare so far free him--made him fear'd,  
So hated, and so banish'd: but he has a merit,  
To choke it in the utterance. So our virtues  
Lie in the interpretation of the time:  
And power, unto itself most commendable,  
Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair  
To extol what it hath done.  
One fire drives out one fire; one nail, one nail;  
Rights by rights falter, strengths by strengths do fail.

Come, let's away. When, Caius, Rome is thine,  
Thou art poor'st of all; then shortly art thou mine.

MENENIUS:

No, I'll not go: you hear what he hath said  
Which was sometime his general; who loved him  
In a most dear particular. He call'd me father:  
But what o' that? Go, you that banish'd him;  
A mile before his tent fall down, and knee  
The way into his mercy: nay, if he coy'd  
To hear Cominius speak, I'll keep at home.

COMINIUS:

He would not seem to know me.

MENENIUS:

Do you hear?

COMINIUS:

Yet one time he did call me by my name:  
I urged our old acquaintance, and the drops  
That we have bled together. Coriolanus  
He would not answer to: forbad all names;  
He was a kind of nothing, titleless,  
Till he had forged himself a name o' the fire  
Of burning Rome.

MENENIUS:

Why, so: you have made good work!  
A pair of tribunes that have rack'd for Rome,  
To make coals cheap,--a noble memory!

COMINIUS:

I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon  
When it was less expected: he replied,  
It was a bare petition of a state  
To one whom they had punish'd.

MENENIUS:

Very well:  
Could he say less?

COMINIUS:

I offer'd to awaken his regard  
For's private friends: his answer to me was,  
He could not stay to pick them in a pile  
Of noisome musty chaff: he said 'twas folly,  
For one poor grain or two, to leave unburnt,  
And still to nose the offence.

MENENIUS:

For one poor grain or two!  
I am one of those; his mother, wife, his child,  
And this brave fellow too, we are the grains:  
You are the musty chaff; and you are smelt  
Above the moon: we must be burnt for you.

SICINIUS:

Nay, pray, be patient: if you refuse your aid  
In this so never-needed help, yet do not  
Upbraid's with our distress. But, sure, if you  
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,  
More than the instant army we can make,  
Might stop our countryman.

MENENIUS:

No, I'll not meddle.

SICINIUS:

Pray you, go to him.

MENENIUS:

What should I do?

BRUTUS:

Only make trial what your love can do  
For Rome, towards Marcius.

MENENIUS:

Well, and say that Marcius  
Return me, as Cominius is return'd,  
Unheard; what then?  
But as a discontented friend, grief-shot  
With his unkindness? say't be so?

SICINIUS:

Yet your good will  
must have that thanks from Rome, after the measure  
As you intended well.

MENENIUS:

I'll undertake 't:  
I think he'll hear me. Yet, to bite his lip  
And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me.  
He was not taken well; he had not dined:  
The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then  
We pout upon the morning, are unapt  
To give or to forgive; but when we have stuff'd  
These and these conveyances of our blood  
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls

Than in our priest-like fasts: therefore I'll watch him  
Till he be dieted to my request,  
And then I'll set upon him.

BRUTUS:  
You know the very road into his kindness,  
And cannot lose your way.

MENENIUS:  
Good faith, I'll prove him,  
Speed how it will. I shall ere long have knowledge  
Of my success.

COMINIUS:  
He'll never hear him.

SICINIUS:  
Not?

COMINIUS:  
I tell you, he does sit in gold, his eye  
Red as 'twould burn Rome; and his injury  
The gaoler to his pity. I kneel'd before him;  
'Twas very faintly he said 'Rise;' dismiss'd me  
Thus, with his speechless hand: what he would do,  
He sent in writing after me; what he would not,  
Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions:  
So that all hope is vain.  
Unless his noble mother, and his wife;  
Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him  
For mercy to his country. Therefore, let's hence,  
And with our fair entreaties haste them on.

First Senator:  
Stay: whence are you?

Second Senator:  
Stand, and go back.

MENENIUS:  
You guard like men; 'tis well: but, by your leave,  
I am an officer of state, and come  
To speak with Coriolanus.

First Senator:  
From whence?

MENENIUS:  
From Rome.

First Senator:

You may not pass, you must return: our general  
Will no more hear from thence.

Second Senator:

You'll see your Rome embraced with fire before  
You'll speak with Coriolanus.

MENENIUS:

Good my friends,  
If you have heard your general talk of Rome,  
And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks,  
My name hath touch'd your ears it is Menenius.

First Senator:

Be it so; go back: the virtue of your name  
Is not here passable.

MENENIUS:

I tell thee, fellow,  
The general is my lover: I have been  
The book of his good acts, whence men have read  
His name unparallel'd, haply amplified;  
For I have ever verified my friends,  
Of whom he's chief, with all the size that verity  
Would without lapsing suffer: nay, sometimes,  
Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground,  
I have tumbled past the throw; and in his praise  
Have almost stamp'd the leasing: therefore, fellow,  
I must have leave to pass.

First Senator:

Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his  
behalf as you have uttered words in your own, you  
should not pass here; no, though it were as virtuous  
to lie as to live chastely. Therefore, go back.

MENENIUS:

Prithee, fellow, remember my name is Menenius,  
always factionary on the party of your general.

Second Senator:

Howsoever you have been his liar, as you say you  
have, I am one that, telling true under him, must  
say, you cannot pass. Therefore, go back.

MENENIUS:

Has he dined, canst thou tell? for I would not  
speak with him till after dinner.

First Senator:  
You are a Roman, are you?

MENENIUS:  
I am, as thy general is.

First Senator:  
Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can you, when you have pushed out your gates the very defender of them, and, in a violent popular ignorance, given your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges with the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms of your daughters, or with the palsied intercession of such a decayed dotant as you seem to be? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your city is ready to flame in, with such weak breath as this? No, you are deceived; therefore, back to Rome, and prepare for your execution: you are condemned, our general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon.

MENENIUS:  
Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.

Second Senator:  
Come, my captain knows you not.

MENENIUS:  
I mean, thy general.

First Senator:  
My general cares not for you. Back, I say, go; lest I let forth your half-pint of blood; back,--that's the utmost of your having: back.

MENENIUS:  
Nay, but, fellow, fellow,--

CORIOLANUS:  
What's the matter?

MENENIUS:  
Now, you companion, I'll say an errand for you: You shall know now that I am in estimation; you shall perceive that a Jack guardant cannot office me from my son Coriolanus: guess, but by my entertainment with him, if thou standest not i' the state of hanging, or of some death more long in spectatorship, and crueller in suffering; behold now



presently, and swoon for what's to come upon thee.  
The glorious gods sit in hourly synod about thy  
particular prosperity, and love thee no worse than  
thy old father Menenius does! O my son, my son!  
thou art preparing fire for us; look thee, here's  
water to quench it. I was hardly moved to come to  
thee; but being assured none but myself could move  
thee, I have been blown out of your gates with  
sighs; and conjure thee to pardon Rome, and thy  
petitionary countrymen. The good gods assuage thy  
wrath, and turn the dregs of it upon this varlet  
here,—this, who, like a block, hath denied my  
access to thee.

CORIOLANUS:  
Away!

MENENIUS:  
How! away!

CORIOLANUS:  
Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs  
Are servanted to others: though I owe  
My revenge properly, my remission lies  
In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar,  
Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison, rather  
Than pity note how much. Therefore, be gone.  
Mine ears against your suits are stronger than  
Your gates against my force. Yet, for I loved thee,  
Take this along; I writ it for thy sake  
And would have rent it. Another word, Menenius,  
I will not hear thee speak. This man, Aufidius,  
Was my beloved in Rome: yet thou behold'st!

AUFIDIUS:  
You keep a constant temper.

First Senator:  
Now, sir, is your name Menenius?

Second Senator:  
'Tis a spell, you see, of much power: you know the  
way home again.

First Senator:  
Do you hear how we are shent for keeping your  
greatness back?

Second Senator:  
What cause, do you think, I have to swoon?

MENENIUS:

I neither care for the world nor your general: for such things as you, I can scarce think there's any, ye're so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself fears it not from another: let your general do his worst. For you, be that you are, long; and your misery increase with your age! I say to you, as I was said to, Away!

First Senator:

A noble fellow, I warrant him.

Second Senator:

The worthy fellow is our general: he's the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken.

CORIOLANUS:

We will before the walls of Rome tomorrow  
Set down our host. My partner in this action,  
You must report to the Volscian lords, how plainly  
I have borne this business.

AUFIDIUS:

Only their ends  
You have respected; stopp'd your ears against  
The general suit of Rome; never admitted  
A private whisper, no, not with such friends  
That thought them sure of you.

CORIOLANUS:

This last old man,  
Whom with a crack'd heart I have sent to Rome,  
Loved me above the measure of a father;  
Nay, godded me, indeed. Their latest refuge  
Was to send him; for whose old love I have,  
Though I show'd sourly to him, once more offer'd  
The first conditions, which they did refuse  
And cannot now accept; to grace him only  
That thought he could do more, a very little  
I have yielded to: fresh embassies and suits,  
Nor from the state nor private friends, hereafter  
Will I lend ear to. Ha! what shout is this?  
Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow  
In the same time 'tis made? I will not.  
My wife comes foremost; then the honour'd mould  
Wherein this trunk was framed, and in her hand  
The grandchild to her blood. But, out, affection!  
All bond and privilege of nature, break!  
Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.

What is that curt'sy worth? or those doves' eyes,  
Which can make gods forsworn? I melt, and am not  
Of stronger earth than others. My mother bows;  
As if Olympus to a molehill should  
In supplication nod: and my young boy  
Hath an aspect of intercession, which  
Great nature cries 'Deny not.' let the Volsces  
Plough Rome and harrow Italy: I'll never  
Be such a gosling to obey instinct, but stand,  
As if a man were author of himself  
And knew no other kin.

VIRGILIA:  
My lord and husband!

CORIOLANUS:  
These eyes are not the same I wore in Rome.

VIRGILIA:  
The sorrow that delivers us thus changed  
Makes you think so.

CORIOLANUS:  
Like a dull actor now,  
I have forgot my part, and I am out,  
Even to a full disgrace. Best of my flesh,  
Forgive my tyranny; but do not say  
For that 'Forgive our Romans.' O, a kiss  
Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!  
Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss  
I carried from thee, dear; and my true lip  
Hath virgin'd it e'er since. You gods! I prate,  
And the most noble mother of the world  
Leave unsaluted: sink, my knee, i' the earth;  
Of thy deep duty more impression show  
Than that of common sons.

VOLUMNIA:  
O, stand up blest!  
Whilst, with no softer cushion than the flint,  
I kneel before thee; and unproperly  
Show duty, as mistaken all this while  
Between the child and parent.

CORIOLANUS:  
What is this?  
Your knees to me? to your corrected son?  
Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach  
Fillip the stars; then let the mutinous winds  
Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun;

Murdering impossibility, to make  
What cannot be, slight work.

VOLUMNIA:

Thou art my warrior;  
I help to frame thee. Do you know this lady?

CORIOLANUS:

The noble sister of Publicola,  
The moon of Rome, chaste as the icicle  
That's curdied by the frost from purest snow  
And hangs on Dian's temple: dear Valeria!

VOLUMNIA:

This is a poor epitome of yours,  
Which by the interpretation of full time  
May show like all yourself.

CORIOLANUS:

The god of soldiers,  
With the consent of supreme Jove, inform  
Thy thoughts with nobleness; that thou mayst prove  
To shame invulnerable, and stick i' the wars  
Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,  
And saving those that eye thee!

VOLUMNIA:

Your knee, sirrah.

CORIOLANUS:

That's my brave boy!

VOLUMNIA:

Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,  
Are suitors to you.

CORIOLANUS:

I beseech you, peace:  
Or, if you'd ask, remember this before:  
The thing I have forsworn to grant may never  
Be held by you denials. Do not bid me  
Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate  
Again with Rome's mechanics: tell me not  
Wherein I seem unnatural: desire not  
To ally my rages and revenges with  
Your colder reasons.

VOLUMNIA:

O, no more, no more!  
You have said you will not grant us any thing;

For we have nothing else to ask, but that  
Which you deny already: yet we will ask;  
That, if you fail in our request, the blame  
May hang upon your hardness: therefore hear us.

CORIOLANUS:

Aufidius, and you Volscies, mark; for we'll  
Hear nought from Rome in private. Your request?

VOLUMNIA:

Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment  
And state of bodies would bewray what life  
We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself  
How more unfortunate than all living women  
Are we come hither: since that thy sight,  
which should  
Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance  
with comforts,  
Constrains them weep and shake with fear and sorrow;  
Making the mother, wife and child to see  
The son, the husband and the father tearing  
His country's bowels out. And to poor we  
Thine enmity's most capital: thou barr'st us  
Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort  
That all but we enjoy; for how can we,  
Alas, how can we for our country pray.  
Whereto we are bound, together with thy victory,  
Whereto we are bound? alack, or we must lose  
The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,  
Our comfort in the country. We must find  
An evident calamity, though we had  
Our wish, which side should win: for either thou  
Must, as a foreign recreant, be led  
With manacles thorough our streets, or else  
triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,  
And bear the palm for having bravely shed  
Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,  
I purpose not to wait on fortune till  
These wars determine: if I cannot persuade thee  
Rather to show a noble grace to both parts  
Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner  
March to assault thy country than to tread--  
Trust to't, thou shalt not--on thy mother's womb,  
That brought thee to this world.

VIRGILIA:

Ay, and mine,  
That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name  
Living to time.

Young MARCIUS:

A' shall not tread on me;  
I'll run away till I am bigger, but then I'll fight.

CORIOLANUS:

Not of a woman's tenderness to be,  
Requires nor child nor woman's face to see.  
I have sat too long.

VOLUMNIA:

Nay, go not from us thus.  
If it were so that our request did tend  
To save the Romans, thereby to destroy  
The Volscies whom you serve, you might condemn us,  
As poisonous of your honour: no; our suit  
Is that you reconcile them: while the Volscies  
May say 'This mercy we have show'd;' the Romans,  
'This we received;' and each in either side  
Give the all-hail to thee and cry 'Be blest  
For making up this peace!' Thou know'st, great son,  
The end of war's uncertain, but this certain,  
That, if thou conquer Rome, the benefit  
Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name,  
Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses;  
Whose chronicle thus writ: 'The man was noble,  
But with his last attempt he wiped it out;  
Destroy'd his country, and his name remains  
To the ensuing age abhorr'd.' Speak to me, son:  
Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour,  
To imitate the graces of the gods;  
To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' the air,  
And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt  
That should but rive an oak. Why dost not speak?  
Think'st thou it honourable for a noble man  
Still to remember wrongs? Daughter, speak you:  
He cares not for your weeping. Speak thou, boy:  
Perhaps thy childishness will move him more  
Than can our reasons. There's no man in the world  
More bound to 's mother; yet here he lets me prate  
Like one i' the stocks. Thou hast never in thy life  
Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy,  
When she, poor hen, fond of no second brood,  
Has cluck'd thee to the wars and safely home,  
Loaden with honour. Say my request's unjust,  
And spurn me back: but if it be not so,  
Thou art not honest; and the gods will plague thee,  
That thou restrain'st from me the duty which  
To a mother's part belongs. He turns away:  
Down, ladies; let us shame him with our knees.  
To his surname Coriolanus 'longs more pride

Than pity to our prayers. Down: an end;  
This is the last: so we will home to Rome,  
And die among our neighbours. Nay, behold 's:  
This boy, that cannot tell what he would have  
But kneels and holds up bands for fellowship,  
Does reason our petition with more strength  
Than thou hast to deny 't. Come, let us go:  
This fellow had a Volscian to his mother;  
His wife is in Corioli and his child  
Like him by chance. Yet give us our dispatch:  
I am hush'd until our city be a-fire,  
And then I'll speak a little.

CORIO LANUS:

O mother, mother!  
What have you done? Behold, the heavens do ope,  
The gods look down, and this unnatural scene  
They laugh at. O my mother, mother! O!  
You have won a happy victory to Rome;  
But, for your son,—believe it, O, believe it,  
Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,  
If not most mortal to him. But, let it come.  
Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,  
I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,  
Were you in my stead, would you have heard  
A mother less? or granted less, Aufidius?

AUFIDIUS:

I was moved withal.

CORIO LANUS:

I dare be sworn you were:  
And, sir, it is no little thing to make  
Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,  
What peace you'll make, advise me: for my part,  
I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you; and pray you,  
Stand to me in this cause. O mother! wife!

AUFIDIUS:

CORIO LANUS:

Ay, by and by;  
But we will drink together; and you shall bear  
A better witness back than words, which we,  
On like conditions, will have counter-seal'd.  
Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve  
To have a temple built you: all the swords  
In Italy, and her confederate arms,  
Could not have made this peace.

MENENIUS:

See you yond coign o' the Capitol, yond  
corner-stone?

SICINIUS:

Why, what of that?

MENENIUS:

If it be possible for you to displace it with your  
little finger, there is some hope the ladies of  
Rome, especially his mother, may prevail with him.  
But I say there is no hope in't: our throats are  
sentenced and stay upon execution.

SICINIUS:

Is't possible that so short a time can alter the  
condition of a man!

MENENIUS:

There is differency between a grub and a butterfly;  
yet your butterfly was a grub. This Marcius is grown  
from man to dragon: he has wings; he's more than a  
creeping thing.

SICINIUS:

He loved his mother dearly.

MENENIUS:

So did he me: and he no more remembers his mother  
now than an eight-year-old horse. The tartness  
of his face sours ripe grapes: when he walks, he  
moves like an engine, and the ground shrinks before  
his treading: he is able to pierce a corslet with  
his eye; talks like a knell, and his hum is a  
battery. He sits in his state, as a thing made for  
Alexander. What he bids be done is finished with  
his bidding. He wants nothing of a god but eternity  
and a heaven to throne in.

SICINIUS:

Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

MENENIUS:

I paint him in the character. Mark what mercy his  
mother shall bring from him: there is no more mercy  
in him than there is milk in a male tiger; that  
shall our poor city find: and all this is long of  
you.

SICINIUS:



The gods be good unto us!

MENENIUS:

No, in such a case the gods will not be good unto us. When we banished him, we respected not them; and, he returning to break our necks, they respect not us.

Messenger:

Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your house:  
The plebeians have got your fellow-tribune  
And hale him up and down, all swearing, if  
The Roman ladies bring not comfort home,  
They'll give him death by inches.

SICINIUS:

What's the news?

Second Messenger:

Good news, good news; the ladies have prevail'd,  
The Volscians are dislodged, and Marcius gone:  
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,  
No, not the expulsion of the Tarquins.

SICINIUS:

Friend,  
Art thou certain this is true? is it most certain?

Second Messenger:

As certain as I know the sun is fire:  
Where have you lurk'd, that you make doubt of it?  
Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide,  
As the recomforted through the gates. Why, hark you!  
The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries and fifes,  
Tabours and cymbals and the shouting Romans,  
Make the sun dance. Hark you!

MENENIUS:

This is good news:  
I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia  
Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians,  
A city full; of tribunes, such as you,  
A sea and land full. You have pray'd well to-day:  
This morning for ten thousand of your throats  
I'd not have given a doit. Hark, how they joy!

SICINIUS:

First, the gods bless you for your tidings; next,  
Accept my thankfulness.

Second Messenger:

Sir, we have all  
Great cause to give great thanks.

SICINIUS:  
They are near the city?

Second Messenger:  
Almost at point to enter.

SICINIUS:  
We will meet them,  
And help the joy.

First Senator:  
Behold our patroness, the life of Rome!  
Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,  
And make triumphant fires; strew flowers before them:  
Unshout the noise that banish'd Marcius,  
Repeal him with the welcome of his mother;  
Cry 'Welcome, ladies, welcome!'

All:  
Welcome, ladies, Welcome!

AUFIDIUS:  
Go tell the lords o' the city I am here:  
Deliver them this paper: having read it,  
Bid them repair to the market place; where I,  
Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,  
Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse  
The city ports by this hath enter'd and  
Intends to appear before the people, hoping  
To purge herself with words: dispatch.  
Most welcome!

First Conspirator:  
How is it with our general?

AUFIDIUS:  
Even so  
As with a man by his own alms empoison'd,  
And with his charity slain.

Second Conspirator:  
Most noble sir,  
If you do hold the same intent wherein  
You wish'd us parties, we'll deliver you  
Of your great danger.

AUFIDIUS:

Sir, I cannot tell:  
We must proceed as we do find the people.

Third Conspirator:  
The people will remain uncertain whilst  
'Twixt you there's difference; but the fall of either  
Makes the survivor heir of all.

AUFIDIUS:  
I know it;  
And my pretext to strike at him admits  
A good construction. I raised him, and I pawn'd  
Mine honour for his truth: who being so heighten'd,  
He water'd his new plants with dews of flattery,  
Seducing so my friends; and, to this end,  
He bow'd his nature, never known before  
But to be rough, unswayable and free.

Third Conspirator:  
Sir, his stoutness  
When he did stand for consul, which he lost  
By lack of stooping,--

AUFIDIUS:  
That I would have spoke of:  
Being banish'd for't, he came unto my hearth;  
Presented to my knife his throat: I took him;  
Made him joint-servant with me; gave him way  
In all his own desires; nay, let him choose  
Out of my files, his projects to accomplish,  
My best and freshest men; served his designments  
In mine own person; help to reap the fame  
Which he did end all his; and took some pride  
To do myself this wrong: till, at the last,  
I seem'd his follower, not partner, and  
He waged me with his countenance, as if  
I had been mercenary.

First Conspirator:  
So he did, my lord:  
The army marvell'd at it, and, in the last,  
When he had carried Rome and that we look'd  
For no less spoil than glory,--

AUFIDIUS:  
There was it:  
For which my sinews shall be stretch'd upon him.  
At a few drops of women's rheum, which are  
As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labour  
Of our great action: therefore shall he die,

And I'll renew me in his fall. But, hark!

First Conspirator:

Your native town you enter'd like a post,  
And had no welcomes home: but he returns,  
Splitting the air with noise.

Second Conspirator:

And patient fools,  
Whose children he hath slain, their base throats tear  
With giving him glory.

Third Conspirator:

Therefore, at your vantage,  
Ere he express himself, or move the people  
With what he would say, let him feel your sword,  
Which we will second. When he lies along,  
After your way his tale pronounced shall bury  
His reasons with his body.

AUFIDIUS:

Say no more:  
Here come the lords.

All The Lords:

You are most welcome home.

AUFIDIUS:

I have not deserved it.  
But, worthy lords, have you with heed perused  
What I have written to you?

Lords:

We have.

First Lord:

And grieve to hear't.  
What faults he made before the last, I think  
Might have found easy fines: but there to end  
Where he was to begin and give away  
The benefit of our levies, answering us  
With our own charge, making a treaty where  
There was a yielding,--this admits no excuse.

AUFIDIUS:

He approaches: you shall hear him.

CORIOLANUS:

Hail, lords! I am return'd your soldier,  
No more infected with my country's love

Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting  
Under your great command. You are to know  
That prosperously I have attempted and  
With bloody passage led your wars even to  
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home  
Do more than counterpoise a full third part  
The charges of the action. We have made peace  
With no less honour to the Antiates  
Than shame to the Romans: and we here deliver,  
Subscribed by the consuls and patricians,  
Together with the seal o' the senate, what  
We have compounded on.

AUFIDIUS:

Read it not, noble lords;  
But tell the traitor, in the high'st degree  
He hath abused your powers.

CORIOLANUS:

Traitor! how now!

AUFIDIUS:

Ay, traitor, Marcius!

CORIOLANUS:

Marcius!

AUFIDIUS:

Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius: dost thou think  
I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name  
Coriolanus in Corioli?  
You lords and heads o' the state, perfidiously  
He has betray'd your business, and given up,  
For certain drops of salt, your city Rome,  
I say 'your city,' to his wife and mother;  
Breaking his oath and resolution like  
A twist of rotten silk, never admitting  
Counsel o' the war, but at his nurse's tears  
He whined and roar'd away your victory,  
That pages blush'd at him and men of heart  
Look'd wondering each at other.

CORIOLANUS:

Hear'st thou, Mars?

AUFIDIUS:

Name not the god, thou boy of tears!

CORIOLANUS:

Ha!

AUFIDIUS:  
No more.

CORIOLANUS:  
Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart  
Too great for what contains it. Boy! O slave!  
Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever  
I was forced to scold. Your judgments, my grave lords,  
Must give this cur the lie: and his own notion--  
Who wears my stripes impress'd upon him; that  
Must bear my beating to his grave--shall join  
To thrust the lie unto him.

First Lord:  
Peace, both, and hear me speak.

CORIOLANUS:  
Cut me to pieces, Volscies; men and lads,  
Stain all your edges on me. Boy! false hound!  
If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,  
That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I  
Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli:  
Alone I did it. Boy!

AUFIDIUS:  
Why, noble lords,  
Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,  
Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,  
'Fore your own eyes and ears?

All Conspirators:  
Let him die for't.

All The People:  
'Tear him to pieces.' 'Do it presently.' 'He kill'd  
my son.' 'My daughter.' 'He killed my cousin  
Marcus.' 'He killed my father.'

Second Lord:  
Peace, ho! no outrage: peace!  
The man is noble and his fame folds-in  
This orb o' the earth. His last offences to us  
Shall have judicious hearing. Stand, Aufidius,  
And trouble not the peace.

CORIOLANUS:  
O that I had him,  
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe,  
To use my lawful sword!

AUFIDIUS:  
Insolent villain!

All Conspirators:  
Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!

Lords:  
Hold, hold, hold, hold!

AUFIDIUS:  
My noble masters, hear me speak.

First Lord:  
O Tullus,--

Second Lord:  
Thou hast done a deed whereat valour will weep.

Third Lord:  
Tread not upon him. Masters all, be quiet;  
Put up your swords.

AUFIDIUS:  
My lords, when you shall know--as in this rage,  
Provoked by him, you cannot--the great danger  
Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice  
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours  
To call me to your senate, I'll deliver  
Myself your loyal servant, or endure  
Your heaviest censure.

First Lord:  
Bear from hence his body;  
And mourn you for him: let him be regarded  
As the most noble corse that ever herald  
Did follow to his urn.

Second Lord:  
His own impatience  
Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.  
Let's make the best of it.

AUFIDIUS:  
My rage is gone;  
And I am struck with sorrow. Take him up.  
Help, three o' the chieftest soldiers; I'll be one.  
Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully:  
Trail your steel pikes. Though in this city he  
Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,

Which to this hour bewail the injury,  
Yet he shall have a noble memory. Assist.

GLoucester:

Now is the winter of our discontent  
Made glorious summer by this sun of York;  
And all the clouds that lour'd upon our house  
In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.  
Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths;  
Our bruised arms hung up for monuments;  
Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,  
Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.  
Grim-visaged war hath smooth'd his wrinkled front;  
And now, instead of mounting barded steeds  
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,  
He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber  
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.  
But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,  
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass;  
I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty  
To strut before a wanton ambling nymph;  
I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,  
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,  
Deformed, unfinish'd, sent before my time  
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,  
And that so lamely and unfashionable  
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them;  
Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,  
Have no delight to pass away the time,  
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun  
And descant on mine own deformity:  
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,  
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,  
I am determin'd to prove a villain  
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.  
Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,  
By drunken prophecies, libels and dreams,  
To set my brother Clarence and the king  
In deadly hate the one against the other:  
And if King Edward be as true and just  
As I am subtle, false and treacherous,  
This day should Clarence closely be mew'd up,  
About a prophecy, which says that 'G'  
Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be.  
Dive, thoughts, down to my soul: here  
Clarence comes.  
Brother, good day; what means this armed guard  
That waits upon your grace?

CLarence:



His majesty  
Tendering my person's safety, hath appointed  
This conduct to convey me to the Tower.

GLOUCESTER:  
Upon what cause?

CLARENCE:  
Because my name is George.

GLOUCESTER:  
Alack, my lord, that fault is none of yours;  
He should, for that, commit your godfathers:  
O, belike his majesty hath some intent  
That you shall be new-christen'd in the Tower.  
But what's the matter, Clarence? may I know?

CLARENCE:  
Yea, Richard, when I know; for I protest  
As yet I do not: but, as I can learn,  
He hearkens after prophecies and dreams;  
And from the cross-row plucks the letter G.  
And says a wizard told him that by G  
His issue disinherited should be;  
And, for my name of George begins with G,  
It follows in his thought that I am he.  
These, as I learn, and such like toys as these  
Have moved his highness to commit me now.

GLOUCESTER:  
Why, this it is, when men are ruled by women:  
'Tis not the king that sends you to the Tower:  
My Lady Grey his wife, Clarence, 'tis she  
That tempers him to this extremity.  
Was it not she and that good man of worship,  
Anthony Woodville, her brother there,  
That made him send Lord Hastings to the Tower,  
From whence this present day he is deliver'd?  
We are not safe, Clarence; we are not safe.

CLARENCE:  
By heaven, I think there's no man is secure  
But the queen's kindred and night-walking heralds  
That trudge betwixt the king and Mistress Shore.  
Heard ye not what an humble suppliant  
Lord Hastings was to her for his delivery?

GLOUCESTER:  
Humbly complaining to her deity  
Got my lord chamberlain his liberty.

I'll tell you what; I think it is our way,  
If we will keep in favour with the king,  
To be her men and wear her livery:  
The jealous o'erworn widow and herself,  
Since that our brother dubb'd them gentlewomen.  
Are mighty gossips in this monarchy.

BRAKENBURY:

I beseech your graces both to pardon me;  
His majesty hath straitly given in charge  
That no man shall have private conference,  
Of what degree soever, with his brother.

GLOUCESTER:

Even so; an't please your worship, Brakenbury,  
You may partake of any thing we say:  
We speak no treason, man: we say the king  
Is wise and virtuous, and his noble queen  
Well struck in years, fair, and not jealous;  
We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot,  
A cherry lip, a bonny eye, a passing pleasing tongue;  
And that the queen's kindred are made gentle-folks:  
How say you sir? Can you deny all this?

BRAKENBURY:

With this, my lord, myself have nought to do.

GLOUCESTER:

Naught to do with mistress Shore! I tell thee, fellow,  
He that doth naught with her, excepting one,  
Were best he do it secretly, alone.

BRAKENBURY:

What one, my lord?

GLOUCESTER:

Her husband, knave: wouldst thou betray me?

BRAKENBURY:

I beseech your grace to pardon me, and withal  
Forbear your conference with the noble duke.

CLARENCE:

We know thy charge, Brakenbury, and will obey.

GLOUCESTER:

We are the queen's abjects, and must obey.  
Brother, farewell: I will unto the king;  
And whatsoever you will employ me in,  
Were it to call King Edward's widow sister,

I will perform it to enfranchise you.  
Meantime, this deep disgrace in brotherhood  
Touches me deeper than you can imagine.

CLARENCE:  
I know it pleaseth neither of us well.

GLOUCESTER:  
Well, your imprisonment shall not be long;  
Meantime, have patience.

CLARENCE:  
I must perforce. Farewell.

GLOUCESTER:  
Go, tread the path that thou shalt ne'er return.  
Simple, plain Clarence! I do love thee so,  
That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven,  
If heaven will take the present at our hands.  
But who comes here? the new-deliver'd Hastings?

HASTINGS:  
Good time of day unto my gracious lord!

GLOUCESTER:  
As much unto my good lord chamberlain!  
Well are you welcome to the open air.  
How hath your lordship brook'd imprisonment?

HASTINGS:  
With patience, noble lord, as prisoners must:  
But I shall live, my lord, to give them thanks  
That were the cause of my imprisonment.

GLOUCESTER:  
No doubt, no doubt; and so shall Clarence too;  
For they that were your enemies are his,  
And have prevail'd as much on him as you.

HASTINGS:  
More pity that the eagle should be mew'd,  
While kites and buzzards prey at liberty.

GLOUCESTER:  
What news abroad?

HASTINGS:  
No news so bad abroad as this at home;  
The King is sickly, weak and melancholy,  
And his physicians fear him mightily.

GLoucester:

Now, by Saint Paul, this news is bad indeed.  
O, he hath kept an evil diet long,  
And overmuch consumed his royal person:  
'Tis very grievous to be thought upon.  
What, is he in his bed?

Hastings:

He is.

GLoucester:

Go you before, and I will follow you.  
He cannot live, I hope; and must not die  
Till George be pack'd with post-horse up to heaven.  
I'll in, to urge his hatred more to Clarence,  
With lies well steel'd with weighty arguments;  
And, if I fall not in my deep intent,  
Clarence hath not another day to live:  
Which done, God take King Edward to his mercy,  
And leave the world for me to bustle in!  
For then I'll marry Warwick's youngest daughter.  
What though I kill'd her husband and her father?  
The readiest way to make the wench amends  
Is to become her husband and her father:  
The which will I; not all so much for love  
As for another secret close intent,  
By marrying her which I must reach unto.  
But yet I run before my horse to market:  
Clarence still breathes; Edward still lives and reigns:  
When they are gone, then must I count my gains.

Lady Anne:

Set down, set down your honourable load,  
If honour may be shrouded in a hearse,  
Whilst I awhile obsequiously lament  
The untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster.  
Poor key-cold figure of a holy king!  
Pale ashes of the house of Lancaster!  
Thou bloodless remnant of that royal blood!  
Be it lawful that I invoke thy ghost,  
To hear the lamentations of Poor Anne,  
Wife to thy Edward, to thy slaughter'd son,  
Stabb'd by the selfsame hand that made these wounds!  
Lo, in these windows that let forth thy life,  
I pour the helpless balm of my poor eyes.  
Cursed be the hand that made these fatal holes!  
Cursed be the heart that had the heart to do it!  
Cursed the blood that let this blood from hence!  
More direful hap betide that hated wretch,

That makes us wretched by the death of thee,  
Than I can wish to adders, spiders, toads,  
Or any creeping venom'd thing that lives!  
If ever he have child, abortive be it,  
Prodigious, and untimely brought to light,  
Whose ugly and unnatural aspect  
May fright the hopeful mother at the view;  
And that be heir to his unhappiness!  
If ever he have wife, let her be made  
A miserable by the death of him  
As I am made by my poor lord and thee!  
Come, now towards Chertsey with your holy load,  
Taken from Paul's to be interred there;  
And still, as you are weary of the weight,  
Rest you, whiles I lament King Henry's corse.

GLoucester:

Stay, you that bear the corse, and set it down.

LADY ANNE:

What black magician conjures up this fiend,  
To stop devoted charitable deeds?

GLoucester:

Villains, set down the corse; or, by Saint Paul,  
I'll make a corse of him that disobeys.

Gentleman:

My lord, stand back, and let the coffin pass.

GLoucester:

Unmanner'd dog! stand thou, when I command:  
Advance thy halbert higher than my breast,  
Or, by Saint Paul, I'll strike thee to my foot,  
And spurn upon thee, beggar, for thy boldness.

LADY ANNE:

What, do you tremble? are you all afraid?  
Alas, I blame you not; for you are mortal,  
And mortal eyes cannot endure the devil.  
Avaunt, thou dreadful minister of hell!  
Thou hadst but power over his mortal body,  
His soul thou canst not have; therefore be gone.

GLoucester:

Sweet saint, for charity, be not so curst.

LADY ANNE:

Foul devil, for God's sake, hence, and trouble us not;  
For thou hast made the happy earth thy hell,

Fill'd it with cursing cries and deep exclams.  
If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,  
Behold this pattern of thy butcheries.  
O, gentlemen, see, see! dead Henry's wounds  
Open their congeal'd mouths and bleed afresh!  
Blush, Blush, thou lump of foul deformity;  
For 'tis thy presence that exhales this blood  
From cold and empty veins, where no blood dwells;  
Thy deed, inhuman and unnatural,  
Provokes this deluge most unnatural.  
O God, which this blood madest, revenge his death!  
O earth, which this blood drink'st revenge his death!  
Either heaven with lightning strike the  
murderer dead,  
Or earth, gape open wide and eat him quick,  
As thou dost swallow up this good king's blood  
Which his hell-govern'd arm hath butchered!

GLOUCESTER:

Lady, you know no rules of charity,  
Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses.

LADY ANNE:

Villain, thou know'st no law of God nor man:  
No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity.

GLOUCESTER:

But I know none, and therefore am no beast.

LADY ANNE:

O wonderful, when devils tell the truth!

GLOUCESTER:

More wonderful, when angels are so angry.  
Vouchsafe, divine perfection of a woman,  
Of these supposed-evils, to give me leave,  
By circumstance, but to acquit myself.

LADY ANNE:

Vouchsafe, defused infection of a man,  
For these known evils, but to give me leave,  
By circumstance, to curse thy cursed self.

GLOUCESTER:

Fairer than tongue can name thee, let me have  
Some patient leisure to excuse myself.

LADY ANNE:

Fouler than heart can think thee, thou canst make  
No excuse current, but to hang thyself.

GLOUCESTER:

By such despair, I should accuse myself.

LADY ANNE:

And, by despairing, shouldst thou stand excused;  
For doing worthy vengeance on thyself,  
Which didst unworthy slaughter upon others.

GLOUCESTER:

Say that I slew them not?

LADY ANNE:

Why, then they are not dead:  
But dead they are, and devilish slave, by thee.

GLOUCESTER:

I did not kill your husband.

LADY ANNE:

Why, then he is alive.

GLOUCESTER:

Nay, he is dead; and slain by Edward's hand.

LADY ANNE:

In thy foul throat thou liest: Queen Margaret saw  
Thy murderous falchion smoking in his blood;  
The which thou once didst bend against her breast,  
But that thy brothers beat aside the point.

GLOUCESTER:

I was provoked by her slanderous tongue,  
which laid their guilt upon my guiltless shoulders.

LADY ANNE:

Thou wast provoked by thy bloody mind.  
Which never dreamt on aught but butcheries:  
Didst thou not kill this king?

GLOUCESTER:

I grant ye.

LADY ANNE:

Dost grant me, hedgehog? then, God grant me too  
Thou mayst be damned for that wicked deed!  
O, he was gentle, mild, and virtuous!

GLOUCESTER:

The fitter for the King of heaven, that hath him.

LADY ANNE:

He is in heaven, where thou shalt never come.

GLOUCESTER:

Let him thank me, that help to send him thither;  
For he was fitter for that place than earth.

LADY ANNE:

And thou unfit for any place but hell.

GLOUCESTER:

Yes, one place else, if you will hear me name it.

LADY ANNE:

Some dungeon.

GLOUCESTER:

Your bed-chamber.

LADY ANNE:

I'll rest betide the chamber where thou liest!

GLOUCESTER:

So will it, madam till I lie with you.

LADY ANNE:

I hope so.

GLOUCESTER:

I know so. But, gentle Lady Anne,  
To leave this keen encounter of our wits,  
And fall somewhat into a slower method,  
Is not the causer of the timeless deaths  
Of these Plantagenets, Henry and Edward,  
As blameful as the executioner?

LADY ANNE:

Thou art the cause, and most accursed effect.

GLOUCESTER:

Your beauty was the cause of that effect;  
Your beauty: which did haunt me in my sleep  
To undertake the death of all the world,  
So I might live one hour in your sweet bosom.

LADY ANNE:

If I thought that, I tell thee, homicide,  
These nails should rend that beauty from my cheeks.



GLOUCESTER:

These eyes could never endure sweet beauty's wreck;  
You should not blemish it, if I stood by:  
As all the world is cheered by the sun,  
So I by that; it is my day, my life.

LADY ANNE:

Black night o'ershade thy day, and death thy life!

GLOUCESTER:

Curse not thyself, fair creature thou art both.

LADY ANNE:

I would I were, to be revenged on thee.

GLOUCESTER:

It is a quarrel most unnatural,  
To be revenged on him that loveth you.

LADY ANNE:

It is a quarrel just and reasonable,  
To be revenged on him that slew my husband.

GLOUCESTER:

He that bereft thee, lady, of thy husband,  
Did it to help thee to a better husband.

LADY ANNE:

His better doth not breathe upon the earth.

GLOUCESTER:

He lives that loves thee better than he could.

LADY ANNE:

Name him.

GLOUCESTER:

Plantagenet.

LADY ANNE:

Why, that was he.

GLOUCESTER:

The selfsame name, but one of better nature.

LADY ANNE:

Where is he?

GLOUCESTER:

Here.

Why dost thou spit at me?

LADY ANNE:

Would it were mortal poison, for thy sake!

GLOUCESTER:

Never came poison from so sweet a place.

LADY ANNE:

Never hung poison on a fouler toad.

Out of my sight! thou dost infect my eyes.

GLOUCESTER:

Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine.

LADY ANNE:

Would they were basilisks, to strike thee dead!

GLOUCESTER:

I would they were, that I might die at once;  
For now they kill me with a living death.  
Those eyes of thine from mine have drawn salt tears,  
Shamed their aspect with store of childish drops:  
These eyes that never shed remorseful tear,  
No, when my father York and Edward wept,  
To hear the piteous moan that Rutland made  
When black-faced Clifford shook his sword at him;  
Nor when thy warlike father, like a child,  
Told the sad story of my father's death,  
And twenty times made pause to sob and weep,  
That all the standers-by had wet their cheeks  
Like trees bedash'd with rain: in that sad time  
My manly eyes did scorn an humble tear;  
And what these sorrows could not thence exhale,  
Thy beauty hath, and made them blind with weeping.  
I never sued to friend nor enemy;  
My tongue could never learn sweet smoothing word;  
But now thy beauty is proposed my fee,  
My proud heart sues, and prompts my tongue to speak.  
Teach not thy lips such scorn, for they were made  
For kissing, lady, not for such contempt.  
If thy revengeful heart cannot forgive,  
Lo, here I lend thee this sharp-pointed sword;  
Which if thou please to hide in this true bosom.  
And let the soul forth that adareth thee,  
I lay it naked to the deadly stroke,  
And humbly beg the death upon my knee.  
Nay, do not pause; for I did kill King Henry,  
But 'twas thy beauty that provoked me.  
Nay, now dispatch; 'twas I that stabb'd young Edward,

But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.  
Take up the sword again, or take up me.

LADY ANNE:  
Arise, dissembler: though I wish thy death,  
I will not be the executioner.

GLOUCESTER:  
Then bid me kill myself, and I will do it.

LADY ANNE:  
I have already.

GLOUCESTER:  
Tush, that was in thy rage:  
Speak it again, and, even with the word,  
That hand, which, for thy love, did kill thy love,  
Shall, for thy love, kill a far truer love;  
To both their deaths thou shalt be accessory.

LADY ANNE:  
I would I knew thy heart.

GLOUCESTER:  
'Tis figured in my tongue.

LADY ANNE:  
I fear me both are false.

GLOUCESTER:  
Then never man was true.

LADY ANNE:  
Well, well, put up your sword.

GLOUCESTER:  
Say, then, my peace is made.

LADY ANNE:  
That shall you know hereafter.

GLOUCESTER:  
But shall I live in hope?

LADY ANNE:  
All men, I hope, live so.

GLOUCESTER:  
Vouchsafe to wear this ring.

LADY ANNE:

To take is not to give.

GLOUCESTER:

Look, how this ring encompasseth finger.  
Even so thy breast encloseth my poor heart;  
Wear both of them, for both of them are thine.  
And if thy poor devoted suppliant may  
But beg one favour at thy gracious hand,  
Thou dost confirm his happiness for ever.

LADY ANNE:

What is it?

GLOUCESTER:

That it would please thee leave these sad designs  
To him that hath more cause to be a mourner,  
And presently repair to Crosby Place;  
Where, after I have solemnly interr'd  
At Chertsey monastery this noble king,  
And wet his grave with my repentant tears,  
I will with all expedient duty see you:  
For divers unknown reasons. I beseech you,  
Grant me this boon.

LADY ANNE:

With all my heart; and much it joys me too,  
To see you are become so penitent.  
Tressel and Berkeley, go along with me.

GLOUCESTER:

Bid me farewell.

LADY ANNE:

'Tis more than you deserve;  
But since you teach me how to flatter you,  
Imagine I have said farewell already.

GLOUCESTER:

Sirs, take up the corse.

GENTLEMEN:

Towards Chertsey, noble lord?

GLOUCESTER:

No, to White-Friars; there attend my coining.  
Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?  
Was ever woman in this humour won?  
I'll have her; but I will not keep her long.  
What! I, that kill'd her husband and his father,

To take her in her heart's extremest hate,  
With curses in her mouth, tears in her eyes,  
The bleeding witness of her hatred by;  
Having God, her conscience, and these bars  
against me,  
And I nothing to back my suit at all,  
But the plain devil and dissembling looks,  
And yet to win her, all the world to nothing!  
Ha!  
Hath she forgot already that brave prince,  
Edward, her lord, whom I, some three months since,  
Stabb'd in my angry mood at Tewksbury?  
A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman,  
Framed in the prodigality of nature,  
Young, valiant, wise, and, no doubt, right royal,  
The spacious world cannot again afford  
And will she yet debase her eyes on me,  
That cropp'd the golden prime of this sweet prince,  
And made her widow to a woful bed?  
On me, whose all not equals Edward's moiety?  
On me, that halt and am unshapen thus?  
My dukedom to a beggarly denier,  
I do mistake my person all this while:  
Upon my life, she finds, although I cannot,  
Myself to be a marvellous proper man.  
I'll be at charges for a looking-glass,  
And entertain some score or two of tailors,  
To study fashions to adorn my body:  
Since I am crept in favour with myself,  
Will maintain it with some little cost.  
But first I'll turn yon fellow in his grave;  
And then return lamenting to my love.  
Shine out, fair sun, till I have bought a glass,  
That I may see my shadow as I pass.

RIVERS:

Have patience, madam: there's no doubt his majesty  
Will soon recover his accustom'd health.

GREY:

In that you brook it in, it makes him worse:  
Therefore, for God's sake, entertain good comfort,  
And cheer his grace with quick and merry words.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

If he were dead, what would betide of me?

RIVERS:

No other harm but loss of such a lord.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

The loss of such a lord includes all harm.

GREY:

The heavens have bless'd you with a goodly son,  
To be your comforter when he is gone.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Oh, he is young and his minority  
Is put unto the trust of Richard Gloucester,  
A man that loves not me, nor none of you.

RIVERS:

Is it concluded that he shall be protector?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

It is determined, not concluded yet:  
But so it must be, if the king miscarry.

GREY:

Here come the lords of Buckingham and Derby.

BUCKINGHAM:

Good time of day unto your royal grace!

DERBY:

God make your majesty joyful as you have been!

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

The Countess Richmond, good my Lord of Derby.  
To your good prayers will scarcely say amen.  
Yet, Derby, notwithstanding she's your wife,  
And loves not me, be you, good lord, assured  
I hate not you for her proud arrogance.

DERBY:

I do beseech you, either not believe  
The envious slanders of her false accusers;  
Or, if she be accused in true report,  
Bear with her weakness, which, I think proceeds  
From wayward sickness, and no grounded malice.

RIVERS:

Saw you the king to-day, my Lord of Derby?

DERBY:

But now the Duke of Buckingham and I  
Are come from visiting his majesty.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

What likelihood of his amendment, lords?

BUCKINGHAM:

Madam, good hope; his grace speaks cheerfully.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

God grant him health! Did you confer with him?

BUCKINGHAM:

Madam, we did: he desires to make atonement  
Betwixt the Duke of Gloucester and your brothers,  
And betwixt them and my lord chamberlain;  
And sent to warn them to his royal presence.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Would all were well! but that will never be  
I fear our happiness is at the highest.

GLOUCESTER:

They do me wrong, and I will not endure it:  
Who are they that complain unto the king,  
That I, forsooth, am stern, and love them not?  
By holy Paul, they love his grace but lightly  
That fill his ears with such dissentious rumours.  
Because I cannot flatter and speak fair,  
Smile in men's faces, smooth, deceive and cog,  
Duck with French nods and apish courtesy,  
I must be held a rancorous enemy.  
Cannot a plain man live and think no harm,  
But thus his simple truth must be abused  
By silken, sly, insinuating Jacks?

RIVERS:

To whom in all this presence speaks your grace?

GLOUCESTER:

To thee, that hast nor honesty nor grace.  
When have I injured thee? when done thee wrong?  
Or thee? or thee? or any of your faction?  
A plague upon you all! His royal person,--  
Whom God preserve better than you would wish!--  
Cannot be quiet scarce a breathing-while,  
But you must trouble him with lewd complaints.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Brother of Gloucester, you mistake the matter.  
The king, of his own royal disposition,  
And not provoked by any suitor else;  
Aiming, belike, at your interior hatred,  
Which in your outward actions shows itself

Against my kindred, brothers, and myself,  
Makes him to send; that thereby he may gather  
The ground of your ill-will, and so remove it.

GLOUCESTER:

I cannot tell: the world is grown so bad,  
That wrens make prey where eagles dare not perch:  
Since every Jack became a gentleman  
There's many a gentle person made a Jack.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Come, come, we know your meaning, brother  
Gloucester;  
You envy my advancement and my friends':  
God grant we never may have need of you!

GLOUCESTER:

Meantime, God grants that we have need of you:  
Your brother is imprison'd by your means,  
Myself disgraced, and the nobility  
Held in contempt; whilst many fair promotions  
Are daily given to ennoble those  
That scarce, some two days since, were worth a noble.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

By Him that raised me to this careful height  
From that contented hap which I enjoy'd,  
I never did incense his majesty  
Against the Duke of Clarence, but have been  
An earnest advocate to plead for him.  
My lord, you do me shameful injury,  
Falsely to draw me in these vile suspects.

GLOUCESTER:

You may deny that you were not the cause  
Of my Lord Hastings' late imprisonment.

RIVERS:

She may, my lord, for--

GLOUCESTER:

She may, Lord Rivers! why, who knows not so?  
She may do more, sir, than denying that:  
She may help you to many fair preferments,  
And then deny her aiding hand therein,  
And lay those honours on your high deserts.  
What may she not? She may, yea, marry, may she--

RIVERS:

What, marry, may she?



GLOUCESTER:

What, marry, may she! marry with a king,  
A bachelor, a handsome stripling too:  
I wis your grandam had a worser match.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

My Lord of Gloucester, I have too long borne  
Your blunt upbraidings and your bitter scoffs:  
By heaven, I will acquaint his majesty  
With those gross taunts I often have endured.  
I had rather be a country servant-maid  
Than a great queen, with this condition,  
To be thus taunted, scorn'd, and baited at:  
Small joy have I in being England's queen.

QUEEN MARGARET:

And lessen'd be that small, God, I beseech thee!  
Thy honour, state and seat is due to me.

GLOUCESTER:

What! threat you me with telling of the king?  
Tell him, and spare not: look, what I have said  
I will avouch in presence of the king:  
I dare adventure to be sent to the Tower.  
'Tis time to speak; my pains are quite forgot.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Out, devil! I remember them too well:  
Thou slewest my husband Henry in the Tower,  
And Edward, my poor son, at Tewksbury.

GLOUCESTER:

Ere you were queen, yea, or your husband king,  
I was a pack-horse in his great affairs;  
A weeder-out of his proud adversaries,  
A liberal rewarder of his friends:  
To royalize his blood I spilt mine own.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Yea, and much better blood than his or thine.

GLOUCESTER:

In all which time you and your husband Grey  
Were factious for the house of Lancaster;  
And, Rivers, so were you. Was not your husband  
In Margaret's battle at Saint Alban's slain?  
Let me put in your minds, if you forget,  
What you have been ere now, and what you are;  
Withal, what I have been, and what I am.

QUEEN MARGARET:

A murderous villain, and so still thou art.

GLOUCESTER:

Poor Clarence did forsake his father, Warwick;  
Yea, and forswore himself,—which Jesu pardon!--

QUEEN MARGARET:

Which God revenge!

GLOUCESTER:

To fight on Edward's party for the crown;  
And for his meed, poor lord, he is mew'd up.  
I would to God my heart were flint, like Edward's;  
Or Edward's soft and pitiful, like mine  
I am too childish-foolish for this world.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Hie thee to hell for shame, and leave the world,  
Thou cacodemon! there thy kingdom is.

RIVERS:

My Lord of Gloucester, in those busy days  
Which here you urge to prove us enemies,  
We follow'd then our lord, our lawful king:  
So should we you, if you should be our king.

GLOUCESTER:

If I should be! I had rather be a pedlar:  
Far be it from my heart, the thought of it!

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

As little joy, my lord, as you suppose  
You should enjoy, were you this country's king,  
As little joy may you suppose in me.  
That I enjoy, being the queen thereof.

QUEEN MARGARET:

A little joy enjoys the queen thereof;  
For I am she, and altogether joyless.  
I can no longer hold me patient.  
Hear me, you wrangling pirates, that fall out  
In sharing that which you have pill'd from me!  
Which of you trembles not that looks on me?  
If not, that, I being queen, you bow like subjects,  
Yet that, by you deposed, you quake like rebels?  
O gentle villain, do not turn away!

GLOUCESTER:

Foul wrinkled witch, what makest thou in my sight?

QUEEN MARGARET:

But repetition of what thou hast marr'd;  
That will I make before I let thee go.

GLOUCESTER:

Wert thou not banished on pain of death?

QUEEN MARGARET:

I was; but I do find more pain in banishment  
Than death can yield me here by my abode.  
A husband and a son thou owest to me;  
And thou a kingdom; all of you allegiance:  
The sorrow that I have, by right is yours,  
And all the pleasures you usurp are mine.

GLOUCESTER:

The curse my noble father laid on thee,  
When thou didst crown his warlike brows with paper  
And with thy scorns drew'st rivers from his eyes,  
And then, to dry them, gavest the duke a clout  
Steep'd in the faultless blood of pretty Rutland--  
His curses, then from bitterness of soul  
Denounced against thee, are all fall'n upon thee;  
And God, not we, hath plagued thy bloody deed.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

So just is God, to right the innocent.

HASTINGS:

O, 'twas the foulest deed to slay that babe,  
And the most merciless that e'er was heard of!

RIVERS:

Tyrants themselves wept when it was reported.

DORSET:

No man but prophesied revenge for it.

BUCKINGHAM:

Northumberland, then present, wept to see it.

QUEEN MARGARET:

What were you snarling all before I came,  
Ready to catch each other by the throat,  
And turn you all your hatred now on me?  
Did York's dread curse prevail so much with heaven?  
That Henry's death, my lovely Edward's death,  
Their kingdom's loss, my woful banishment,

Could all but answer for that peevish brat?  
Can curses pierce the clouds and enter heaven?  
Why, then, give way, dull clouds, to my quick curses!  
If not by war, by surfeit die your king,  
As ours by murder, to make him a king!  
Edward thy son, which now is Prince of Wales,  
For Edward my son, which was Prince of Wales,  
Die in his youth by like untimely violence!  
Thyself a queen, for me that was a queen,  
Outlive thy glory, like my wretched self!  
Long mayst thou live to wail thy children's loss;  
And see another, as I see thee now,  
Deck'd in thy rights, as thou art stall'd in mine!  
Long die thy happy days before thy death;  
And, after many lengthen'd hours of grief,  
Die neither mother, wife, nor England's queen!  
Rivers and Dorset, you were standers by,  
And so wast thou, Lord Hastings, when my son  
Was stabb'd with bloody daggers: God, I pray him,  
That none of you may live your natural age,  
But by some unlook'd accident cut off!

GLoucester:

Have done thy charm, thou hateful wither'd hag!

Queen Margaret:

And leave out thee? stay, dog, for thou shalt hear me.  
If heaven have any grievous plague in store  
Exceeding those that I can wish upon thee,  
O, let them keep it till thy sins be ripe,  
And then hurl down their indignation  
On thee, the troubler of the poor world's peace!  
The worm of conscience still begnaw thy soul!  
Thy friends suspect for traitors while thou livest,  
And take deep traitors for thy dearest friends!  
No sleep close up that deadly eye of thine,  
Unless it be whilst some tormenting dream  
Affrights thee with a hell of ugly devils!  
Thou elvish-mark'd, abortive, rooting hog!  
Thou that wast seal'd in thy nativity  
The slave of nature and the son of hell!  
Thou slander of thy mother's heavy womb!  
Thou loathed issue of thy father's loins!  
Thou rag of honour! thou detested--

GLoucester:

Margaret.

Queen Margaret:

Richard!

GLoucester:  
Ha!

Queen Margaret:  
I call thee not.

GLoucester:  
I cry thee mercy then, for I had thought  
That thou hadst call'd me all these bitter names.

Queen Margaret:  
Why, so I did; but look'd for no reply.  
O, let me make the period to my curse!

GLoucester:  
'Tis done by me, and ends in 'Margaret.'

Queen Elizabeth:  
Thus have you breathed your curse against yourself.

Queen Margaret:  
Poor painted queen, vain flourish of my fortune!  
Why strew'st thou sugar on that bottled spider,  
Whose deadly web ensnareth thee about?  
Fool, fool! thou whet'st a knife to kill thyself.  
The time will come when thou shalt wish for me  
To help thee curse that poisonous bunchback'd toad.

Hastings:  
False-boding woman, end thy frantic curse,  
Lest to thy harm thou move our patience.

Queen Margaret:  
Foul shame upon you! you have all moved mine.

Rivers:  
Were you well served, you would be taught your duty.

Queen Margaret:  
To serve me well, you all should do me duty,  
Teach me to be your queen, and you my subjects:  
O, serve me well, and teach yourselves that duty!

Dorset:  
Dispute not with her; she is lunatic.

Queen Margaret:  
Peace, master marquess, you are malapert:  
Your fire-new stamp of honour is scarce current.

O, that your young nobility could judge  
What 'twere to lose it, and be miserable!  
They that stand high have many blasts to shake them;  
And if they fall, they dash themselves to pieces.

GLOUCESTER:

Good counsel, marry: learn it, learn it, marquess.

DORSET:

It toucheth you, my lord, as much as me.

GLOUCESTER:

Yea, and much more: but I was born so high,  
Our aery buildeth in the cedar's top,  
And dallies with the wind and scorns the sun.

QUEEN MARGARET:

And turns the sun to shade; alas! alas!  
Witness my son, now in the shade of death;  
Whose bright out-shining beams thy cloudy wrath  
Hath in eternal darkness folded up.  
Your aery buildeth in our aery's nest.  
O God, that seest it, do not suffer it!  
As it was won with blood, lost be it so!

BUCKINGHAM:

Have done! for shame, if not for charity.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Urge neither charity nor shame to me:  
Uncharitably with me have you dealt,  
And shamefully by you my hopes are butcher'd.  
My charity is outrage, life my shame  
And in that shame still live my sorrow's rage.

BUCKINGHAM:

Have done, have done.

QUEEN MARGARET:

O princely Buckingham I'll kiss thy hand,  
In sign of league and amity with thee:  
Now fair befall thee and thy noble house!  
Thy garments are not spotted with our blood,  
Nor thou within the compass of my curse.

BUCKINGHAM:

Nor no one here; for curses never pass  
The lips of those that breathe them in the air.

QUEEN MARGARET:

I'll not believe but they ascend the sky,  
And there awake God's gentle-sleeping peace.  
O Buckingham, take heed of yonder dog!  
Look, when he fawns, he bites; and when he bites,  
His venom tooth will rankle to the death:  
Have not to do with him, beware of him;  
Sin, death, and hell have set their marks on him,  
And all their ministers attend on him.

GLOUCESTER:

What doth she say, my Lord of Buckingham?

BUCKINGHAM:

Nothing that I respect, my gracious lord.

QUEEN MARGARET:

What, dost thou scorn me for my gentle counsel?  
And soothe the devil that I warn thee from?  
O, but remember this another day,  
When he shall split thy very heart with sorrow,  
And say poor Margaret was a prophetess!  
Live each of you the subjects to his hate,  
And he to yours, and all of you to God's!

HASTINGS:

My hair doth stand on end to hear her curses.

RIVERS:

And so doth mine: I muse why she's at liberty.

GLOUCESTER:

I cannot blame her: by God's holy mother,  
She hath had too much wrong; and I repent  
My part thereof that I have done to her.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

I never did her any, to my knowledge.

GLOUCESTER:

But you have all the vantage of her wrong.  
I was too hot to do somebody good,  
That is too cold in thinking of it now.  
Marry, as for Clarence, he is well repaid,  
He is frank'd up to fattening for his pains  
God pardon them that are the cause of it!

RIVERS:

A virtuous and a Christian-like conclusion,  
To pray for them that have done scathe to us.

GLOUCESTER:

So do I ever:

being well-advised.

For had I cursed now, I had cursed myself.

CATESBY:

Madam, his majesty doth call for you,

And for your grace; and you, my noble lords.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Catesby, we come. Lords, will you go with us?

RIVERS:

Madam, we will attend your grace.

GLOUCESTER:

I do the wrong, and first begin to brawl.

The secret mischiefs that I set abroad

I lay unto the grievous charge of others.

Clarence, whom I, indeed, have laid in darkness,

I do beweepe to many simple gulls

Namely, to Hastings, Derby, Buckingham;

And say it is the queen and her allies

That stir the king against the duke my brother.

Now, they believe it; and withal whet me

To be revenged on Rivers, Vaughan, Grey:

But then I sigh; and, with a piece of scripture,

Tell them that God bids us do good for evil:

And thus I clothe my naked villany

With old odd ends stolen out of holy writ;

And seem a saint, when most I play the devil.

But, soft! here come my executioners.

How now, my hardy, stout resolved mates!

Are you now going to dispatch this deed?

First Murderer:

We are, my lord; and come to have the warrant

That we may be admitted where he is.

GLOUCESTER:

Well thought upon; I have it here about me.

When you have done, repair to Crosby Place.

But, sirs, be sudden in the execution,

Withal obdurate, do not hear him plead;

For Clarence is well-spoken, and perhaps

May move your hearts to pity if you mark him.

First Murderer:

Tush!

Fear not, my lord, we will not stand to prate;



Talkers are no good doers: be assured  
We come to use our hands and not our tongues.

GLOUCESTER:

Your eyes drop millstones, when fools' eyes drop tears:  
I like you, lads; about your business straight;  
Go, go, dispatch.

First Murderer:

We will, my noble lord.

BRAKENBURY:

Why looks your grace so heavily today?

CLARENCE:

O, I have pass'd a miserable night,  
So full of ugly sights, of ghastly dreams,  
That, as I am a Christian faithful man,  
I would not spend another such a night,  
Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days,  
So full of dismal terror was the time!

BRAKENBURY:

What was your dream? I long to hear you tell it.

CLARENCE:

Methoughts that I had broken from the Tower,  
And was embark'd to cross to Burgundy;  
And, in my company, my brother Gloucester;  
Who from my cabin tempted me to walk  
Upon the hatches: thence we looked toward England,  
And cited up a thousand fearful times,  
During the wars of York and Lancaster  
That had befall'n us. As we paced along  
Upon the giddy footing of the hatches,  
Methought that Gloucester stumbled; and, in falling,  
Struck me, that thought to stay him, overboard,  
Into the tumbling billows of the main.  
Lord, Lord! methought, what pain it was to drown!  
What dreadful noise of waters in mine ears!  
What ugly sights of death within mine eyes!  
Methought I saw a thousand fearful wrecks;  
Ten thousand men that fishes gnaw'd upon;  
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,  
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,  
All scatter'd in the bottom of the sea:  
Some lay in dead men's skulls; and, in those holes  
Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept,  
As 'twere in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems,  
Which woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep,

And mock'd the dead bones that lay scatter'd by.

BRAKENBURY:

Had you such leisure in the time of death  
To gaze upon the secrets of the deep?

CLARENCE:

Methought I had; and often did I strive  
To yield the ghost: but still the envious flood  
Kept in my soul, and would not let it forth  
To seek the empty, vast and wandering air;  
But smother'd it within my panting bulk,  
Which almost burst to belch it in the sea.

BRAKENBURY:

Awaked you not with this sore agony?

CLARENCE:

O, no, my dream was lengthen'd after life;  
O, then began the tempest to my soul,  
Who pass'd, methought, the melancholy flood,  
With that grim ferryman which poets write of,  
Unto the kingdom of perpetual night.  
The first that there did greet my stranger soul,  
Was my great father-in-law, renowned Warwick;  
Who cried aloud, 'What scourge for perjury  
Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?'  
And so he vanish'd: then came wandering by  
A shadow like an angel, with bright hair  
Dabbled in blood; and he squeak'd out aloud,  
'Clarence is come; false, fleeting, perjured Clarence,  
That stabb'd me in the field by Tewksbury;  
Seize on him, Furies, take him to your torments!'  
With that, methoughts, a legion of foul fiends  
Environ'd me about, and howled in mine ears  
Such hideous cries, that with the very noise  
I trembling waked, and for a season after  
Could not believe but that I was in hell,  
Such terrible impression made the dream.

BRAKENBURY:

No marvel, my lord, though it affrighted you;  
I promise, I am afraid to hear you tell it.

CLARENCE:

O Brakenbury, I have done those things,  
Which now bear evidence against my soul,  
For Edward's sake; and see how he requites me!  
O God! if my deep prayers cannot appease thee,  
But thou wilt be avenged on my misdeeds,

Yet execute thy wrath in me alone,  
O, spare my guiltless wife and my poor children!  
I pray thee, gentle keeper, stay by me;  
My soul is heavy, and I fain would sleep.

BRAKENBURY:

I will, my lord: God give your grace good rest!  
Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours,  
Makes the night morning, and the noon-tide night.  
Princes have but their tides for their glories,  
An outward honour for an inward toil;  
And, for unfelt imagination,  
They often feel a world of restless cares:  
So that, betwixt their tides and low names,  
There's nothing differs but the outward fame.

First Murderer:  
Ho! who's here?

BRAKENBURY:

In God's name what are you, and how came you hither?

First Murderer:  
I would speak with Clarence, and I came hither on my legs.

BRAKENBURY:

Yea, are you so brief?

Second Murderer:  
O sir, it is better to be brief than tedious. Show  
him our commission; talk no more.

BRAKENBURY:

I am, in this, commanded to deliver  
The noble Duke of Clarence to your hands:  
I will not reason what is meant hereby,  
Because I will be guiltless of the meaning.  
Here are the keys, there sits the duke asleep:  
I'll to the king; and signify to him  
That thus I have resign'd my charge to you.

First Murderer:  
Do so, it is a point of wisdom: fare you well.

Second Murderer:  
What, shall we stab him as he sleeps?

First Murderer:  
No; then he will say 'twas done cowardly, when he wakes.

Second Murderer:  
When he wakes! why, fool, he shall never wake till  
the judgment-day.

First Murderer:  
Why, then he will say we stabbed him sleeping.

Second Murderer:  
The urging of that word 'judgment' hath bred a kind  
of remorse in me.

First Murderer:  
What, art thou afraid?

Second Murderer:  
Not to kill him, having a warrant for it; but to be  
damned for killing him, from which no warrant can defend us.

First Murderer:  
I thought thou hadst been resolute.

Second Murderer:  
So I am, to let him live.

First Murderer:  
Back to the Duke of Gloucester, tell him so.

Second Murderer:  
I pray thee, stay a while: I hope my holy humour  
will change; 'twas wont to hold me but while one  
would tell twenty.

First Murderer:  
How dost thou feel thyself now?

Second Murderer:  
'Faith, some certain dregs of conscience are yet  
within me.

First Murderer:  
Remember our reward, when the deed is done.

Second Murderer:  
'Zounds, he dies: I had forgot the reward.

First Murderer:  
Where is thy conscience now?

Second Murderer:  
In the Duke of Gloucester's purse.

First Murderer:

So when he opens his purse to give us our reward,  
thy conscience flies out.

Second Murderer:

Let it go; there's few or none will entertain it.

First Murderer:

How if it come to thee again?

Second Murderer:

I'll not meddle with it: it is a dangerous thing: it makes a man a coward: a man cannot steal, but it accuseth him; he cannot swear, but it cheques him; he cannot lie with his neighbour's wife, but it detects him: 'tis a blushing shamefast spirit that mutinies in a man's bosom; it fills one full of obstacles: it made me once restore a purse of gold that I found; it beggars any man that keeps it: it is turned out of all towns and cities for a dangerous thing; and every man that means to live well endeavours to trust to himself and to live without it.

First Murderer:

'Zounds, it is even now at my elbow, persuading me not to kill the duke.

Second Murderer:

Take the devil in thy mind, and relieve him not: he would insinuate with thee but to make thee sigh.

First Murderer:

Tut, I am strong-framed, he cannot prevail with me, I warrant thee.

Second Murderer:

Spoke like a tail fellow that respects his reputation. Come, shall we to this gear?

First Murderer:

Take him over the costard with the hilts of thy sword, and then we will chop him in the malmsey-butt in the next room.

Second Murderer:

O excellent devise! make a sop of him.

First Murderer:

Hark! he stirs: shall I strike?

Second Murderer:

No, first let's reason with him.

CLARENCE:

Where art thou, keeper? give me a cup of wine.

Second murderer:

You shall have wine enough, my lord, anon.

CLARENCE:

In God's name, what art thou?

Second Murderer:

A man, as you are.

CLARENCE:

But not, as I am, royal.

Second Murderer:

Nor you, as we are, loyal.

CLARENCE:

Thy voice is thunder, but thy looks are humble.

Second Murderer:

My voice is now the king's, my looks mine own.

CLARENCE:

How darkly and how deadly dost thou speak!  
Your eyes do menace me: why look you pale?  
Who sent you hither? Wherefore do you come?

Both:

To, to, to--

CLARENCE:

To murder me?

Both:

Ay, ay.

CLARENCE:

You scarcely have the hearts to tell me so,  
And therefore cannot have the hearts to do it.  
Wherein, my friends, have I offended you?

First Murderer:

Offended us you have not, but the king.

CLARENCE:

I shall be reconciled to him again.

Second Murderer:

Never, my lord; therefore prepare to die.

CLARENCE:

Are you call'd forth from out a world of men  
To slay the innocent? What is my offence?  
Where are the evidence that do accuse me?  
What lawful quest have given their verdict up  
Unto the frowning judge? or who pronounced  
The bitter sentence of poor Clarence' death?  
Before I be convict by course of law,  
To threaten me with death is most unlawful.  
I charge you, as you hope to have redemption  
By Christ's dear blood shed for our grievous sins,  
That you depart and lay no hands on me  
The deed you undertake is damnable.

First Murderer:

What we will do, we do upon command.

Second Murderer:

And he that hath commanded is the king.

CLARENCE:

Erroneous vassal! the great King of kings  
Hath in the tables of his law commanded  
That thou shalt do no murder: and wilt thou, then,  
Spurn at his edict and fulfil a man's?  
Take heed; for he holds vengeance in his hands,  
To hurl upon their heads that break his law.

Second Murderer:

And that same vengeance doth he hurl on thee,  
For false forswearing and for murder too:  
Thou didst receive the holy sacrament,  
To fight in quarrel of the house of Lancaster.

First Murderer:

And, like a traitor to the name of God,  
Didst break that vow; and with thy treacherous blade  
Unrip'dst the bowels of thy sovereign's son.

Second Murderer:

Whom thou wert sworn to cherish and defend.

First Murderer:

How canst thou urge God's dreadful law to us,  
When thou hast broke it in so dear degree?

CLARENCE:

Alas! for whose sake did I that ill deed?  
For Edward, for my brother, for his sake: Why, sirs,  
He sends ye not to murder me for this  
For in this sin he is as deep as I.  
If God will be revenged for this deed.  
O, know you yet, he doth it publicly,  
Take not the quarrel from his powerful arm;  
He needs no indirect nor lawless course  
To cut off those that have offended him.

First Murderer:

Who made thee, then, a bloody minister,  
When gallant-springing brave Plantagenet,  
That princely novice, was struck dead by thee?

CLARENCE:

My brother's love, the devil, and my rage.

First Murderer:

Thy brother's love, our duty, and thy fault,  
Provoke us hither now to slaughter thee.

CLARENCE:

Oh, if you love my brother, hate not me;  
I am his brother, and I love him well.  
If you be hired for meed, go back again,  
And I will send you to my brother Gloucester,  
Who shall reward you better for my life  
Than Edward will for tidings of my death.

Second Murderer:

You are deceived, your brother Gloucester hates you.

CLARENCE:

O, no, he loves me, and he holds me dear:  
Go you to him from me.

Both:

Ay, so we will.

CLARENCE:

Tell him, when that our princely father York  
Bless'd his three sons with his victorious arm,  
And charged us from his soul to love each other,  
He little thought of this divided friendship:  
Bid Gloucester think of this, and he will weep.



First Murderer:  
Ay, millstones; as be lesson'd us to weep.

CLARENCE:  
O, do not slander him, for he is kind.

First Murderer:  
Right,  
As snow in harvest. Thou deceivest thyself:  
'Tis he that sent us hither now to slaughter thee.

CLARENCE:  
It cannot be; for when I parted with him,  
He hugg'd me in his arms, and swore, with sobs,  
That he would labour my delivery.

Second Murderer:  
Why, so he doth, now he delivers thee  
From this world's thralldom to the joys of heaven.

First Murderer:  
Make peace with God, for you must die, my lord.

CLARENCE:  
Hast thou that holy feeling in thy soul,  
To counsel me to make my peace with God,  
And art thou yet to thy own soul so blind,  
That thou wilt war with God by murdering me?  
Ah, sirs, consider, he that set you on  
To do this deed will hate you for the deed.

Second Murderer:  
What shall we do?

CLARENCE:  
Relent, and save your souls.

First Murderer:  
Relent! 'tis cowardly and womanish.

CLARENCE:  
Not to relent is beastly, savage, devilish.  
Which of you, if you were a prince's son,  
Being pent from liberty, as I am now,  
if two such murderers as yourselves came to you,  
Would not entreat for life?  
My friend, I spy some pity in thy looks:  
O, if thine eye be not a flatterer,  
Come thou on my side, and entreat for me,

As you would beg, were you in my distress  
A begging prince what beggar pities not?

Second Murderer:  
Look behind you, my lord.

First Murderer:  
Take that, and that: if all this will not do,  
I'll drown you in the malmsey-butt within.

Second Murderer:  
A bloody deed, and desperately dispatch'd!  
How fain, like Pilate, would I wash my hands  
Of this most grievous guilty murder done!

First Murderer:  
How now! what mean'st thou, that thou help'st me not?  
By heavens, the duke shall know how slack thou art!

Second Murderer:  
I would he knew that I had saved his brother!  
Take thou the fee, and tell him what I say;  
For I repent me that the duke is slain.

First Murderer:  
So do not I: go, coward as thou art.  
Now must I hide his body in some hole,  
Until the duke take order for his burial:  
And when I have my meed, I must away;  
For this will out, and here I must not stay.

KING EDWARD IV:  
Why, so: now have I done a good day's work:  
You peers, continue this united league:  
I every day expect an embassy  
From my Redeemer to redeem me hence;  
And now in peace my soul shall part to heaven,  
Since I have set my friends at peace on earth.  
Rivers and Hastings, take each other's hand;  
Dissemble not your hatred, swear your love.

RIVERS:  
By heaven, my heart is purged from grudging hate:  
And with my hand I seal my true heart's love.

HASTINGS:  
So thrive I, as I truly swear the like!

KING EDWARD IV:  
Take heed you dally not before your king;

Lest he that is the supreme King of kings  
Confound your hidden falsehood, and award  
Either of you to be the other's end.

HASTINGS:

So prosper I, as I swear perfect love!

RIVERS:

And I, as I love Hastings with my heart!

KING EDWARD IV:

Madam, yourself are not exempt in this,  
Nor your son Dorset, Buckingham, nor you;  
You have been factious one against the other,  
Wife, love Lord Hastings, let him kiss your hand;  
And what you do, do it unfeignedly.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Here, Hastings; I will never more remember  
Our former hatred, so thrive I and mine!

KING EDWARD IV:

Dorset, embrace him; Hastings, love lord marquess.

DORSET:

This interchange of love, I here protest,  
Upon my part shall be unviolable.

HASTINGS:

And so swear I, my lord

KING EDWARD IV:

Now, princely Buckingham, seal thou this league  
With thy embracements to my wife's allies,  
And make me happy in your unity.

BUCKINGHAM:

Whenever Buckingham doth turn his hate  
On you or yours,  
but with all duteous love  
Doth cherish you and yours, God punish me  
With hate in those where I expect most love!  
When I have most need to employ a friend,  
And most assured that he is a friend  
Deep, hollow, treacherous, and full of guile,  
Be he unto me! this do I beg of God,  
When I am cold in zeal to yours.

KING EDWARD IV:

A pleasing cordial, princely Buckingham,

is this thy vow unto my sickly heart.  
There wanteth now our brother Gloucester here,  
To make the perfect period of this peace.

BUCKINGHAM:

And, in good time, here comes the noble duke.

GLOUCESTER:

Good morrow to my sovereign king and queen:  
And, princely peers, a happy time of day!

KING EDWARD IV:

Happy, indeed, as we have spent the day.  
Brother, we done deeds of charity;  
Made peace enmity, fair love of hate,  
Between these swelling wrong-incensed peers.

GLOUCESTER:

A blessed labour, my most sovereign liege:  
Amongst this princely heap, if any here,  
By false intelligence, or wrong surmise,  
Hold me a foe;  
If I unwittingly, or in my rage,  
Have aught committed that is hardly borne  
By any in this presence, I desire  
To reconcile me to his friendly peace:  
'Tis death to me to be at enmity;  
I hate it, and desire all good men's love.  
First, madam, I entreat true peace of you,  
Which I will purchase with my duteous service;  
Of you, my noble cousin Buckingham,  
If ever any grudge were lodged between us;  
Of you, Lord Rivers, and, Lord Grey, of you;  
That without desert have frown'd on me;  
Dukes, earls, lords, gentlemen; indeed, of all.  
I do not know that Englishman alive  
With whom my soul is any jot at odds  
More than the infant that is born to-night  
I thank my God for my humility.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

A holy day shall this be kept hereafter:  
I would to God all strifes were well compounded.  
My sovereign liege, I do beseech your majesty  
To take our brother Clarence to your grace.

GLOUCESTER:

Why, madam, have I offer'd love for this  
To be so bouted in this royal presence?  
Who knows not that the noble duke is dead?

You do him injury to scorn his corse.

RIVERS:

Who knows not he is dead! who knows he is?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

All seeing heaven, what a world is this!

BUCKINGHAM:

Look I so pale, Lord Dorset, as the rest?

DORSET:

Ay, my good lord; and no one in this presence  
But his red colour hath forsook his cheeks.

KING EDWARD IV:

Is Clarence dead? the order was reversed.

GLOUCESTER:

But he, poor soul, by your first order died,  
And that a winged Mercury did bear:  
Some tardy cripple bore the countermand,  
That came too lag to see him buried.  
God grant that some, less noble and less loyal,  
Nearer in bloody thoughts, but not in blood,  
Deserve not worse than wretched Clarence did,  
And yet go current from suspicion!

DORSET:

A boon, my sovereign, for my service done!

KING EDWARD IV:

I pray thee, peace: my soul is full of sorrow.

DORSET:

I will not rise, unless your highness grant.

KING EDWARD IV:

Then speak at once what is it thou demand'st.

DORSET:

The forfeit, sovereign, of my servant's life;  
Who slew to-day a righteous gentleman  
Lately attendant on the Duke of Norfolk.

KING EDWARD IV:

Have a tongue to doom my brother's death,  
And shall the same give pardon to a slave?  
My brother slew no man; his fault was thought,  
And yet his punishment was cruel death.

Who sued to me for him? who, in my rage,  
Kneel'd at my feet, and bade me be advised  
Who spake of brotherhood? who spake of love?  
Who told me how the poor soul did forsake  
The mighty Warwick, and did fight for me?  
Who told me, in the field by Tewksbury  
When Oxford had me down, he rescued me,  
And said, 'Dear brother, live, and be a king'?  
Who told me, when we both lay in the field  
Frozen almost to death, how he did lap me  
Even in his own garments, and gave himself,  
All thin and naked, to the numb cold night?  
All this from my remembrance brutish wrath  
Sinfully pluck'd, and not a man of you  
Had so much grace to put it in my mind.  
But when your carters or your waiting-vassals  
Have done a drunken slaughter, and defaced  
The precious image of our dear Redeemer,  
You straight are on your knees for pardon, pardon;  
And I unjustly too, must grant it you  
But for my brother not a man would speak,  
Nor I, ungracious, speak unto myself  
For him, poor soul. The proudest of you all  
Have been beholding to him in his life;  
Yet none of you would once plead for his life.  
O God, I fear thy justice will take hold  
On me, and you, and mine, and yours for this!  
Come, Hastings, help me to my closet.  
Oh, poor Clarence!

GLoucester:

This is the fruit of rashness! Mark'd you not  
How that the guilty kindred of the queen  
Look'd pale when they did hear of Clarence' death?  
O, they did urge it still unto the king!  
God will revenge it. But come, let us in,  
To comfort Edward with our company.

Buckingham:

We wait upon your grace.

Boy:

Tell me, good grandam, is our father dead?

Duchess of York:

No, boy.

Boy:

Why do you wring your hands, and beat your breast,  
And cry 'O Clarence, my unhappy son!'

Girl:

Why do you look on us, and shake your head,  
And call us wretches, orphans, castaways  
If that our noble father be alive?

DUCHESS OF YORK:

My pretty cousins, you mistake me much;  
I do lament the sickness of the king.  
As loath to lose him, not your father's death;  
It were lost sorrow to wail one that's lost.

Boy:

Then, grandam, you conclude that he is dead.  
The king my uncle is to blame for this:  
God will revenge it; whom I will importune  
With daily prayers all to that effect.

Girl:

And so will I.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Peace, children, peace! the king doth love you well:  
Incapable and shallow innocents,  
You cannot guess who caused your father's death.

Boy:

Grandam, we can; for my good uncle Gloucester  
Told me, the king, provoked by the queen,  
Devised impeachments to imprison him :  
And when my uncle told me so, he wept,  
And hugg'd me in his arm, and kindly kiss'd my cheek;  
Bade me rely on him as on my father,  
And he would love me dearly as his child.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Oh, that deceit should steal such gentle shapes,  
And with a virtuous vizard hide foul guile!  
He is my son; yea, and therein my shame;  
Yet from my dugs he drew not this deceit.

Boy:

Think you my uncle did dissemble, grandam?

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Ay, boy.

Boy:

I cannot think it. Hark! what noise is this?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Oh, who shall hinder me to wail and weep,  
To chide my fortune, and torment myself?  
I'll join with black despair against my soul,  
And to myself become an enemy.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

What means this scene of rude impatience?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

To make an act of tragic violence:  
Edward, my lord, your son, our king, is dead.  
Why grow the branches now the root is wither'd?  
Why wither not the leaves the sap being gone?  
If you will live, lament; if die, be brief,  
That our swift-winged souls may catch the king's;  
Or, like obedient subjects, follow him  
To his new kingdom of perpetual rest.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Ah, so much interest have I in thy sorrow  
As I had title in thy noble husband!  
I have bewept a worthy husband's death,  
And lived by looking on his images:  
But now two mirrors of his princely semblance  
Are crack'd in pieces by malignant death,  
And I for comfort have but one false glass,  
Which grieves me when I see my shame in him.  
Thou art a widow; yet thou art a mother,  
And hast the comfort of thy children left thee:  
But death hath snatch'd my husband from mine arms,  
And pluck'd two crutches from my feeble limbs,  
Edward and Clarence. O, what cause have I,  
Thine being but a moiety of my grief,  
To overgo thy plaints and drown thy cries!

Boy:

Good aunt, you wept not for our father's death;  
How can we aid you with our kindred tears?

Girl:

Our fatherless distress was left unmoan'd;  
Your widow-dolour likewise be unwept!

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Give me no help in lamentation;  
I am not barren to bring forth complaints  
All springs reduce their currents to mine eyes,  
That I, being govern'd by the watery moon,  
May send forth plenteous tears to drown the world!



Oh for my husband, for my dear lord Edward!

Children:

Oh for our father, for our dear lord Clarence!

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Alas for both, both mine, Edward and Clarence!

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

What stay had I but Edward? and he's gone.

Children:

What stay had we but Clarence? and he's gone.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

What stays had I but they? and they are gone.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Was never widow had so dear a loss!

Children:

Were never orphans had so dear a loss!

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Was never mother had so dear a loss!

Alas, I am the mother of these moans!

Their woes are parcell'd, mine are general.

She for an Edward weeps, and so do I;

I for a Clarence weep, so doth not she:

These babes for Clarence weep and so do I;

I for an Edward weep, so do not they:

Alas, you three, on me, threefold distress'd,

Pour all your tears! I am your sorrow's nurse,

And I will pamper it with lamentations.

DORSET:

Comfort, dear mother: God is much displeased

That you take with unthankfulness, his doing:

In common worldly things, 'tis call'd ungrateful,

With dull unwillingness to repay a debt

Which with a bounteous hand was kindly lent;

Much more to be thus opposite with heaven,

For it requires the royal debt it lent you.

RIVERS:

Madam, bethink you, like a careful mother,

Of the young prince your son: send straight for him

Let him be crown'd; in him your comfort lives:

Drown desperate sorrow in dead Edward's grave,

And plant your joys in living Edward's throne.

GLOUCESTER:

Madam, have comfort: all of us have cause  
To wail the dimming of our shining star;  
But none can cure their harms by wailing them.  
Madam, my mother, I do cry you mercy;  
I did not see your grace: humbly on my knee  
I crave your blessing.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

God bless thee; and put meekness in thy mind,  
Love, charity, obedience, and true duty!

GLOUCESTER:

BUCKINGHAM:

You cloudy princes and heart-sorrowing peers,  
That bear this mutual heavy load of moan,  
Now cheer each other in each other's love  
Though we have spent our harvest of this king,  
We are to reap the harvest of his son.  
The broken rancour of your high-swoln hearts,  
But lately splinter'd, knit, and join'd together,  
Must gently be preserved, cherish'd, and kept:  
Me seemeth good, that, with some little train,  
Forthwith from Ludlow the young prince be fetch'd  
Hither to London, to be crown'd our king.

RIVERS:

Why with some little train, my Lord of Buckingham?

BUCKINGHAM:

Marry, my lord, lest, by a multitude,  
The new-heal'd wound of malice should break out,  
Which would be so much the more dangerous  
By how much the estate is green and yet ungovern'd:  
Where every horse bears his commanding rein,  
And may direct his course as please himself,  
As well the fear of harm, as harm apparent,  
In my opinion, ought to be prevented.

GLOUCESTER:

I hope the king made peace with all of us  
And the compact is firm and true in me.

RIVERS:

And so in me; and so, I think, in all:  
Yet, since it is but green, it should be put  
To no apparent likelihood of breach,  
Which haply by much company might be urged:

Therefore I say with noble Buckingham,  
That it is meet so few should fetch the prince.

HASTINGS:  
And so say I.

GLOUCESTER:  
Then be it so; and go we to determine  
Who they shall be that straight shall post to Ludlow.  
Madam, and you, my mother, will you go  
To give your censures in this weighty business?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
With all our harts.

BUCKINGHAM:  
My lord, whoever journeys to the Prince,  
For God's sake, let not us two be behind;  
For, by the way, I'll sort occasion,  
As index to the story we late talk'd of,  
To part the queen's proud kindred from the king.

GLOUCESTER:  
My other self, my counsel's consistory,  
My oracle, my prophet! My dear cousin,  
I, like a child, will go by thy direction.  
Towards Ludlow then, for we'll not stay behind.

First Citizen:  
Neighbour, well met: whither away so fast?

Second Citizen:  
I promise you, I scarcely know myself:  
Hear you the news abroad?

First Citizen:  
Ay, that the king is dead.

Second Citizen:  
Bad news, by'r lady; seldom comes the better:  
I fear, I fear 'twill prove a troublous world.

Third Citizen:  
Neighbours, God speed!

First Citizen:  
Give you good morrow, sir.

Third Citizen:  
Doth this news hold of good King Edward's death?

Second Citizen:

Ay, sir, it is too true; God help the while!

Third Citizen:

Then, masters, look to see a troublous world.

First Citizen:

No, no; by God's good grace his son shall reign.

Third Citizen:

Woe to the land that's govern'd by a child!

Second Citizen:

In him there is a hope of government,  
That in his nonage council under him,  
And in his full and ripen'd years himself,  
No doubt, shall then and till then govern well.

First Citizen:

So stood the state when Henry the Sixth  
Was crown'd in Paris but at nine months old.

Third Citizen:

Stood the state so? No, no, good friends, God wot;  
For then this land was famously enrich'd  
With politic grave counsel; then the king  
Had virtuous uncles to protect his grace.

First Citizen:

Why, so hath this, both by the father and mother.

Third Citizen:

Better it were they all came by the father,  
Or by the father there were none at all;  
For emulation now, who shall be nearest,  
Will touch us all too near, if God prevent not.  
O, full of danger is the Duke of Gloucester!  
And the queen's sons and brothers haught and proud:  
And were they to be ruled, and not to rule,  
This sickly land might solace as before.

First Citizen:

Come, come, we fear the worst; all shall be well.

Third Citizen:

When clouds appear, wise men put on their cloaks;  
When great leaves fall, the winter is at hand;  
When the sun sets, who doth not look for night?  
Untimely storms make men expect a dearth.

All may be well; but, if God sort it so,  
'Tis more than we deserve, or I expect.

Second Citizen:

Truly, the souls of men are full of dread:  
Ye cannot reason almost with a man  
That looks not heavily and full of fear.

Third Citizen:

Before the times of change, still is it so:  
By a divine instinct men's minds mistrust  
Ensuing dangers; as by proof, we see  
The waters swell before a boisterous storm.  
But leave it all to God. whither away?

Second Citizen:

Marry, we were sent for to the justices.

Third Citizen:

And so was I: I'll bear you company.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK:

Last night, I hear, they lay at Northampton;  
At Stony-Stratford will they be to-night:  
To-morrow, or next day, they will be here.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

I long with all my heart to see the prince:  
I hope he is much grown since last I saw him.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

But I hear, no; they say my son of York  
Hath almost overta'en him in his growth.

YORK:

Ay, mother; but I would not have it so.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Why, my young cousin, it is good to grow.

YORK:

Grandam, one night, as we did sit at supper,  
My uncle Rivers talk'd how I did grow  
More than my brother: 'Ay,' quoth my uncle  
Gloucester,  
'Small herbs have grace, great weeds do grow apace:'  
And since, methinks, I would not grow so fast,  
Because sweet flowers are slow and weeds make haste.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Good faith, good faith, the saying did not hold  
In him that did object the same to thee;  
He was the wretched'st thing when he was young,  
So long a-growing and so leisurely,  
That, if this rule were true, he should be gracious.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK:  
Why, madam, so, no doubt, he is.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
I hope he is; but yet let mothers doubt.

YORK:  
Now, by my troth, if I had been remember'd,  
I could have given my uncle's grace a flout,  
To touch his growth nearer than he touch'd mine.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
How, my pretty York? I pray thee, let me hear it.

YORK:  
Marry, they say my uncle grew so fast  
That he could gnaw a crust at two hours old  
'Twas full two years ere I could get a tooth.  
Grandam, this would have been a biting jest.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
I pray thee, pretty York, who told thee this?

YORK:  
Grandam, his nurse.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
His nurse! why, she was dead ere thou wert born.

YORK:  
If 'twere not she, I cannot tell who told me.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
A parlous boy: go to, you are too shrewd.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK:  
Good madam, be not angry with the child.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
Pitchers have ears.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK:  
Here comes a messenger. What news?

Messenger:  
Such news, my lord, as grieves me to unfold.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
How fares the prince?

Messenger:  
Well, madam, and in health.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
What is thy news then?

Messenger:  
Lord Rivers and Lord Grey are sent to Pomfret,  
With them Sir Thomas Vaughan, prisoners.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
Who hath committed them?

Messenger:  
The mighty dukes  
Gloucester and Buckingham.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
For what offence?

Messenger:  
The sum of all I can, I have disclosed;  
Why or for what these nobles were committed  
Is all unknown to me, my gracious lady.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
Ay me, I see the downfall of our house!  
The tiger now hath seized the gentle hind;  
Insulting tyranny begins to jet  
Upon the innocent and aweless throne:  
Welcome, destruction, death, and massacre!  
I see, as in a map, the end of all.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
Accursed and unquiet wrangling days,  
How many of you have mine eyes beheld!  
My husband lost his life to get the crown;  
And often up and down my sons were toss'd,  
For me to joy and weep their gain and loss:  
And being seated, and domestic broils  
Clean over-blown, themselves, the conquerors.  
Make war upon themselves; blood against blood,  
Self against self: O, preposterous  
And frantic outrage, end thy damned spleen;

Or let me die, to look on death no more!

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Come, come, my boy; we will to sanctuary.  
Madam, farewell.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

I'll go along with you.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

You have no cause.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK:

My gracious lady, go;  
And thither bear your treasure and your goods.  
For my part, I'll resign unto your grace  
The seal I keep: and so betide to me  
As well I tender you and all of yours!  
Come, I'll conduct you to the sanctuary.

BUCKINGHAM:

Welcome, sweet prince, to London, to your chamber.

GLOUCESTER:

Welcome, dear cousin, my thoughts' sovereign  
The weary way hath made you melancholy.

PRINCE EDWARD:

No, uncle; but our crosses on the way  
Have made it tedious, wearisome, and heavy  
I want more uncles here to welcome me.

GLOUCESTER:

Sweet prince, the untainted virtue of your years  
Hath not yet dived into the world's deceit  
Nor more can you distinguish of a man  
Than of his outward show; which, God he knows,  
Seldom or never jumpeth with the heart.  
Those uncles which you want were dangerous;  
Your grace attended to their sugar'd words,  
But look'd not on the poison of their hearts :  
God keep you from them, and from such false friends!

PRINCE EDWARD:

God keep me from false friends! but they were none.

GLOUCESTER:

My lord, the mayor of London comes to greet you.

Lord Mayor:



God bless your grace with health and happy days!

PRINCE EDWARD:

I thank you, good my lord; and thank you all.  
I thought my mother, and my brother York,  
Would long ere this have met us on the way  
Fie, what a slug is Hastings, that he comes not  
To tell us whether they will come or no!

BUCKINGHAM:

And, in good time, here comes the sweating lord.

PRINCE EDWARD:

Welcome, my lord: what, will our mother come?

HASTINGS:

On what occasion, God he knows, not I,  
The queen your mother, and your brother York,  
Have taken sanctuary: the tender prince  
Would fain have come with me to meet your grace,  
But by his mother was perforce withheld.

BUCKINGHAM:

Fie, what an indirect and peevish course  
Is this of hers! Lord cardinal, will your grace  
Persuade the queen to send the Duke of York  
Unto his princely brother presently?  
If she deny, Lord Hastings, go with him,  
And from her jealous arms pluck him perforce.

CARDINAL:

My Lord of Buckingham, if my weak oratory  
Can from his mother win the Duke of York,  
Anon expect him here; but if she be obdurate  
To mild entreaties, God in heaven forbid  
We should infringe the holy privilege  
Of blessed sanctuary! not for all this land  
Would I be guilty of so deep a sin.

BUCKINGHAM:

You are too senseless--obstinate, my lord,  
Too ceremonious and traditional  
Weigh it but with the grossness of this age,  
You break not sanctuary in seizing him.  
The benefit thereof is always granted  
To those whose dealings have deserved the place,  
And those who have the wit to claim the place:  
This prince hath neither claim'd it nor deserved it;  
And therefore, in mine opinion, cannot have it:  
Then, taking him from thence that is not there,

You break no privilege nor charter there.  
Oft have I heard of sanctuary men;  
But sanctuary children ne'er till now.

CARDINAL:

My lord, you shall o'er-rule my mind for once.  
Come on, Lord Hastings, will you go with me?

HASTINGS:

I go, my lord.

PRINCE EDWARD:

Good lords, make all the speedy haste you may.  
Say, uncle Gloucester, if our brother come,  
Where shall we sojourn till our coronation?

GLOUCESTER:

Where it seems best unto your royal self.  
If I may counsel you, some day or two  
Your highness shall repose you at the Tower:  
Then where you please, and shall be thought most fit  
For your best health and recreation.

PRINCE EDWARD:

I do not like the Tower, of any place.  
Did Julius Caesar build that place, my lord?

BUCKINGHAM:

He did, my gracious lord, begin that place;  
Which, since, succeeding ages have re-edified.

PRINCE EDWARD:

Is it upon record, or else reported  
Successively from age to age, he built it?

BUCKINGHAM:

Upon record, my gracious lord.

PRINCE EDWARD:

But say, my lord, it were not register'd,  
Methinks the truth should live from age to age,  
As 'twere retail'd to all posterity,  
Even to the general all-ending day.

GLOUCESTER:

PRINCE EDWARD:

What say you, uncle?

GLOUCESTER:

I say, without characters, fame lives long.  
Thus, like the formal vice, Iniquity,  
I moralize two meanings in one word.

PRINCE EDWARD:

That Julius Caesar was a famous man;  
With what his valour did enrich his wit,  
His wit set down to make his valour live  
Death makes no conquest of this conqueror;  
For now he lives in fame, though not in life.  
I'll tell you what, my cousin Buckingham,--

BUCKINGHAM:

What, my gracious lord?

PRINCE EDWARD:

An if I live until I be a man,  
I'll win our ancient right in France again,  
Or die a soldier, as I lived a king.

GLOUCESTER:

BUCKINGHAM:

Now, in good time, here comes the Duke of York.

PRINCE EDWARD:

Richard of York! how fares our loving brother?

YORK:

Well, my dread lord; so must I call you now.

PRINCE EDWARD:

Ay, brother, to our grief, as it is yours:  
Too late he died that might have kept that title,  
Which by his death hath lost much majesty.

GLOUCESTER:

How fares our cousin, noble Lord of York?

YORK:

I thank you, gentle uncle. O, my lord,  
You said that idle weeds are fast in growth  
The prince my brother hath outgrown me far.

GLOUCESTER:

He hath, my lord.

YORK:

And therefore is he idle?

GLOUCESTER:

O, my fair cousin, I must not say so.

YORK:

Then is he more beholding to you than I.

GLOUCESTER:

He may command me as my sovereign;  
But you have power in me as in a kinsman.

YORK:

I pray you, uncle, give me this dagger.

GLOUCESTER:

My dagger, little cousin? with all my heart.

PRINCE EDWARD:

A beggar, brother?

YORK:

Of my kind uncle, that I know will give;  
And being but a toy, which is no grief to give.

GLOUCESTER:

A greater gift than that I'll give my cousin.

YORK:

A greater gift! O, that's the sword to it.

GLOUCESTER:

A gentle cousin, were it light enough.

YORK:

O, then, I see, you will part but with light gifts;  
In weightier things you'll say a beggar nay.

GLOUCESTER:

It is too heavy for your grace to wear.

YORK:

I weigh it lightly, were it heavier.

GLOUCESTER:

What, would you have my weapon, little lord?

YORK:

I would, that I might thank you as you call me.

GLOUCESTER:

How?

YORK:  
Little.

PRINCE EDWARD:  
My Lord of York will still be cross in talk:  
Uncle, your grace knows how to bear with him.

YORK:  
You mean, to bear me, not to bear with me:  
Uncle, my brother mocks both you and me;  
Because that I am little, like an ape,  
He thinks that you should bear me on your shoulders.

BUCKINGHAM:  
With what a sharp-provided wit he reasons!  
To mitigate the scorn he gives his uncle,  
He prettily and aptly taunts himself:  
So cunning and so young is wonderful.

GLOUCESTER:  
My lord, will't please you pass along?  
Myself and my good cousin Buckingham  
Will to your mother, to entreat of her  
To meet you at the Tower and welcome you.

YORK:  
What, will you go unto the Tower, my lord?

PRINCE EDWARD:  
My lord protector needs will have it so.

YORK:  
I shall not sleep in quiet at the Tower.

GLOUCESTER:  
Why, what should you fear?

YORK:  
Marry, my uncle Clarence' angry ghost:  
My grandam told me he was murdered there.

PRINCE EDWARD:  
I fear no uncles dead.

GLOUCESTER:  
Nor none that live, I hope.

PRINCE EDWARD:  
An if they live, I hope I need not fear.

But come, my lord; and with a heavy heart,  
Thinking on them, go I unto the Tower.

BUCKINGHAM:

Think you, my lord, this little prating York  
Was not incensed by his subtle mother  
To taunt and scorn you thus opprobriously?

GLOUCESTER:

No doubt, no doubt; O, 'tis a parlous boy;  
Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, capable  
He is all the mother's, from the top to toe.

BUCKINGHAM:

Well, let them rest. Come hither, Catesby.  
Thou art sworn as deeply to effect what we intend  
As closely to conceal what we impart:  
Thou know'st our reasons urged upon the way;  
What think'st thou? is it not an easy matter  
To make William Lord Hastings of our mind,  
For the instalment of this noble duke  
In the seat royal of this famous isle?

CATESBY:

He for his father's sake so loves the prince,  
That he will not be won to aught against him.

BUCKINGHAM:

What think'st thou, then, of Stanley? what will he?

CATESBY:

He will do all in all as Hastings doth.

BUCKINGHAM:

Well, then, no more but this: go, gentle Catesby,  
And, as it were far off sound thou Lord Hastings,  
How doth he stand affected to our purpose;  
And summon him to-morrow to the Tower,  
To sit about the coronation.  
If thou dost find him tractable to us,  
Encourage him, and show him all our reasons:  
If he be leaden, icy-cold, unwilling,  
Be thou so too; and so break off your talk,  
And give us notice of his inclination:  
For we to-morrow hold divided councils,  
Wherein thyself shalt highly be employ'd.

GLOUCESTER:

Commend me to Lord William: tell him, Catesby,  
His ancient knot of dangerous adversaries

To-morrow are let blood at Pomfret-castle;  
And bid my friend, for joy of this good news,  
Give mistress Shore one gentle kiss the more.

BUCKINGHAM:

Good Catesby, go, effect this business soundly.

CATESBY:

My good lords both, with all the heed I may.

GLOUCESTER:

Shall we hear from you, Catesby, ere we sleep?

CATESBY:

You shall, my lord.

GLOUCESTER:

At Crosby Place, there shall you find us both.

BUCKINGHAM:

Now, my lord, what shall we do, if we perceive  
Lord Hastings will not yield to our complots?

GLOUCESTER:

Chop off his head, man; somewhat we will do:  
And, look, when I am king, claim thou of me  
The earldom of Hereford, and the moveables  
Whereof the king my brother stood possess'd.

BUCKINGHAM:

I'll claim that promise at your grace's hands.

GLOUCESTER:

And look to have it yielded with all willingness.  
Come, let us sup betimes, that afterwards  
We may digest our complots in some form.

Messenger:

What, ho! my lord!

HASTINGS:

Messenger:

A messenger from the Lord Stanley.

HASTINGS:

What is't o'clock?

Messenger:

Upon the stroke of four.

HASTINGS:

Cannot thy master sleep these tedious nights?

Messenger:

So it should seem by that I have to say.

First, he commends him to your noble lordship.

HASTINGS:

And then?

Messenger:

And then he sends you word

He dreamt to-night the boar had razed his helm:

Besides, he says there are two councils held;

And that may be determined at the one

which may make you and him to rue at the other.

Therefore he sends to know your lordship's pleasure,

If presently you will take horse with him,

And with all speed post with him toward the north,

To shun the danger that his soul divines.

HASTINGS:

Go, fellow, go, return unto thy lord;

Bid him not fear the separated councils

His honour and myself are at the one,

And at the other is my servant Catesby

Where nothing can proceed that toucheth us

Whereof I shall not have intelligence.

Tell him his fears are shallow, wanting instance:

And for his dreams, I wonder he is so fond

To trust the mockery of unquiet slumbers

To fly the boar before the boar pursues,

Were to incense the boar to follow us

And make pursuit where he did mean no chase.

Go, bid thy master rise and come to me

And we will both together to the Tower,

Where, he shall see, the boar will use us kindly.

Messenger:

My gracious lord, I'll tell him what you say.

CATESBY:

Many good morrows to my noble lord!

HASTINGS:

Good morrow, Catesby; you are early stirring

What news, what news, in this our tottering state?

CATESBY:



It is a reeling world, indeed, my lord;  
And I believe twill never stand upright  
Tim Richard wear the garland of the realm.

HASTINGS:

How! wear the garland! dost thou mean the crown?

CATESBY:

Ay, my good lord.

HASTINGS:

I'll have this crown of mine cut from my shoulders  
Ere I will see the crown so foul misplaced.  
But canst thou guess that he doth aim at it?

CATESBY:

Ay, on my life; and hopes to find forward  
Upon his party for the gain thereof:  
And thereupon he sends you this good news,  
That this same very day your enemies,  
The kindred of the queen, must die at Pomfret.

HASTINGS:

Indeed, I am no mourner for that news,  
Because they have been still mine enemies:  
But, that I'll give my voice on Richard's side,  
To bar my master's heirs in true descent,  
God knows I will not do it, to the death.

CATESBY:

God keep your lordship in that gracious mind!

HASTINGS:

But I shall laugh at this a twelve-month hence,  
That they who brought me in my master's hate  
I live to look upon their tragedy.  
I tell thee, Catesby--

CATESBY:

What, my lord?

HASTINGS:

Ere a fortnight make me elder,  
I'll send some packing that yet think not on it.

CATESBY:

'Tis a vile thing to die, my gracious lord,  
When men are unprepared and look not for it.

HASTINGS:

O monstrous, monstrous! and so falls it out  
With Rivers, Vaughan, Grey: and so 'twill do  
With some men else, who think themselves as safe  
As thou and I; who, as thou know'st, are dear  
To princely Richard and to Buckingham.

CATESBY:

The princes both make high account of you;  
For they account his head upon the bridge.

HASTINGS:

I know they do; and I have well deserved it.  
Come on, come on; where is your boar-spear, man?  
Fear you the boar, and go so unprovided?

STANLEY:

My lord, good morrow; good morrow, Catesby:  
You may jest on, but, by the holy rood,  
I do not like these several councils, I.

HASTINGS:

My lord,  
I hold my life as dear as you do yours;  
And never in my life, I do protest,  
Was it more precious to me than 'tis now:  
Think you, but that I know our state secure,  
I would be so triumphant as I am?

STANLEY:

The lords at Pomfret, when they rode from London,  
Were jocund, and supposed their state was sure,  
And they indeed had no cause to mistrust;  
But yet, you see how soon the day o'ercast.  
This sudden stag of rancour I misdoubt:  
Pray God, I say, I prove a needless coward!  
What, shall we toward the Tower? the day is spent.

HASTINGS:

Come, come, have with you. Wot you what, my lord?  
To-day the lords you talk of are beheaded.

LORD STANLEY:

They, for their truth, might better wear their heads  
Than some that have accused them wear their hats.  
But come, my lord, let us away.

HASTINGS:

Go on before; I'll talk with this good fellow.  
How now, sirrah! how goes the world with thee?

Pursuivant:

The better that your lordship please to ask.

HASTINGS:

I tell thee, man, 'tis better with me now  
Than when I met thee last where now we meet:  
Then was I going prisoner to the Tower,  
By the suggestion of the queen's allies;  
But now, I tell thee--keep it to thyself--  
This day those enemies are put to death,  
And I in better state than e'er I was.

Pursuivant:

God hold it, to your honour's good content!

HASTINGS:

Gramercy, fellow: there, drink that for me.

Pursuivant:

God save your lordship!

Priest:

Well met, my lord; I am glad to see your honour.

HASTINGS:

I thank thee, good Sir John, with all my heart.  
I am in your debt for your last exercise;  
Come the next Sabbath, and I will content you.

BUCKINGHAM:

What, talking with a priest, lord chamberlain?  
Your friends at Pomfret, they do need the priest;  
Your honour hath no shriving work in hand.

HASTINGS:

Good faith, and when I met this holy man,  
Those men you talk of came into my mind.  
What, go you toward the Tower?

BUCKINGHAM:

I do, my lord; but long I shall not stay  
I shall return before your lordship thence.

HASTINGS:

'Tis like enough, for I stay dinner there.

BUCKINGHAM:

HASTINGS:

I'll wait upon your lordship.

RATCLIFF:

Come, bring forth the prisoners.

RIVERS:

Sir Richard Ratcliff, let me tell thee this:  
To-day shalt thou behold a subject die  
For truth, for duty, and for loyalty.

GREY:

God keep the prince from all the pack of you!  
A knot you are of damned blood-suckers!

VAUGHAN:

You live that shall cry woe for this after.

RATCLIFF:

Dispatch; the limit of your lives is out.

RIVERS:

O Pomfret, Pomfret! O thou bloody prison,  
Fatal and ominous to noble peers!  
Within the guilty closure of thy walls  
Richard the second here was hack'd to death;  
And, for more slander to thy dismal seat,  
We give thee up our guiltless blood to drink.

GREY:

Now Margaret's curse is fall'n upon our heads,  
For standing by when Richard stabb'd her son.

RIVERS:

Then cursed she Hastings, then cursed she Buckingham,  
Then cursed she Richard. O, remember, God  
To hear her prayers for them, as now for us  
And for my sister and her princely sons,  
Be satisfied, dear God, with our true blood,  
Which, as thou know'st, unjustly must be spilt.

RATCLIFF:

Make haste; the hour of death is expiate.

RIVERS:

Come, Grey, come, Vaughan, let us all embrace:  
And take our leave, until we meet in heaven.

HASTINGS:

My lords, at once: the cause why we are met  
Is, to determine of the coronation.  
In God's name, speak: when is the royal day?

BUCKINGHAM:

Are all things fitting for that royal time?

DERBY:

It is, and wants but nomination.

BISHOP OF ELY:

To-morrow, then, I judge a happy day.

BUCKINGHAM:

Who knows the lord protector's mind herein?

Who is most inward with the royal duke?

BISHOP OF ELY:

Your grace, we think, should soonest know his mind.

BUCKINGHAM:

Who, I, my lord I we know each other's faces,  
But for our hearts, he knows no more of mine,  
Than I of yours;

Nor I no more of his, than you of mine.

Lord Hastings, you and he are near in love.

HASTINGS:

I thank his grace, I know he loves me well;

But, for his purpose in the coronation.

I have not sounded him, nor he deliver'd

His gracious pleasure any way therein:

But you, my noble lords, may name the time;

And in the duke's behalf I'll give my voice,

Which, I presume, he'll take in gentle part.

BISHOP OF ELY:

Now in good time, here comes the duke himself.

GLOUCESTER:

My noble lords and cousins all, good morrow.

I have been long a sleeper; but, I hope,

My absence doth neglect no great designs,

Which by my presence might have been concluded.

BUCKINGHAM:

Had not you come upon your cue, my lord

William Lord Hastings had pronounced your part,--

I mean, your voice,--for crowning of the king.

GLOUCESTER:

Than my Lord Hastings no man might be bolder;

His lordship knows me well, and loves me well.

HASTINGS:

I thank your grace.

GLOUCESTER:

My lord of Ely!

BISHOP OF ELY:

My lord?

GLOUCESTER:

When I was last in Holborn,  
I saw good strawberries in your garden there  
I do beseech you send for some of them.

BISHOP OF ELY:

Marry, and will, my lord, with all my heart.

GLOUCESTER:

Cousin of Buckingham, a word with you.  
Catesby hath sounded Hastings in our business,  
And finds the testy gentleman so hot,  
As he will lose his head ere give consent  
His master's son, as worshipful as he terms it,  
Shall lose the royalty of England's throne.

BUCKINGHAM:

Withdraw you hence, my lord, I'll follow you.

DERBY:

We have not yet set down this day of triumph.  
To-morrow, in mine opinion, is too sudden;  
For I myself am not so well provided  
As else I would be, were the day prolong'd.

BISHOP OF ELY:

Where is my lord protector? I have sent for these  
strawberries.

HASTINGS:

His grace looks cheerfully and smooth to-day;  
There's some conceit or other likes him well,  
When he doth bid good morrow with such a spirit.  
I think there's never a man in Christendom  
That can less hide his love or hate than he;  
For by his face straight shall you know his heart.

DERBY:

What of his heart perceive you in his face  
By any likelihood he show'd to-day?

HASTINGS:

Marry, that with no man here he is offended;  
For, were he, he had shown it in his looks.

DERBY:

I pray God he be not, I say.

GLOUCESTER:

I pray you all, tell me what they deserve  
That do conspire my death with devilish plots  
Of damned witchcraft, and that have prevail'd  
Upon my body with their hellish charms?

HASTINGS:

The tender love I bear your grace, my lord,  
Makes me most forward in this noble presence  
To doom the offenders, whatsoever they be  
I say, my lord, they have deserved death.

GLOUCESTER:

Then be your eyes the witness of this ill:  
See how I am bewitch'd; behold mine arm  
Is, like a blasted sapling, wither'd up:  
And this is Edward's wife, that monstrous witch,  
Consorted with that harlot strumpet Shore,  
That by their witchcraft thus have marked me.

HASTINGS:

If they have done this thing, my gracious lord--

GLOUCESTER:

If I thou protector of this damned strumpet--  
Tellest thou me of 'ifs'? Thou art a traitor:  
Off with his head! Now, by Saint Paul I swear,  
I will not dine until I see the same.  
Lovel and Ratcliff, look that it be done:  
The rest, that love me, rise and follow me.

HASTINGS:

Woe, woe for England! not a whit for me;  
For I, too fond, might have prevented this.  
Stanley did dream the boar did raze his helm;  
But I disdain'd it, and did scorn to fly:  
Three times to-day my foot-cloth horse did stumble,  
And startled, when he look'd upon the Tower,  
As loath to bear me to the slaughter-house.  
O, now I want the priest that spake to me:  
I now repent I told the pursuivant  
As 'twere triumphing at mine enemies,

How they at Pomfret bloodily were butcher'd,  
And I myself secure in grace and favour.  
O Margaret, Margaret, now thy heavy curse  
Is lighted on poor Hastings' wretched head!

RATCLIFF:

Dispatch, my lord; the duke would be at dinner:  
Make a short shrift; he longs to see your head.

HASTINGS:

O momentary grace of mortal men,  
Which we more hunt for than the grace of God!  
Who builds his hopes in air of your good looks,  
Lives like a drunken sailor on a mast,  
Ready, with every nod, to tumble down  
Into the fatal bowels of the deep.

LOVEL:

Come, come, dispatch; 'tis bootless to exclaim.

HASTINGS:

O bloody Richard! miserable England!  
I prophesy the fearful'st time to thee  
That ever wretched age hath look'd upon.  
Come, lead me to the block; bear him my head.  
They smile at me that shortly shall be dead.

GLOUCESTER:

Come, cousin, canst thou quake, and change thy colour,  
Murder thy breath in the middle of a word,  
And then begin again, and stop again,  
As if thou wert distraught and mad with terror?

BUCKINGHAM:

Tut, I can counterfeit the deep tragedian;  
Speak and look back, and pry on every side,  
Tremble and start at wagging of a straw,  
Intending deep suspicion: ghastly looks  
Are at my service, like enforced smiles;  
And both are ready in their offices,  
At any time, to grace my stratagems.  
But what, is Catesby gone?

GLOUCESTER:

He is; and, see, he brings the mayor along.

BUCKINGHAM:

Lord mayor,--

GLOUCESTER:



Look to the drawbridge there!

BUCKINGHAM:  
Hark! a drum.

GLOUCESTER:  
Catesby, o'erlook the walls.

BUCKINGHAM:  
Lord mayor, the reason we have sent--

GLOUCESTER:  
Look back, defend thee, here are enemies.

BUCKINGHAM:  
God and our innocency defend and guard us!

GLOUCESTER:  
Be patient, they are friends, Ratcliff and Lovel.

LOVEL:  
Here is the head of that ignoble traitor,  
The dangerous and unsuspected Hastings.

GLOUCESTER:  
So dear I loved the man, that I must weep.  
I took him for the plainest harmless creature  
That breathed upon this earth a Christian;  
Made him my book wherein my soul recorded  
The history of all her secret thoughts:  
So smooth he daub'd his vice with show of virtue,  
That, his apparent open guilt omitted,  
I mean, his conversation with Shore's wife,  
He lived from all attainder of suspect.

BUCKINGHAM:  
Well, well, he was the covert'st shelter'd traitor  
That ever lived.  
Would you imagine, or almost believe,  
Were't not that, by great preservation,  
We live to tell it you, the subtle traitor  
This day had plotted, in the council-house  
To murder me and my good Lord of Gloucester?

Lord Mayor:  
What, had he so?

GLOUCESTER:  
What, think You we are Turks or infidels?  
Or that we would, against the form of law,

Proceed thus rashly to the villain's death,  
But that the extreme peril of the case,  
The peace of England and our persons' safety,  
Enforced us to this execution?

Lord Mayor:

Now, fair befall you! he deserved his death;  
And you my good lords, both have well proceeded,  
To warn false traitors from the like attempts.  
I never look'd for better at his hands,  
After he once fell in with Mistress Shore.

GLOUCESTER:

Yet had not we determined he should die,  
Until your lordship came to see his death;  
Which now the loving haste of these our friends,  
Somewhat against our meaning, have prevented:  
Because, my lord, we would have had you heard  
The traitor speak, and timorously confess  
The manner and the purpose of his treason;  
That you might well have signified the same  
Unto the citizens, who haply may  
Misconstrue us in him and wail his death.

Lord Mayor:

But, my good lord, your grace's word shall serve,  
As well as I had seen and heard him speak  
And doubt you not, right noble princes both,  
But I'll acquaint our duteous citizens  
With all your just proceedings in this cause.

GLOUCESTER:

And to that end we wish'd your lord-ship here,  
To avoid the carping censures of the world.

BUCKINGHAM:

But since you come too late of our intents,  
Yet witness what you hear we did intend:  
And so, my good lord mayor, we bid farewell.

GLOUCESTER:

Go, after, after, cousin Buckingham.  
The mayor towards Guildhall hies him in all post:  
There, at your meet'st advantage of the time,  
Infer the bastardy of Edward's children:  
Tell them how Edward put to death a citizen,  
Only for saying he would make his son  
Heir to the crown; meaning indeed his house,  
Which, by the sign thereof was termed so.  
Moreover, urge his hateful luxury

And bestial appetite in change of lust;  
Which stretched to their servants, daughters, wives,  
Even where his lustful eye or savage heart,  
Without control, listed to make his prey.  
Nay, for a need, thus far come near my person:  
Tell them, when that my mother went with child  
Of that unsatiate Edward, noble York  
My princely father then had wars in France  
And, by just computation of the time,  
Found that the issue was not his begot;  
Which well appeared in his lineaments,  
Being nothing like the noble duke my father:  
But touch this sparingly, as 'twere far off,  
Because you know, my lord, my mother lives.

BUCKINGHAM:

Fear not, my lord, I'll play the orator  
As if the golden fee for which I plead  
Were for myself: and so, my lord, adieu.

GLOUCESTER:

If you thrive well, bring them to Baynard's Castle;  
Where you shall find me well accompanied  
With reverend fathers and well-learned bishops.

BUCKINGHAM:

I go: and towards three or four o'clock  
Look for the news that the Guildhall affords.

GLOUCESTER:

Go, Lovel, with all speed to Doctor Shaw;  
Go thou to Friar Penker; bid them both  
Meet me within this hour at Baynard's Castle.  
Now will I in, to take some privy order,  
To draw the brats of Clarence out of sight;  
And to give notice, that no manner of person  
At any time have recourse unto the princes.

Scrivener:

This is the indictment of the good Lord Hastings;  
Which in a set hand fairly is engross'd,  
That it may be this day read over in Paul's.  
And mark how well the sequel hangs together:  
Eleven hours I spent to write it over,  
For yesternight by Catesby was it brought me;  
The precedent was full as long a-doing:  
And yet within these five hours lived Lord Hastings,  
Untainted, unexamined, free, at liberty  
Here's a good world the while! Why who's so gross,  
That seeth not this palpable device?

Yet who's so blind, but says he sees it not?  
Bad is the world; and all will come to nought,  
When such bad dealings must be seen in thought.

GLOUCESTER:

How now, my lord, what say the citizens?

BUCKINGHAM:

Now, by the holy mother of our Lord,  
The citizens are mum and speak not a word.

GLOUCESTER:

Touch'd you the bastardy of Edward's children?

BUCKINGHAM:

I did; with his contract with Lady Lucy,  
And his contract by deputy in France;  
The insatiate greediness of his desires,  
And his enforcement of the city wives;  
His tyranny for trifles; his own bastardy,  
As being got, your father then in France,  
His resemblance, being not like the duke;  
Withal I did infer your lineaments,  
Being the right idea of your father,  
Both in your form and nobleness of mind;  
Laid open all your victories in Scotland,  
Your discipline in war, wisdom in peace,  
Your bounty, virtue, fair humility:  
Indeed, left nothing fitting for the purpose  
Untouch'd, or slightly handled, in discourse  
And when mine oratory grew to an end  
I bid them that did love their country's good  
Cry 'God save Richard, England's royal king!'

GLOUCESTER:

Ah! and did they so?

BUCKINGHAM:

No, so God help me, they spake not a word;  
But, like dumb statues or breathing stones,  
Gazed each on other, and look'd deadly pale.  
Which when I saw, I reprehended them;  
And ask'd the mayor what meant this wilful silence:  
His answer was, the people were not wont  
To be spoke to but by the recorder.  
Then he was urged to tell my tale again,  
'Thus saith the duke, thus hath the duke inferr'd;'  
But nothing spake in warrant from himself.  
When he had done, some followers of mine own,  
At the lower end of the hall, hurl'd up their caps,

And some ten voices cried 'God save King Richard!'  
And thus I took the vantage of those few,  
'Thanks, gentle citizens and friends,' quoth I;  
'This general applause and loving shout  
Argues your wisdoms and your love to Richard:'  
And even here brake off, and came away.

GLOUCESTER:

What tongueless blocks were they! would not they speak?

BUCKINGHAM:

No, by my troth, my lord.

GLOUCESTER:

Will not the mayor then and his brethren come?

BUCKINGHAM:

The mayor is here at hand: intend some fear;  
Be not you spoke with, but by mighty suit:  
And look you get a prayer-book in your hand,  
And stand betwixt two churchmen, good my lord;  
For on that ground I'll build a holy descant:  
And be not easily won to our request:  
Play the maid's part, still answer nay, and take it.

GLOUCESTER:

I go; and if you plead as well for them  
As I can say nay to thee for myself,  
No doubt well bring it to a happy issue.

BUCKINGHAM:

Go, go, up to the leads; the lord mayor knocks.  
Welcome my lord; I dance attendance here;  
I think the duke will not be spoke withal.  
Here comes his servant: how now, Catesby,  
What says he?

CATESBY:

My lord: he doth entreat your grace;  
To visit him to-morrow or next day:  
He is within, with two right reverend fathers,  
Divinely bent to meditation;  
And no worldly suit would he be moved,  
To draw him from his holy exercise.

BUCKINGHAM:

Return, good Catesby, to thy lord again;  
Tell him, myself, the mayor and citizens,  
In deep designs and matters of great moment,  
No less importing than our general good,

Are come to have some conference with his grace.

CATESBY:

I'll tell him what you say, my lord.

BUCKINGHAM:

Ah, ha, my lord, this prince is not an Edward!  
He is not lolling on a lewd day-bed,  
But on his knees at meditation;  
Not dallying with a brace of courtezans,  
But meditating with two deep divines;  
Not sleeping, to engross his idle body,  
But praying, to enrich his watchful soul:  
Happy were England, would this gracious prince  
Take on himself the sovereignty thereof:  
But, sure, I fear, we shall ne'er win him to it.

Lord Mayor:

Marry, God forbid his grace should say us nay!

BUCKINGHAM:

I fear he will.  
How now, Catesby, what says your lord?

CATESBY:

My lord,  
He wonders to what end you have assembled  
Such troops of citizens to speak with him,  
His grace not being warn'd thereof before:  
My lord, he fears you mean no good to him.

BUCKINGHAM:

Sorry I am my noble cousin should  
Suspect me, that I mean no good to him:  
By heaven, I come in perfect love to him;  
And so once more return and tell his grace.  
When holy and devout religious men  
Are at their beads, 'tis hard to draw them thence,  
So sweet is zealous contemplation.

Lord Mayor:

See, where he stands between two clergymen!

BUCKINGHAM:

Two props of virtue for a Christian prince,  
To stay him from the fall of vanity:  
And, see, a book of prayer in his hand,  
True ornaments to know a holy man.  
Famous Plantagenet, most gracious prince,  
Lend favourable ears to our request;

And pardon us the interruption  
Of thy devotion and right Christian zeal.

GLOUCESTER:

My lord, there needs no such apology:  
I rather do beseech you pardon me,  
Who, earnest in the service of my God,  
Neglect the visitation of my friends.  
But, leaving this, what is your grace's pleasure?

BUCKINGHAM:

Even that, I hope, which pleaseth God above,  
And all good men of this ungovern'd isle.

GLOUCESTER:

I do suspect I have done some offence  
That seems disgracious in the city's eyes,  
And that you come to reprehend my ignorance.

BUCKINGHAM:

You have, my lord: would it might please your grace,  
At our entreaties, to amend that fault!

GLOUCESTER:

Else wherefore breathe I in a Christian land?

BUCKINGHAM:

Then know, it is your fault that you resign  
The supreme seat, the throne majestic,  
The scepter'd office of your ancestors,  
Your state of fortune and your due of birth,  
The lineal glory of your royal house,  
To the corruption of a blemished stock:  
Whilst, in the mildness of your sleepy thoughts,  
Which here we waken to our country's good,  
This noble isle doth want her proper limbs;  
Her face defaced with scars of infamy,  
Her royal stock graft with ignoble plants,  
And almost shoulder'd in the swallowing gulf  
Of blind forgetfulness and dark oblivion.  
Which to recure, we heartily solicit  
Your gracious self to take on you the charge  
And kingly government of this your land,  
Not as protector, steward, substitute,  
Or lowly factor for another's gain;  
But as successively from blood to blood,  
Your right of birth, your empery, your own.  
For this, consorted with the citizens,  
Your very worshipful and loving friends,  
And by their vehement instigation,

In this just suit come I to move your grace.

GLOUCESTER:

I know not whether to depart in silence,  
Or bitterly to speak in your reproof.  
Best fitteth my degree or your condition  
If not to answer, you might haply think  
Tongue-tied ambition, not replying, yielded  
To bear the golden yoke of sovereignty,  
Which fondly you would here impose on me;  
If to reprove you for this suit of yours,  
So season'd with your faithful love to me.  
Then, on the other side, I cheque'd my friends.  
Therefore, to speak, and to avoid the first,  
And then, in speaking, not to incur the last,  
Definitively thus I answer you.  
Your love deserves my thanks; but my desert  
Unmeritable shuns your high request.  
First if all obstacles were cut away,  
And that my path were even to the crown,  
As my ripe revenue and due by birth  
Yet so much is my poverty of spirit,  
So mighty and so many my defects,  
As I had rather hide me from my greatness,  
Being a bark to brook no mighty sea,  
Than in my greatness covet to be hid,  
And in the vapour of my glory smother'd.  
But, God be thank'd, there's no need of me,  
And much I need to help you, if need were;  
The royal tree hath left us royal fruit,  
Which, mellow'd by the stealing hours of time,  
Will well become the seat of majesty,  
And make, no doubt, us happy by his reign.  
On him I lay what you would lay on me,  
The right and fortune of his happy stars;  
Which God defend that I should wring from him!

BUCKINGHAM:

My lord, this argues conscience in your grace;  
But the respects thereof are nice and trivial,  
All circumstances well considered.  
You say that Edward is your brother's son:  
So say we too, but not by Edward's wife;  
For first he was contract to Lady Lucy--  
Your mother lives a witness to that vow--  
And afterward by substitute betroth'd  
To Bona, sister to the King of France.  
These both put by a poor petitioner,  
A care-crazed mother of a many children,  
A beauty-waning and distressed widow,



Even in the afternoon of her best days,  
Made prize and purchase of his lustful eye,  
Seduced the pitch and height of all his thoughts  
To base declension and loathed bigamy  
By her, in his unlawful bed, he got  
This Edward, whom our manners term the prince.  
More bitterly could I expostulate,  
Save that, for reverence to some alive,  
I give a sparing limit to my tongue.  
Then, good my lord, take to your royal self  
This proffer'd benefit of dignity;  
If non to bless us and the land withal,  
Yet to draw forth your noble ancestry  
From the corruption of abusing times,  
Unto a lineal true-derived course.

Lord Mayor:

Do, good my lord, your citizens entreat you.

BUCKINGHAM:

Refuse not, mighty lord, this proffer'd love.

CATESBY:

O, make them joyful, grant their lawful suit!

GLOUCESTER:

Alas, why would you heap these cares on me?  
I am unfit for state and majesty;  
I do beseech you, take it not amiss;  
I cannot nor I will not yield to you.

BUCKINGHAM:

If you refuse it,--as, in love and zeal,  
Loath to depose the child, Your brother's son;  
As well we know your tenderness of heart  
And gentle, kind, effeminate remorse,  
Which we have noted in you to your kin,  
And egally indeed to all estates,--  
Yet whether you accept our suit or no,  
Your brother's son shall never reign our king;  
But we will plant some other in the throne,  
To the disgrace and downfall of your house:  
And in this resolution here we leave you.--  
Come, citizens: 'zounds! I'll entreat no more.

GLOUCESTER:

O, do not swear, my lord of Buckingham.

CATESBY:

Call them again, my lord, and accept their suit.

ANOTHER:

Do, good my lord, lest all the land do rue it.

GLOUCESTER:

Would you enforce me to a world of care?  
Well, call them again. I am not made of stone,  
But penetrable to your kind entreats,  
Albeit against my conscience and my soul.  
Cousin of Buckingham, and you sage, grave men,  
Since you will buckle fortune on my back,  
To bear her burthen, whether I will or no,  
I must have patience to endure the load:  
But if black scandal or foul-faced reproach  
Attend the sequel of your imposition,  
Your mere enforcement shall acquittance me  
From all the impure blots and stains thereof;  
For God he knows, and you may partly see,  
How far I am from the desire thereof.

Lord Mayor:

God bless your grace! we see it, and will say it.

GLOUCESTER:

In saying so, you shall but say the truth.

BUCKINGHAM:

Then I salute you with this kingly title:  
Long live Richard, England's royal king!

Lord Mayor:

Amen.

BUCKINGHAM:

To-morrow will it please you to be crown'd?

GLOUCESTER:

Even when you please, since you will have it so.

BUCKINGHAM:

To-morrow, then, we will attend your grace:  
And so most joyfully we take our leave.

GLOUCESTER:

Come, let us to our holy task again.  
Farewell, good cousin; farewell, gentle friends.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Who meets us here? my niece Plantagenet  
Led in the hand of her kind aunt of Gloucester?

Now, for my life, she's wandering to the Tower,  
On pure heart's love to greet the tender princes.  
Daughter, well met.

LADY ANNE:  
God give your graces both  
A happy and a joyful time of day!

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
As much to you, good sister! Whither away?

LADY ANNE:  
No farther than the Tower; and, as I guess,  
Upon the like devotion as yourselves,  
To gratulate the gentle princes there.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
Kind sister, thanks: we'll enter all together.  
And, in good time, here the lieutenant comes.  
Master lieutenant, pray you, by your leave,  
How doth the prince, and my young son of York?

BRAKENBURY:  
Right well, dear madam. By your patience,  
I may not suffer you to visit them;  
The king hath straitly charged the contrary.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
The king! why, who's that?

BRAKENBURY:  
I cry you mercy: I mean the lord protector.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
The Lord protect him from that kingly title!  
Hath he set bounds betwixt their love and me?  
I am their mother; who should keep me from them?

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
I am their fathers mother; I will see them.

LADY ANNE:  
Their aunt I am in law, in love their mother:  
Then bring me to their sights; I'll bear thy blame  
And take thy office from thee, on my peril.

BRAKENBURY:  
No, madam, no; I may not leave it so:  
I am bound by oath, and therefore pardon me.

LORD STANLEY:

Let me but meet you, ladies, one hour hence,  
And I'll salute your grace of York as mother,  
And reverend looker on, of two fair queens.  
Come, madam, you must straight to Westminster,  
There to be crowned Richard's royal queen.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

O, cut my lace in sunder, that my pent heart  
May have some scope to beat, or else I swoon  
With this dead-killing news!

LADY ANNE:

Despiteful tidings! O unpleasing news!

DORSET:

Be of good cheer: mother, how fares your grace?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

O Dorset, speak not to me, get thee hence!  
Death and destruction dog thee at the heels;  
Thy mother's name is ominous to children.  
If thou wilt outstrip death, go cross the seas,  
And live with Richmond, from the reach of hell  
Go, hie thee, hie thee from this slaughter-house,  
Lest thou increase the number of the dead;  
And make me die the thrall of Margaret's curse,  
Nor mother, wife, nor England's counted queen.

LORD STANLEY:

Full of wise care is this your counsel, madam.  
Take all the swift advantage of the hours;  
You shall have letters from me to my son  
To meet you on the way, and welcome you.  
Be not ta'en tardy by unwise delay.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

O ill-dispersing wind of misery!  
O my accursed womb, the bed of death!  
A cockatrice hast thou hatch'd to the world,  
Whose unavowed eye is murderous.

LORD STANLEY:

Come, madam, come; I in all haste was sent.

LADY ANNE:

And I in all unwillingness will go.  
I would to God that the inclusive verge  
Of golden metal that must round my brow  
Were red-hot steel, to sear me to the brain!

Anointed let me be with deadly venom,  
And die, ere men can say, God save the queen!

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Go, go, poor soul, I envy not thy glory  
To feed my humour, wish thyself no harm.

LADY ANNE:

No! why? When he that is my husband now  
Came to me, as I follow'd Henry's corse,  
When scarce the blood was well wash'd from his hands  
Which issued from my other angel husband  
And that dead saint which then I weeping follow'd;  
O, when, I say, I look'd on Richard's face,  
This was my wish: 'Be thou,' quoth I, 'accursed,  
For making me, so young, so old a widow!  
And, when thou wed'st, let sorrow haunt thy bed;  
And be thy wife--if any be so mad--  
As miserable by the life of thee  
As thou hast made me by my dear lord's death!  
Lo, ere I can repeat this curse again,  
Even in so short a space, my woman's heart  
Grossly grew captive to his honey words  
And proved the subject of my own soul's curse,  
Which ever since hath kept my eyes from rest;  
For never yet one hour in his bed  
Have I enjoy'd the golden dew of sleep,  
But have been waked by his timorous dreams.  
Besides, he hates me for my father Warwick;  
And will, no doubt, shortly be rid of me.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Poor heart, adieu! I pity thy complaining.

LADY ANNE:

No more than from my soul I mourn for yours.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Farewell, thou woful welcomer of glory!

LADY ANNE:

Adieu, poor soul, that takest thy leave of it!

DUCHESS OF YORK:

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Stay, yet look back with me unto the Tower.  
Pity, you ancient stones, those tender babes  
Whom envy hath immured within your walls!  
Rough cradle for such little pretty ones!

Rude ragged nurse, old sullen playfellow  
For tender princes, use my babies well!  
So foolish sorrow bids your stones farewell.

KING RICHARD III:  
Stand all apart Cousin of Buckingham!

BUCKINGHAM:  
My gracious sovereign?

KING RICHARD III:  
Give me thy hand.  
Thus high, by thy advice  
And thy assistance, is King Richard seated;  
But shall we wear these honours for a day?  
Or shall they last, and we rejoice in them?

BUCKINGHAM:  
Still live they and for ever may they last!

KING RICHARD III:  
O Buckingham, now do I play the touch,  
To try if thou be current gold indeed  
Young Edward lives: think now what I would say.

BUCKINGHAM:  
Say on, my loving lord.

KING RICHARD III:  
Why, Buckingham, I say, I would be king,

BUCKINGHAM:  
Why, so you are, my thrice renowned liege.

KING RICHARD III:  
Ha! am I king? 'tis so: but Edward lives.

BUCKINGHAM:  
True, noble prince.

KING RICHARD III:  
O bitter consequence,  
That Edward still should live! 'True, noble prince!'  
Cousin, thou wert not wont to be so dull:  
Shall I be plain? I wish the bastards dead;  
And I would have it suddenly perform'd.  
What sayest thou? speak suddenly; be brief.

BUCKINGHAM:  
Your grace may do your pleasure.

KING RICHARD III:

Tut, tut, thou art all ice, thy kindness freezeth:  
Say, have I thy consent that they shall die?

BUCKINGHAM:

Give me some breath, some little pause, my lord  
Before I positively herein:  
I will resolve your grace immediately.

CATESBY:

KING RICHARD III:

I will converse with iron-witted fools  
And unrespective boys: none are for me  
That look into me with considerate eyes:  
High-reaching Buckingham grows circumspect.  
Boy!

Page:

My lord?

KING RICHARD III:

Know'st thou not any whom corrupting gold  
Would tempt unto a close exploit of death?

Page:

My lord, I know a discontented gentleman,  
Whose humble means match not his haughty mind:  
Gold were as good as twenty orators,  
And will, no doubt, tempt him to any thing.

KING RICHARD III:

What is his name?

Page:

His name, my lord, is Tyrrel.

KING RICHARD III:

I partly know the man: go, call him hither.  
The deep-revolving witty Buckingham  
No more shall be the neighbour to my counsel:  
Hath he so long held out with me untired,  
And stops he now for breath?  
How now! what news with you?

STANLEY:

My lord, I hear the Marquis Dorset's fled  
To Richmond, in those parts beyond the sea  
Where he abides.

KING RICHARD III:  
Catesby!

CATESBY:  
My lord?

KING RICHARD III:  
Rumour it abroad  
That Anne, my wife, is sick and like to die:  
I will take order for her keeping close.  
Inquire me out some mean-born gentleman,  
Whom I will marry straight to Clarence' daughter:  
The boy is foolish, and I fear not him.  
Look, how thou dream'st! I say again, give out  
That Anne my wife is sick and like to die:  
About it; for it stands me much upon,  
To stop all hopes whose growth may damage me.  
I must be married to my brother's daughter,  
Or else my kingdom stands on brittle glass.  
Murder her brothers, and then marry her!  
Uncertain way of gain! But I am in  
So far in blood that sin will pluck on sin:  
Tear-falling pity dwells not in this eye.  
Is thy name Tyrrel?

TYRREL:  
James Tyrrel, and your most obedient subject.

KING RICHARD III:  
Art thou, indeed?

TYRREL:  
Prove me, my gracious sovereign.

KING RICHARD III:  
Darest thou resolve to kill a friend of mine?

TYRREL:  
Ay, my lord;  
But I had rather kill two enemies.

KING RICHARD III:  
Why, there thou hast it: two deep enemies,  
Foes to my rest and my sweet sleep's disturbers  
Are they that I would have thee deal upon:  
Tyrrel, I mean those bastards in the Tower.

TYRREL:  
Let me have open means to come to them,



And soon I'll rid you from the fear of them.

KING RICHARD III:

Thou sing'st sweet music. Hark, come hither, Tyrrel  
Go, by this token: rise, and lend thine ear:  
There is no more but so: say it is done,  
And I will love thee, and prefer thee too.

TYRREL:

'Tis done, my gracious lord.

KING RICHARD III:

Shall we hear from thee, Tyrrel, ere we sleep?

TYRREL:

Ye shall, my Lord.

BUCKINGHAM:

My Lord, I have consider'd in my mind  
The late demand that you did sound me in.

KING RICHARD III:

Well, let that pass. Dorset is fled to Richmond.

BUCKINGHAM:

I hear that news, my lord.

KING RICHARD III:

Stanley, he is your wife's son well, look to it.

BUCKINGHAM:

My lord, I claim your gift, my due by promise,  
For which your honour and your faith is pawn'd;  
The earldom of Hereford and the moveables  
The which you promised I should possess.

KING RICHARD III:

Stanley, look to your wife; if she convey  
Letters to Richmond, you shall answer it.

BUCKINGHAM:

What says your highness to my just demand?

KING RICHARD III:

As I remember, Henry the Sixth  
Did prophesy that Richmond should be king,  
When Richmond was a little peevish boy.  
A king, perhaps, perhaps,--

BUCKINGHAM:

My lord!

KING RICHARD III:

How chance the prophet could not at that time  
Have told me, I being by, that I should kill him?

BUCKINGHAM:

My lord, your promise for the earldom,--

KING RICHARD III:

Richmond! When last I was at Exeter,  
The mayor in courtesy show'd me the castle,  
And call'd it Rougemont: at which name I started,  
Because a bard of Ireland told me once  
I should not live long after I saw Richmond.

BUCKINGHAM:

My Lord!

KING RICHARD III:

Ay, what's o'clock?

BUCKINGHAM:

I am thus bold to put your grace in mind  
Of what you promised me.

KING RICHARD III:

Well, but what's o'clock?

BUCKINGHAM:

Upon the stroke of ten.

KING RICHARD III:

Well, let it strike.

BUCKINGHAM:

Why let it strike?

KING RICHARD III:

Because that, like a Jack, thou keep'st the stroke  
Betwixt thy begging and my meditation.  
I am not in the giving vein to-day.

BUCKINGHAM:

Why, then resolve me whether you will or no.

KING RICHARD III:

Tut, tut,  
Thou troublest me; am not in the vein.

BUCKINGHAM:

Is it even so? rewards he my true service  
With such deep contempt made I him king for this?  
O, let me think on Hastings, and be gone  
To Brecknock, while my fearful head is on!

TYRREL:

The tyrannous and bloody deed is done.  
The most arch of piteous massacre  
That ever yet this land was guilty of.  
Dighton and Forrest, whom I did suborn  
To do this ruthless piece of butchery,  
Although they were flesh'd villains, bloody dogs,  
Melting with tenderness and kind compassion  
Wept like two children in their deaths' sad stories.  
'Lo, thus' quoth Dighton, 'lay those tender babes:'  
'Thus, thus,' quoth Forrest, 'girdling one another  
Within their innocent alabaster arms:  
Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,  
Which in their summer beauty kiss'd each other.  
A book of prayers on their pillow lay;  
Which once,' quoth Forrest, 'almost changed my mind;  
But O! the devil'--there the villain stopp'd  
Whilst Dighton thus told on: 'We smothered  
The most replenished sweet work of nature,  
That from the prime creation e'er she framed.'  
Thus both are gone with conscience and remorse;  
They could not speak; and so I left them both,  
To bring this tidings to the bloody king.  
And here he comes.  
All hail, my sovereign liege!

KING RICHARD III:

Kind Tyrrel, am I happy in thy news?

TYRREL:

If to have done the thing you gave in charge  
Beget your happiness, be happy then,  
For it is done, my lord.

KING RICHARD III:

But didst thou see them dead?

TYRREL:

I did, my lord.

KING RICHARD III:

And buried, gentle Tyrrel?

TYRREL:

The chaplain of the Tower hath buried them;  
But how or in what place I do not know.

KING RICHARD III:

Come to me, Tyrrel, soon at after supper,  
And thou shalt tell the process of their death.  
Meantime, but think how I may do thee good,  
And be inheritor of thy desire.  
Farewell till soon.  
The son of Clarence have I pent up close;  
His daughter meanly have I match'd in marriage;  
The sons of Edward sleep in Abraham's bosom,  
And Anne my wife hath bid the world good night.  
Now, for I know the Breton Richmond aims  
At young Elizabeth, my brother's daughter,  
And, by that knot, looks proudly o'er the crown,  
To her I go, a jolly thriving wooer.

CATESBY:

My lord!

KING RICHARD III:

Good news or bad, that thou comest in so bluntly?

CATESBY:

Bad news, my lord: Ely is fled to Richmond;  
And Buckingham, back'd with the hardy Welshmen,  
Is in the field, and still his power increaseth.

KING RICHARD III:

Ely with Richmond troubles me more near  
Than Buckingham and his rash-levied army.  
Come, I have heard that fearful commenting  
Is leaden servitor to dull delay;  
Delay leads impotent and snail-paced beggary  
Then fiery expedition be my wing,  
Jove's Mercury, and herald for a king!  
Come, muster men: my counsel is my shield;  
We must be brief when traitors brave the field.

QUEEN MARGARET:

So, now prosperity begins to mellow  
And drop into the rotten mouth of death.  
Here in these confines slily have I lurk'd,  
To watch the waning of mine adversaries.  
A dire induction am I witness to,  
And will to France, hoping the consequence  
Will prove as bitter, black, and tragical.  
Withdraw thee, wretched Margaret: who comes here?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Ah, my young princes! ah, my tender babes!  
My unblown flowers, new-appearing sweets!  
If yet your gentle souls fly in the air  
And be not fix'd in doom perpetual,  
Hover about me with your airy wings  
And hear your mother's lamentation!

QUEEN MARGARET:

Hover about her; say, that right for right  
Hath dimm'd your infant morn to aged night.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

So many miseries have crazed my voice,  
That my woe-wearied tongue is mute and dumb,  
Edward Plantagenet, why art thou dead?

QUEEN MARGARET:

Plantagenet doth quit Plantagenet.  
Edward for Edward pays a dying debt.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Wilt thou, O God, fly from such gentle lambs,  
And throw them in the entrails of the wolf?  
When didst thou sleep when such a deed was done?

QUEEN MARGARET:

When holy Harry died, and my sweet son.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Blind sight, dead life, poor mortal living ghost,  
Woe's scene, world's shame, grave's due by life usurp'd,  
Brief abstract and record of tedious days,  
Rest thy unrest on England's lawful earth,  
Unlawfully made drunk with innocents' blood!

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

O, that thou wouldst as well afford a grave  
As thou canst yield a melancholy seat!  
Then would I hide my bones, not rest them here.  
O, who hath any cause to mourn but I?

QUEEN MARGARET:

If ancient sorrow be most reverend,  
Give mine the benefit of seniory,  
And let my woes frown on the upper hand.  
If sorrow can admit society,  
Tell o'er your woes again by viewing mine:  
I had an Edward, till a Richard kill'd him;  
I had a Harry, till a Richard kill'd him:

Thou hadst an Edward, till a Richard kill'd him;  
Thou hadst a Richard, till a Richard killed him;

DUCHESS OF YORK:

I had a Richard too, and thou didst kill him;  
I had a Rutland too, thou holp'st to kill him.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Thou hadst a Clarence too, and Richard kill'd him.  
From forth the kennel of thy womb hath crept  
A hell-hound that doth hunt us all to death:  
That dog, that had his teeth before his eyes,  
To worry lambs and lap their gentle blood,  
That foul defacer of God's handiwork,  
That excellent grand tyrant of the earth,  
That reigns in galled eyes of weeping souls,  
Thy womb let loose, to chase us to our graves.  
O upright, just, and true-disposing God,  
How do I thank thee, that this carnal cur  
Preys on the issue of his mother's body,  
And makes her pew-fellow with others' moan!

DUCHESS OF YORK:

O Harry's wife, triumph not in my woes!  
God witness with me, I have wept for thine.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Bear with me; I am hungry for revenge,  
And now I cloy me with beholding it.  
Thy Edward he is dead, that stabb'd my Edward:  
Thy other Edward dead, to quit my Edward;  
Young York he is but boot, because both they  
Match not the high perfection of my loss:  
Thy Clarence he is dead that kill'd my Edward;  
And the beholders of this tragic play,  
The adulterate Hastings, Rivers, Vaughan, Grey,  
Untimely smother'd in their dusky graves.  
Richard yet lives, hell's black intelligencer,  
Only reserved their factor, to buy souls  
And send them thither: but at hand, at hand,  
Ensues his piteous and unpitied end:  
Earth gapes, hell burns, fiends roar, saints pray.  
To have him suddenly convey'd away.  
Cancel his bond of life, dear God, I prey,  
That I may live to say, The dog is dead!

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

O, thou didst prophesy the time would come  
That I should wish for thee to help me curse  
That bottled spider, that foul bunch-back'd toad!

QUEEN MARGARET:

I call'd thee then vain flourish of my fortune;  
I call'd thee then poor shadow, painted queen;  
The presentation of but what I was;  
The flattering index of a direful pageant;  
One heaved a-high, to be hurl'd down below;  
A mother only mock'd with two sweet babes;  
A dream of what thou wert, a breath, a bubble,  
A sign of dignity, a garish flag,  
To be the aim of every dangerous shot,  
A queen in jest, only to fill the scene.  
Where is thy husband now? where be thy brothers?  
Where are thy children? wherein dost thou, joy?  
Who sues to thee and cries 'God save the queen'?  
Where be the bending peers that flatter'd thee?  
Where be the thronging troops that follow'd thee?  
Decline all this, and see what now thou art:  
For happy wife, a most distressed widow;  
For joyful mother, one that wails the name;  
For queen, a very caitiff crown'd with care;  
For one being sued to, one that humbly sues;  
For one that scorn'd at me, now scorn'd of me;  
For one being fear'd of all, now fearing one;  
For one commanding all, obey'd of none.  
Thus hath the course of justice wheel'd about,  
And left thee but a very prey to time;  
Having no more but thought of what thou wert,  
To torture thee the more, being what thou art.  
Thou didst usurp my place, and dost thou not  
Usurp the just proportion of my sorrow?  
Now thy proud neck bears half my burthen'd yoke;  
From which even here I slip my weary neck,  
And leave the burthen of it all on thee.  
Farewell, York's wife, and queen of sad mischance:  
These English woes will make me smile in France.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

O thou well skill'd in curses, stay awhile,  
And teach me how to curse mine enemies!

QUEEN MARGARET:

Forbear to sleep the nights, and fast the days;  
Compare dead happiness with living woe;  
Think that thy babes were fairer than they were,  
And he that slew them fouler than he is:  
Bettering thy loss makes the bad causer worse:  
Revolving this will teach thee how to curse.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

My words are dull; O, quicken them with thine!

QUEEN MARGARET:

Thy woes will make them sharp, and pierce like mine.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Why should calamity be full of words?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Windy attorneys to their client woes,  
Airy succeders of intestate joys,  
Poor breathing orators of miseries!  
Let them have scope: though what they do impart  
Help not all, yet do they ease the heart.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

If so, then be not tongue-tied: go with me.  
And in the breath of bitter words let's smother  
My damned son, which thy two sweet sons smother'd.  
I hear his drum: be copious in exclams.

KING RICHARD III:

Who intercepts my expedition?

DUCHESS OF YORK:

O, she that might have intercepted thee,  
By strangling thee in her accursed womb  
From all the slaughters, wretch, that thou hast done!

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Hidest thou that forehead with a golden crown,  
Where should be graven, if that right were right,  
The slaughter of the prince that owed that crown,  
And the dire death of my two sons and brothers?  
Tell me, thou villain slave, where are my children?

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Thou toad, thou toad, where is thy brother Clarence?  
And little Ned Plantagenet, his son?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Where is kind Hastings, Rivers, Vaughan, Grey?

KING RICHARD III:

A flourish, trumpets! strike alarum, drums!  
Let not the heavens hear these tell-tale women  
Rail on the Lord's enointed: strike, I say!  
Either be patient, and entreat me fair,  
Or with the clamorous report of war  
Thus will I drown your exclamations.



DUCHESS OF YORK:  
Art thou my son?

KING RICHARD III:  
Ay, I thank God, my father, and yourself.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
Then patiently hear my impatience.

KING RICHARD III:  
Madam, I have a touch of your condition,  
Which cannot brook the accent of reproof.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
O, let me speak!

KING RICHARD III:  
Do then: but I'll not hear.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
I will be mild and gentle in my speech.

KING RICHARD III:  
And brief, good mother; for I am in haste.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
Art thou so hasty? I have stay'd for thee,  
God knows, in anguish, pain and agony.

KING RICHARD III:  
And came I not at last to comfort you?

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
No, by the holy rood, thou know'st it well,  
Thou camest on earth to make the earth my hell.  
A grievous burthen was thy birth to me;  
Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy;  
Thy school-days frightful, desperate, wild, and furious,  
Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous,  
Thy age confirm'd, proud, subdued, bloody,  
treacherous,  
More mild, but yet more harmful, kind in hatred:  
What comfortable hour canst thou name,  
That ever graced me in thy company?

KING RICHARD III:  
Faith, none, but Humphrey Hour, that call'd  
your grace  
To breakfast once forth of my company.

If I be so disgracious in your sight,  
Let me march on, and not offend your grace.  
Strike the drum.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
I prithee, hear me speak.

KING RICHARD III:  
You speak too bitterly.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
Hear me a word;  
For I shall never speak to thee again.

KING RICHARD III:  
So.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
Either thou wilt die, by God's just ordinance,  
Ere from this war thou turn a conqueror,  
Or I with grief and extreme age shall perish  
And never look upon thy face again.  
Therefore take with thee my most heavy curse;  
Which, in the day of battle, tire thee more  
Than all the complete armour that thou wear'st!  
My prayers on the adverse party fight;  
And there the little souls of Edward's children  
Whisper the spirits of thine enemies  
And promise them success and victory.  
Bloody thou art, bloody will be thy end;  
Shame serves thy life and doth thy death attend.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
Though far more cause, yet much less spirit to curse  
Abides in me; I say amen to all.

KING RICHARD III:  
Stay, madam; I must speak a word with you.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
I have no more sons of the royal blood  
For thee to murder: for my daughters, Richard,  
They shall be praying nuns, not weeping queens;  
And therefore level not to hit their lives.

KING RICHARD III:  
You have a daughter call'd Elizabeth,  
Virtuous and fair, royal and gracious.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

And must she die for this? O, let her live,  
And I'll corrupt her manners, stain her beauty;  
Slander myself as false to Edward's bed;  
Throw over her the veil of infamy:  
So she may live unscarr'd of bleeding slaughter,  
I will confess she was not Edward's daughter.

KING RICHARD III:  
Wrong not her birth, she is of royal blood.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
To save her life, I'll say she is not so.

KING RICHARD III:  
Her life is only safest in her birth.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
And only in that safety died her brothers.

KING RICHARD III:  
Lo, at their births good stars were opposite.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
No, to their lives bad friends were contrary.

KING RICHARD III:  
All unavoided is the doom of destiny.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
True, when avoided grace makes destiny:  
My babes were destined to a fairer death,  
If grace had bless'd thee with a fairer life.

KING RICHARD III:  
You speak as if that I had slain my cousins.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
Cousins, indeed; and by their uncle cozen'd  
Of comfort, kingdom, kindred, freedom, life.  
Whose hand soever lanced their tender hearts,  
Thy head, all indirectly, gave direction:  
No doubt the murderous knife was dull and blunt  
Till it was whetted on thy stone-hard heart,  
To revel in the entrails of my lambs.  
But that still use of grief makes wild grief tame,  
My tongue should to thy ears not name my boys  
Till that my nails were anchor'd in thine eyes;  
And I, in such a desperate bay of death,  
Like a poor bark, of sails and tackling reft,  
Rush all to pieces on thy rocky bosom.

KING RICHARD III:

Madam, so thrive I in my enterprise  
And dangerous success of bloody wars,  
As I intend more good to you and yours,  
Than ever you or yours were by me wrong'd!

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

What good is cover'd with the face of heaven,  
To be discover'd, that can do me good?

KING RICHARD III:

The advancement of your children, gentle lady.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Up to some scaffold, there to lose their heads?

KING RICHARD III:

No, to the dignity and height of honour  
The high imperial type of this earth's glory.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Flatter my sorrows with report of it;  
Tell me what state, what dignity, what honour,  
Canst thou demise to any child of mine?

KING RICHARD III:

Even all I have; yea, and myself and all,  
Will I withal endow a child of thine;  
So in the Lethe of thy angry soul  
Thou drown the sad remembrance of those wrongs  
Which thou supposest I have done to thee.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Be brief, lest that be process of thy kindness  
Last longer telling than thy kindness' date.

KING RICHARD III:

Then know, that from my soul I love thy daughter.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

My daughter's mother thinks it with her soul.

KING RICHARD III:

What do you think?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

That thou dost love my daughter from thy soul:  
So from thy soul's love didst thou love her brothers;  
And from my heart's love I do thank thee for it.

KING RICHARD III:

Be not so hasty to confound my meaning:  
I mean, that with my soul I love thy daughter,  
And mean to make her queen of England.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Say then, who dost thou mean shall be her king?

KING RICHARD III:

Even he that makes her queen who should be else?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

What, thou?

KING RICHARD III:

I, even I: what think you of it, madam?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

How canst thou woo her?

KING RICHARD III:

That would I learn of you,  
As one that are best acquainted with her humour.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

And wilt thou learn of me?

KING RICHARD III:

Madam, with all my heart.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Send to her, by the man that slew her brothers,  
A pair of bleeding-hearts; thereon engrave  
Edward and York; then haply she will weep:  
Therefore present to her--as sometime Margaret  
Did to thy father, steep'd in Rutland's blood,--  
A handkerchief; which, say to her, did drain  
The purple sap from her sweet brother's body  
And bid her dry her weeping eyes therewith.  
If this inducement force her not to love,  
Send her a story of thy noble acts;  
Tell her thou madest away her uncle Clarence,  
Her uncle Rivers; yea, and, for her sake,  
Madest quick conveyance with her good aunt Anne.

KING RICHARD III:

Come, come, you mock me; this is not the way  
To win our daughter.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

There is no other way  
Unless thou couldst put on some other shape,  
And not be Richard that hath done all this.

KING RICHARD III:

Say that I did all this for love of her.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Nay, then indeed she cannot choose but hate thee,  
Having bought love with such a bloody spoil.

KING RICHARD III:

Look, what is done cannot be now amended:  
Men shall deal unadvisedly sometimes,  
Which after hours give leisure to repent.  
If I did take the kingdom from your sons,  
To make amends, Ill give it to your daughter.  
If I have kill'd the issue of your womb,  
To quicken your increase, I will beget  
Mine issue of your blood upon your daughter  
A grandam's name is little less in love  
Than is the doting title of a mother;  
They are as children but one step below,  
Even of your mettle, of your very blood;  
Of an one pain, save for a night of groans  
Endured of her, for whom you bid like sorrow.  
Your children were vexation to your youth,  
But mine shall be a comfort to your age.  
The loss you have is but a son being king,  
And by that loss your daughter is made queen.  
I cannot make you what amends I would,  
Therefore accept such kindness as I can.  
Dorset your son, that with a fearful soul  
Leads discontented steps in foreign soil,  
This fair alliance quickly shall call home  
To high promotions and great dignity:  
The king, that calls your beauteous daughter wife.  
Familiarly shall call thy Dorset brother;  
Again shall you be mother to a king,  
And all the ruins of distressful times  
Repair'd with double riches of content.  
What! we have many goodly days to see:  
The liquid drops of tears that you have shed  
Shall come again, transform'd to orient pearl,  
Advantaging their loan with interest  
Of ten times double gain of happiness.  
Go, then my mother, to thy daughter go  
Make bold her bashful years with your experience;  
Prepare her ears to hear a wooer's tale

Put in her tender heart the aspiring flame  
Of golden sovereignty; acquaint the princess  
With the sweet silent hours of marriage joys  
And when this arm of mine hath chastised  
The petty rebel, dull-brain'd Buckingham,  
Bound with triumphant garlands will I come  
And lead thy daughter to a conqueror's bed;  
To whom I will retail my conquest won,  
And she shall be sole victress, Caesar's Caesar.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

What were I best to say? her father's brother  
Would be her lord? or shall I say, her uncle?  
Or, he that slew her brothers and her uncles?  
Under what title shall I woo for thee,  
That God, the law, my honour and her love,  
Can make seem pleasing to her tender years?

KING RICHARD III:

Infer fair England's peace by this alliance.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Which she shall purchase with still lasting war.

KING RICHARD III:

Say that the king, which may command, entreats.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

That at her hands which the king's King forbids.

KING RICHARD III:

Say, she shall be a high and mighty queen.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

To wail the tide, as her mother doth.

KING RICHARD III:

Say, I will love her everlastingly.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

But how long shall that title 'ever' last?

KING RICHARD III:

Sweetly in force unto her fair life's end.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

But how long fairly shall her sweet lie last?

KING RICHARD III:

So long as heaven and nature lengthens it.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

So long as hell and Richard likes of it.

KING RICHARD III:

Say, I, her sovereign, am her subject love.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

But she, your subject, loathes such sovereignty.

KING RICHARD III:

Be eloquent in my behalf to her.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

An honest tale speeds best being plainly told.

KING RICHARD III:

Then in plain terms tell her my loving tale.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Plain and not honest is too harsh a style.

KING RICHARD III:

Your reasons are too shallow and too quick.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

O no, my reasons are too deep and dead;  
Too deep and dead, poor infants, in their grave.

KING RICHARD III:

Harp not on that string, madam; that is past.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Harp on it still shall I till heart-strings break.

KING RICHARD III:

Now, by my George, my garter, and my crown,--

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Profaned, dishonour'd, and the third usurp'd.

KING RICHARD III:

I swear--

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

By nothing; for this is no oath:  
The George, profaned, hath lost his holy honour;  
The garter, blemish'd, pawn'd his knightly virtue;  
The crown, usurp'd, disgraced his kingly glory.  
if something thou wilt swear to be believed,



Swear then by something that thou hast not wrong'd.

KING RICHARD III:  
Now, by the world--

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
'Tis full of thy foul wrongs.

KING RICHARD III:  
My father's death--

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
Thy life hath that dishonour'd.

KING RICHARD III:  
Then, by myself--

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
Thyself thyself misusest.

KING RICHARD III:  
Why then, by God--

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
God's wrong is most of all.  
If thou hadst fear'd to break an oath by Him,  
The unity the king thy brother made  
Had not been broken, nor my brother slain:  
If thou hadst fear'd to break an oath by Him,  
The imperial metal, circling now thy brow,  
Had graced the tender temples of my child,  
And both the princes had been breathing here,  
Which now, two tender playfellows to dust,  
Thy broken faith hath made a prey for worms.  
What canst thou swear by now?

KING RICHARD III:  
The time to come.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
That thou hast wronged in the time o'erpast;  
For I myself have many tears to wash  
Hereafter time, for time past wrong'd by thee.  
The children live, whose parents thou hast  
slaughter'd,  
Ungovern'd youth, to wail it in their age;  
The parents live, whose children thou hast butcher'd,  
Old wither'd plants, to wail it with their age.  
Swear not by time to come; for that thou hast  
Misused ere used, by time misused o'erpast.

KING RICHARD III:

As I intend to prosper and repent,  
So thrive I in my dangerous attempt  
Of hostile arms! myself myself confound!  
Heaven and fortune bar me happy hours!  
Day, yield me not thy light; nor, night, thy rest!  
Be opposite all planets of good luck  
To my proceedings, if, with pure heart's love,  
Immaculate devotion, holy thoughts,  
I tender not thy beauteous princely daughter!  
In her consists my happiness and thine;  
Without her, follows to this land and me,  
To thee, herself, and many a Christian soul,  
Death, desolation, ruin and decay:  
It cannot be avoided but by this;  
It will not be avoided but by this.  
Therefore, good mother,--I must can you so--  
Be the attorney of my love to her:  
Plead what I will be, not what I have been;  
Not my deserts, but what I will deserve:  
Urge the necessity and state of times,  
And be not peevish-fond in great designs.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Shall I be tempted of the devil thus?

KING RICHARD III:

Ay, if the devil tempt thee to do good.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Shall I forget myself to be myself?

KING RICHARD III:

Ay, if yourself's remembrance wrong yourself.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

But thou didst kill my children.

KING RICHARD III:

But in your daughter's womb I bury them:  
Where in that nest of spicery they shall breed  
Selves of themselves, to your recomforture.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Shall I go win my daughter to thy will?

KING RICHARD III:

And be a happy mother by the deed.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

I go. Write to me very shortly.  
And you shall understand from me her mind.

KING RICHARD III:

Bear her my true love's kiss; and so, farewell.  
Relenting fool, and shallow, changing woman!  
How now! what news?

RATCLIFF:

My gracious sovereign, on the western coast  
Rideth a puissant navy; to the shore  
Throng many doubtful hollow-hearted friends,  
Unarm'd, and unresolved to beat them back:  
'Tis thought that Richmond is their admiral;  
And there they hull, expecting but the aid  
Of Buckingham to welcome them ashore.

KING RICHARD III:

Some light-foot friend post to the Duke of Norfolk:  
Ratcliff, thyself, or Catesby; where is he?

CATESBY:

Here, my lord.

KING RICHARD III:

Fly to the duke:  
Post thou to Salisbury  
When thou comest thither--  
Dull, unmindful villain,  
Why stand'st thou still, and go'st not to the duke?

CATESBY:

First, mighty sovereign, let me know your mind,  
What from your grace I shall deliver to him.

KING RICHARD III:

O, true, good Catesby: bid him levy straight  
The greatest strength and power he can make,  
And meet me presently at Salisbury.

CATESBY:

I go.

RATCLIFF:

What is't your highness' pleasure I shall do at  
Salisbury?

KING RICHARD III:

Why, what wouldst thou do there before I go?

RATCLIFF:

Your highness told me I should post before.

KING RICHARD III:

My mind is changed, sir, my mind is changed.  
How now, what news with you?

STANLEY:

None good, my lord, to please you with the hearing;  
Nor none so bad, but it may well be told.

KING RICHARD III:

Hoyday, a riddle! neither good nor bad!  
Why dost thou run so many mile about,  
When thou mayst tell thy tale a nearer way?  
Once more, what news?

STANLEY:

Richmond is on the seas.

KING RICHARD III:

There let him sink, and be the seas on him!  
White-liver'd runagate, what doth he there?

STANLEY:

I know not, mighty sovereign, but by guess.

KING RICHARD III:

Well, sir, as you guess, as you guess?

STANLEY:

Stirr'd up by Dorset, Buckingham, and Ely,  
He makes for England, there to claim the crown.

KING RICHARD III:

Is the chair empty? is the sword unsway'd?  
Is the king dead? the empire unpossess'd?  
What heir of York is there alive but we?  
And who is England's king but great York's heir?  
Then, tell me, what doth he upon the sea?

STANLEY:

Unless for that, my liege, I cannot guess.

KING RICHARD III:

Unless for that he comes to be your liege,  
You cannot guess wherefore the Welshman comes.  
Thou wilt revolt, and fly to him, I fear.

STANLEY:

No, mighty liege; therefore mistrust me not.

KING RICHARD III:

Where is thy power, then, to beat him back?

Where are thy tenants and thy followers?

Are they not now upon the western shore.

Safe-conducting the rebels from their ships!

STANLEY:

No, my good lord, my friends are in the north.

KING RICHARD III:

Cold friends to Richard: what do they in the north,

When they should serve their sovereign in the west?

STANLEY:

They have not been commanded, mighty sovereign:

Please it your majesty to give me leave,

I'll muster up my friends, and meet your grace

Where and what time your majesty shall please.

KING RICHARD III:

Ay, ay. thou wouldst be gone to join with Richmond:

I will not trust you, sir.

STANLEY:

Most mighty sovereign,

You have no cause to hold my friendship doubtful:

I never was nor never will be false.

KING RICHARD III:

Well,

Go muster men; but, hear you, leave behind

Your son, George Stanley: look your faith be firm.

Or else his head's assurance is but frail.

STANLEY:

So deal with him as I prove true to you.

Messenger:

My gracious sovereign, now in Devonshire,

As I by friends am well advertised,

Sir Edward Courtney, and the haughty prelate

Bishop of Exeter, his brother there,

With many more confederates, are in arms.

Second Messenger:

My liege, in Kent the Guildfords are in arms;

And every hour more competitors

Flock to their aid, and still their power increaseth.

Third Messenger:

My lord, the army of the Duke of Buckingham--

KING RICHARD III:

Out on you, owls! nothing but songs of death?  
Take that, until thou bring me better news.

Third Messenger:

The news I have to tell your majesty  
Is, that by sudden floods and fall of waters,  
Buckingham's army is dispersed and scatter'd;  
And he himself wander'd away alone,  
No man knows whither.

KING RICHARD III:

I cry thee mercy:  
There is my purse to cure that blow of thine.  
Hath any well-advised friend proclaim'd  
Reward to him that brings the traitor in?

Third Messenger:

Such proclamation hath been made, my liege.

Fourth Messenger:

Sir Thomas Lovel and Lord Marquis Dorset,  
'Tis said, my liege, in Yorkshire are in arms.  
Yet this good comfort bring I to your grace,  
The Breton navy is dispersed by tempest:  
Richmond, in Yorkshire, sent out a boat  
Unto the shore, to ask those on the banks  
If they were his assistants, yea or no;  
Who answer'd him, they came from Buckingham.  
Upon his party: he, mistrusting them,  
Hoisted sail and made away for Brittany.

KING RICHARD III:

March on, march on, since we are up in arms;  
If not to fight with foreign enemies,  
Yet to beat down these rebels here at home.

CATESBY:

My liege, the Duke of Buckingham is taken;  
That is the best news: that the Earl of Richmond  
Is with a mighty power landed at Milford,  
Is colder tidings, yet they must be told.

KING RICHARD III:

Away towards Salisbury! while we reason here,

A royal battle might be won and lost  
Some one take order Buckingham be brought  
To Salisbury; the rest march on with me.

DERBY:

Sir Christopher, tell Richmond this from me:  
That in the sty of this most bloody boar  
My son George Stanley is frank'd up in hold:  
If I revolt, off goes young George's head;  
The fear of that withholds my present aid.  
But, tell me, where is princely Richmond now?

CHRISTOPHER:

At Pembroke, or at Harford-west, in Wales.

DERBY:

What men of name resort to him?

CHRISTOPHER:

Sir Walter Herbert, a renowned soldier;  
Sir Gilbert Talbot, Sir William Stanley;  
Oxford, redoubted Pembroke, Sir James Blunt,  
And Rice ap Thomas with a valiant crew;  
And many more of noble fame and worth:  
And towards London they do bend their course,  
If by the way they be not fought withal.

DERBY:

Return unto thy lord; commend me to him:  
Tell him the queen hath heartily consented  
He shall espouse Elizabeth her daughter.  
These letters will resolve him of my mind. Farewell.

BUCKINGHAM:

Will not King Richard let me speak with him?

Sheriff:

No, my good lord; therefore be patient.

BUCKINGHAM:

Hastings, and Edward's children, Rivers, Grey,  
Holy King Henry, and thy fair son Edward,  
Vaughan, and all that have miscarried  
By underhand corrupted foul injustice,  
If that your moody discontented souls  
Do through the clouds behold this present hour,  
Even for revenge mock my destruction!  
This is All-Souls' day, fellows, is it not?

Sheriff:

It is, my lord.

BUCKINGHAM:

Why, then All-Souls' day is my body's doomsday.  
This is the day that, in King Edward's time,  
I wish't might fall on me, when I was found  
False to his children or his wife's allies  
This is the day wherein I wish'd to fall  
By the false faith of him I trusted most;  
This, this All-Souls' day to my fearful soul  
Is the determined respite of my wrongs:  
That high All-Seer that I dallied with  
Hath turn'd my feigned prayer on my head  
And given in earnest what I begg'd in jest.  
Thus doth he force the swords of wicked men  
To turn their own points on their masters' bosoms:  
Now Margaret's curse is fallen upon my head;  
'When he,' quoth she, 'shall split thy heart with sorrow,  
Remember Margaret was a prophetess.'  
Come, sirs, convey me to the block of shame;  
Wrong hath but wrong, and blame the due of blame.

RICHMOND:

Fellows in arms, and my most loving friends,  
Bruised underneath the yoke of tyranny,  
Thus far into the bowels of the land  
Have we march'd on without impediment;  
And here receive we from our father Stanley  
Lines of fair comfort and encouragement.  
The wretched, bloody, and usurping boar,  
That spoil'd your summer fields and fruitful vines,  
Swills your warm blood like wash, and makes his trough  
In your embowell'd bosoms, this foul swine  
Lies now even in the centre of this isle,  
Near to the town of Leicester, as we learn  
From Tamworth thither is but one day's march.  
In God's name, cheerly on, courageous friends,  
To reap the harvest of perpetual peace  
By this one bloody trial of sharp war.

OXFORD:

Every man's conscience is a thousand swords,  
To fight against that bloody homicide.

HERBERT:

I doubt not but his friends will fly to us.

BLUNT:

He hath no friends but who are friends for fear.  
Which in his greatest need will shrink from him.



RICHMOND:

All for our vantage. Then, in God's name, march:  
True hope is swift, and flies with swallow's wings:  
Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures kings.

KING RICHARD III:

Here pitch our tents, even here in Bosworth field.  
My Lord of Surrey, why look you so sad?

SURREY:

My heart is ten times lighter than my looks.

KING RICHARD III:

My Lord of Norfolk,--

NORFOLK:

Here, most gracious liege.

KING RICHARD III:

Norfolk, we must have knocks; ha! must we not?

NORFOLK:

We must both give and take, my gracious lord.

KING RICHARD III:

Up with my tent there! here will I lie tonight;  
But where to-morrow? Well, all's one for that.  
Who hath descried the number of the foe?

NORFOLK:

Six or seven thousand is their utmost power.

KING RICHARD III:

Why, our battalion trebles that account:  
Besides, the king's name is a tower of strength,  
Which they upon the adverse party want.  
Up with my tent there! Valiant gentlemen,  
Let us survey the vantage of the field  
Call for some men of sound direction  
Let's want no discipline, make no delay,  
For, lords, to-morrow is a busy day.

RICHMOND:

The weary sun hath made a golden set,  
And by the bright track of his fiery car,  
Gives signal, of a goodly day to-morrow.  
Sir William Brandon, you shall bear my standard.  
Give me some ink and paper in my tent  
I'll draw the form and model of our battle,

Limit each leader to his several charge,  
And part in just proportion our small strength.  
My Lord of Oxford, you, Sir William Brandon,  
And you, Sir Walter Herbert, stay with me.  
The Earl of Pembroke keeps his regiment:  
Good Captain Blunt, bear my good night to him  
And by the second hour in the morning  
Desire the earl to see me in my tent:  
Yet one thing more, good Blunt, before thou go'st,  
Where is Lord Stanley quarter'd, dost thou know?

BLUNT:

Unless I have mista'en his colours much,  
Which well I am assured I have not done,  
His regiment lies half a mile at least  
South from the mighty power of the king.

RICHMOND:

If without peril it be possible,  
Good Captain Blunt, bear my good-night to him,  
And give him from me this most needful scroll.

BLUNT:

Upon my life, my lord, I'll under-take it;  
And so, God give you quiet rest to-night!

RICHMOND:

Good night, good Captain Blunt. Come gentlemen,  
Let us consult upon to-morrow's business  
In to our tent; the air is raw and cold.

KING RICHARD III:

What is't o'clock?

CATESBY:

It's supper-time, my lord;  
It's nine o'clock.

KING RICHARD III:

I will not sup to-night.  
Give me some ink and paper.  
What, is my beaver easier than it was?  
And all my armour laid into my tent?

CATESBY:

If is, my liege; and all things are in readiness.

KING RICHARD III:

Good Norfolk, hie thee to thy charge;  
Use careful watch, choose trusty sentinels.

NORFOLK:  
I go, my lord.

KING RICHARD III:  
Stir with the lark to-morrow, gentle Norfolk.

NORFOLK:  
I warrant you, my lord.

KING RICHARD III:  
Catesby!

CATESBY:  
My lord?

KING RICHARD III:  
Send out a pursuivant at arms  
To Stanley's regiment; bid him bring his power  
Before sunrising, lest his son George fall  
Into the blind cave of eternal night.  
Fill me a bowl of wine. Give me a watch.  
Saddle white Surrey for the field to-morrow.  
Look that my staves be sound, and not too heavy.  
Ratcliff!

RATCLIFF:  
My lord?

KING RICHARD III:  
Saw'st thou the melancholy Lord Northumberland?

RATCLIFF:  
Thomas the Earl of Surrey, and himself,  
Much about cock-shut time, from troop to troop  
Went through the army, cheering up the soldiers.

KING RICHARD III:  
So, I am satisfied. Give me a bowl of wine:  
I have not that alacrity of spirit,  
Nor cheer of mind, that I was wont to have.  
Set it down. Is ink and paper ready?

RATCLIFF:  
It is, my lord.

KING RICHARD III:  
Bid my guard watch; leave me.  
Ratcliff, about the mid of night come to my tent  
And help to arm me. Leave me, I say.

DERBY:

Fortune and victory sit on thy helm!

RICHMOND:

All comfort that the dark night can afford  
Be to thy person, noble father-in-law!  
Tell me, how fares our loving mother?

DERBY:

I, by attorney, bless thee from thy mother  
Who prays continually for Richmond's good:  
So much for that. The silent hours steal on,  
And flaky darkness breaks within the east.  
In brief,--for so the season bids us be,--  
Prepare thy battle early in the morning,  
And put thy fortune to the arbitrement  
Of bloody strokes and mortal-staring war.  
I, as I may--that which I would I cannot,--  
With best advantage will deceive the time,  
And aid thee in this doubtful shock of arms:  
But on thy side I may not be too forward  
Lest, being seen, thy brother, tender George,  
Be executed in his father's sight.  
Farewell: the leisure and the fearful time  
Cuts off the ceremonious vows of love  
And ample interchange of sweet discourse,  
Which so long sunder'd friends should dwell upon:  
God give us leisure for these rites of love!  
Once more, adieu: be valiant, and speed well!

RICHMOND:

Good lords, conduct him to his regiment:  
I'll strive, with troubled thoughts, to take a nap,  
Lest leaden slumber peise me down to-morrow,  
When I should mount with wings of victory:  
Once more, good night, kind lords and gentlemen.  
O Thou, whose captain I account myself,  
Look on my forces with a gracious eye;  
Put in their hands thy bruising irons of wrath,  
That they may crush down with a heavy fall  
The usurping helmets of our adversaries!  
Make us thy ministers of chastisement,  
That we may praise thee in the victory!  
To thee I do commend my watchful soul,  
Ere I let fall the windows of mine eyes:  
Sleeping and waking, O, defend me still!

Ghost of Prince Edward:

Ghost of King Henry VI:

Ghost of CLARENCE:

Ghost of RIVERS:

Ghost of GREY:

Ghost of VAUGHAN:

All:

Ghost of HASTINGS:

Ghosts of young Princes:

Ghost of LADY ANNE:

Ghost of BUCKINGHAM:

KING RICHARD III:

Give me another horse: bind up my wounds.  
Have mercy, Jesu!--Soft! I did but dream.  
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!  
The lights burn blue. It is now dead midnight.  
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.  
What do I fear? myself? there's none else by:  
Richard loves Richard; that is, I am I.  
Is there a murderer here? No. Yes, I am:  
Then fly. What, from myself? Great reason why:  
Lest I revenge. What, myself upon myself?  
Alack. I love myself. Wherefore? for any good  
That I myself have done unto myself?  
O, no! alas, I rather hate myself  
For hateful deeds committed by myself!  
I am a villain: yet I lie. I am not.  
Fool, of thyself speak well: fool, do not flatter.  
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,  
And every tongue brings in a several tale,  
And every tale condemns me for a villain.  
Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree  
Murder, stem murder, in the direst degree;  
All several sins, all used in each degree,  
Throng to the bar, crying all, Guilty! guilty!  
I shall despair. There is no creature loves me;  
And if I die, no soul shall pity me:  
Nay, wherefore should they, since that I myself  
Find in myself no pity to myself?  
Methought the souls of all that I had murder'd  
Came to my tent; and every one did threat

To-morrow's vengeance on the head of Richard.

RATCLIFF:  
My lord!

KING RICHARD III:  
'Zounds! who is there?

RATCLIFF:  
Ratcliff, my lord; 'tis I. The early village-cock  
Hath twice done salutation to the morn;  
Your friends are up, and buckle on their armour.

KING RICHARD III:  
O Ratcliff, I have dream'd a fearful dream!  
What thinkest thou, will our friends prove all true?

RATCLIFF:  
No doubt, my lord.

KING RICHARD III:  
O Ratcliff, I fear, I fear,--

RATCLIFF:  
Nay, good my lord, be not afraid of shadows.

KING RICHARD III:  
By the apostle Paul, shadows to-night  
Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard  
Than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers  
Armed in proof, and led by shallow Richmond.  
It is not yet near day. Come, go with me;  
Under our tents I'll play the eaves-dropper,  
To see if any mean to shrink from me.

LORDS:  
Good morrow, Richmond!

RICHMOND:  
Cry mercy, lords and watchful gentlemen,  
That you have ta'en a tardy sluggard here.

LORDS:  
How have you slept, my lord?

RICHMOND:  
The sweetest sleep, and fairest-boding dreams  
That ever enter'd in a drowsy head,  
Have I since your departure had, my lords.  
Methought their souls, whose bodies Richard murder'd,

Came to my tent, and cried on victory:  
I promise you, my soul is very jocund  
In the remembrance of so fair a dream.  
How far into the morning is it, lords?

LORDS:

Upon the stroke of four.

RICHMOND:

Why, then 'tis time to arm and give direction.  
More than I have said, loving countrymen,  
The leisure and enforcement of the time  
Forbids to dwell upon: yet remember this,  
God and our good cause fight upon our side;  
The prayers of holy saints and wronged souls,  
Like high-rear'd bulwarks, stand before our faces;  
Richard except, those whom we fight against  
Had rather have us win than him they follow:  
For what is he they follow? truly, gentlemen,  
A bloody tyrant and a homicide;  
One raised in blood, and one in blood establish'd;  
One that made means to come by what he hath,  
And slaughter'd those that were the means to help him;  
Abase foul stone, made precious by the foil  
Of England's chair, where he is falsely set;  
One that hath ever been God's enemy:  
Then, if you fight against God's enemy,  
God will in justice ward you as his soldiers;  
If you do sweat to put a tyrant down,  
You sleep in peace, the tyrant being slain;  
If you do fight against your country's foes,  
Your country's fat shall pay your pains the hire;  
If you do fight in safeguard of your wives,  
Your wives shall welcome home the conquerors;  
If you do free your children from the sword,  
Your children's children quit it in your age.  
Then, in the name of God and all these rights,  
Advance your standards, draw your willing swords.  
For me, the ransom of my bold attempt  
Shall be this cold corpse on the earth's cold face;  
But if I thrive, the gain of my attempt  
The least of you shall share his part thereof.  
Sound drums and trumpets boldly and cheerfully;  
God and Saint George! Richmond and victory!

KING RICHARD III:

What said Northumberland as touching Richmond?

RATCLIFF:

That he was never trained up in arms.

KING RICHARD III:

He said the truth: and what said Surrey then?

RATCLIFF:

He smiled and said 'The better for our purpose.'

KING RICHARD III:

He was in the right; and so indeed it is.

Ten the clock there. Give me a calendar.

Who saw the sun to-day?

RATCLIFF:

Not I, my lord.

KING RICHARD III:

Then he disdains to shine; for by the book

He should have braved the east an hour ago

A black day will it be to somebody. Ratcliff!

RATCLIFF:

My lord?

KING RICHARD III:

The sun will not be seen to-day;

The sky doth frown and lour upon our army.

I would these dewy tears were from the ground.

Not shine to-day! Why, what is that to me

More than to Richmond? for the selfsame heaven

That frowns on me looks sadly upon him.

NORFOLK:

Arm, arm, my lord; the foe vaunts in the field.

KING RICHARD III:

Come, bustle, bustle; caparison my horse.

Call up Lord Stanley, bid him bring his power:

I will lead forth my soldiers to the plain,

And thus my battle shall be ordered:

My foreward shall be drawn out all in length,

Consisting equally of horse and foot;

Our archers shall be placed in the midst

John Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Earl of Surrey,

Shall have the leading of this foot and horse.

They thus directed, we will follow

In the main battle, whose puissance on either side

Shall be well winged with our chiefest horse.

This, and Saint George to boot! What think'st thou, Norfolk?

NORFOLK:



A good direction, warlike sovereign.  
This found I on my tent this morning.

KING RICHARD III:

Messenger:  
My lord, he doth deny to come.

KING RICHARD III:  
Off with his son George's head!

NORFOLK:  
My lord, the enemy is past the marsh  
After the battle let George Stanley die.

KING RICHARD III:  
A thousand hearts are great within my bosom:  
Advance our standards, set upon our foes  
Our ancient word of courage, fair Saint George,  
Inspire us with the spleen of fiery dragons!  
Upon them! victory sits on our helms.

CATESBY:  
Rescue, my Lord of Norfolk, rescue, rescue!  
The king enacts more wonders than a man,  
Daring an opposite to every danger:  
His horse is slain, and all on foot he fights,  
Seeking for Richmond in the throat of death.  
Rescue, fair lord, or else the day is lost!

KING RICHARD III:  
A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

CATESBY:  
Withdraw, my lord; I'll help you to a horse.

KING RICHARD III:  
Slave, I have set my life upon a cast,  
And I will stand the hazard of the die:  
I think there be six Richmonds in the field;  
Five have I slain to-day instead of him.  
A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

RICHMOND:  
God and your arms be praised, victorious friends,  
The day is ours, the bloody dog is dead.

DERBY:  
Courageous Richmond, well hast thou acquit thee.  
Lo, here, this long-usurped royalty

From the dead temples of this bloody wretch  
Have I pluck'd off, to grace thy brows withal:  
Wear it, enjoy it, and make much of it.

RICHMOND:

Great God of heaven, say Amen to all!  
But, tell me, is young George Stanley living?

DERBY:

He is, my lord, and safe in Leicester town;  
Whither, if it please you, we may now withdraw us.

RICHMOND:

What men of name are slain on either side?

DERBY:

John Duke of Norfolk, Walter Lord Ferrers,  
Sir Robert Brakenbury, and Sir William Brandon.

RICHMOND:

Inter their bodies as becomes their births:  
Proclaim a pardon to the soldiers fled  
That in submission will return to us:  
And then, as we have ta'en the sacrament,  
We will unite the white rose and the red:  
Smile heaven upon this fair conjunction,  
That long have frown'd upon their enmity!  
What traitor hears me, and says not amen?  
England hath long been mad, and scarr'd herself;  
The brother blindly shed the brother's blood,  
The father rashly slaughter'd his own son,  
The son, compell'd, been butcher to the sire:  
All this divided York and Lancaster,  
Divided in their dire division,  
O, now, let Richmond and Elizabeth,  
The true succeeders of each royal house,  
By God's fair ordinance conjoin together!  
And let their heirs, God, if thy will be so.  
Enrich the time to come with smooth-faced peace,  
With smiling plenty and fair prosperous days!  
Abate the edge of traitors, gracious Lord,  
That would reduce these bloody days again,  
And make poor England weep in streams of blood!  
Let them not live to taste this land's increase  
That would with treason wound this fair land's peace!  
Now civil wounds are stopp'd, peace lives again:  
That she may long live here, God say amen!

KING RICHARD II:

Old John of Gaunt, time-honour'd Lancaster,

Hast thou, according to thy oath and band,  
Brought hither Henry Hereford thy bold son,  
Here to make good the boisterous late appeal,  
Which then our leisure would not let us hear,  
Against the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?

JOHN OF GAUNT:  
I have, my liege.

KING RICHARD II:  
Tell me, moreover, hast thou sounded him,  
If he appeal the duke on ancient malice;  
Or worthily, as a good subject should,  
On some known ground of treachery in him?

JOHN OF GAUNT:  
As near as I could sift him on that argument,  
On some apparent danger seen in him  
Aim'd at your highness, no inveterate malice.

KING RICHARD II:  
Then call them to our presence; face to face,  
And frowning brow to brow, ourselves will hear  
The accuser and the accused freely speak:  
High-stomach'd are they both, and full of ire,  
In rage deaf as the sea, hasty as fire.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:  
Many years of happy days befall  
My gracious sovereign, my most loving liege!

THOMAS MOWBRAY:  
Each day still better other's happiness;  
Until the heavens, envying earth's good hap,  
Add an immortal title to your crown!

KING RICHARD II:  
We thank you both: yet one but flatters us,  
As well appeareth by the cause you come;  
Namely to appeal each other of high treason.  
Cousin of Hereford, what dost thou object  
Against the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:  
First, heaven be the record to my speech!  
In the devotion of a subject's love,  
Tendering the precious safety of my prince,  
And free from other misbegotten hate,  
Come I appellant to this princely presence.  
Now, Thomas Mowbray, do I turn to thee,

And mark my greeting well; for what I speak  
My body shall make good upon this earth,  
Or my divine soul answer it in heaven.  
Thou art a traitor and a miscreant,  
Too good to be so and too bad to live,  
Since the more fair and crystal is the sky,  
The uglier seem the clouds that in it fly.  
Once more, the more to aggravate the note,  
With a foul traitor's name stuff I thy throat;  
And wish, so please my sovereign, ere I move,  
What my tongue speaks my right drawn sword may prove.

THOMAS MOWBRAY:

Let not my cold words here accuse my zeal:  
'Tis not the trial of a woman's war,  
The bitter clamour of two eager tongues,  
Can arbitrate this cause betwixt us twain;  
The blood is hot that must be cool'd for this:  
Yet can I not of such tame patience boast  
As to be hush'd and nought at all to say:  
First, the fair reverence of your highness curbs me  
From giving reins and spurs to my free speech;  
Which else would post until it had return'd  
These terms of treason doubled down his throat.  
Setting aside his high blood's royalty,  
And let him be no kinsman to my liege,  
I do defy him, and I spit at him;  
Call him a slanderous coward and a villain:  
Which to maintain I would allow him odds,  
And meet him, were I tied to run afoot  
Even to the frozen ridges of the Alps,  
Or any other ground inhabitable,  
Where ever Englishman durst set his foot.  
Mean time let this defend my loyalty,  
By all my hopes, most falsely doth he lie.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Pale trembling coward, there I throw my gage,  
Disclaiming here the kindred of the king,  
And lay aside my high blood's royalty,  
Which fear, not reverence, makes thee to except.  
If guilty dread have left thee so much strength  
As to take up mine honour's pawn, then stoop:  
By that and all the rites of knighthood else,  
Will I make good against thee, arm to arm,  
What I have spoke, or thou canst worse devise.

THOMAS MOWBRAY:

I take it up; and by that sword I swear  
Which gently laid my knighthood on my shoulder,

I'll answer thee in any fair degree,  
Or chivalrous design of knightly trial:  
And when I mount, alive may I not light,  
If I be traitor or unjustly fight!

KING RICHARD II:

What doth our cousin lay to Mowbray's charge?  
It must be great that can inherit us  
So much as of a thought of ill in him.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Look, what I speak, my life shall prove it true;  
That Mowbray hath received eight thousand nobles  
In name of lendings for your highness' soldiers,  
The which he hath detain'd for lewd employments,  
Like a false traitor and injurious villain.  
Besides I say and will in battle prove,  
Or here or elsewhere to the furthest verge  
That ever was survey'd by English eye,  
That all the treasons for these eighteen years  
Complotted and contrived in this land  
Fetch from false Mowbray their first head and spring.  
Further I say and further will maintain  
Upon his bad life to make all this good,  
That he did plot the Duke of Gloucester's death,  
Suggest his soon-believing adversaries,  
And consequently, like a traitor coward,  
Sluic'd out his innocent soul through streams of blood:  
Which blood, like sacrificing Abel's, cries,  
Even from the tongueless caverns of the earth,  
To me for justice and rough chastisement;  
And, by the glorious worth of my descent,  
This arm shall do it, or this life be spent.

KING RICHARD II:

How high a pitch his resolution soars!  
Thomas of Norfolk, what say'st thou to this?

THOMAS MOWBRAY:

O, let my sovereign turn away his face  
And bid his ears a little while be deaf,  
Till I have told this slander of his blood,  
How God and good men hate so foul a liar.

KING RICHARD II:

Mowbray, impartial are our eyes and ears:  
Were he my brother, nay, my kingdom's heir,  
As he is but my father's brother's son,  
Now, by my sceptre's awe, I make a vow,  
Such neighbour nearness to our sacred blood

Should nothing privilege him, nor partialize  
The unstooping firmness of my upright soul:  
He is our subject, Mowbray; so art thou:  
Free speech and fearless I to thee allow.

THOMAS MOWBRAY:

Then, Bolingbroke, as low as to thy heart,  
Through the false passage of thy throat, thou liest.  
Three parts of that receipt I had for Calais  
Disbursed I duly to his highness' soldiers;  
The other part reserved I by consent,  
For that my sovereign liege was in my debt  
Upon remainder of a dear account,  
Since last I went to France to fetch his queen:  
Now swallow down that lie. For Gloucester's death,  
I slew him not; but to my own disgrace  
Neglected my sworn duty in that case.  
For you, my noble Lord of Lancaster,  
The honourable father to my foe  
Once did I lay an ambush for your life,  
A trespass that doth vex my grieved soul  
But ere I last received the sacrament  
I did confess it, and exactly begg'd  
Your grace's pardon, and I hope I had it.  
This is my fault: as for the rest appeall'd,  
It issues from the rancour of a villain,  
A recreant and most degenerate traitor  
Which in myself I boldly will defend;  
And interchangeably hurl down my gage  
Upon this overweening traitor's foot,  
To prove myself a loyal gentleman  
Even in the best blood chamber'd in his bosom.  
In haste whereof, most heartily I pray  
Your highness to assign our trial day.

KING RICHARD II:

Wrath-kindled gentlemen, be ruled by me;  
Let's purge this choler without letting blood:  
This we prescribe, though no physician;  
Deep malice makes too deep incision;  
Forget, forgive; conclude and be agreed;  
Our doctors say this is no month to bleed.  
Good uncle, let this end where it begun;  
We'll calm the Duke of Norfolk, you your son.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

To be a make-peace shall become my age:  
Throw down, my son, the Duke of Norfolk's gage.

KING RICHARD II:

And, Norfolk, throw down his.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

When, Harry, when?

Obedience bids I should not bid again.

KING RICHARD II:

Norfolk, throw down, we bid; there is no boot.

THOMAS MOWBRAY:

Myself I throw, dread sovereign, at thy foot.

My life thou shalt command, but not my shame:

The one my duty owes; but my fair name,

Despite of death that lives upon my grave,

To dark dishonour's use thou shalt not have.

I am disgraced, impeach'd and baffled here,

Pierced to the soul with slander's venom'd spear,

The which no balm can cure but his heart-blood

Which breathed this poison.

KING RICHARD II:

Rage must be withstood:

Give me his gage: lions make leopards tame.

THOMAS MOWBRAY:

Yea, but not change his spots: take but my shame.

And I resign my gage. My dear dear lord,

The purest treasure mortal times afford

Is spotless reputation: that away,

Men are but gilded loam or painted clay.

A jewel in a ten-times-barr'd-up chest

Is a bold spirit in a loyal breast.

Mine honour is my life; both grow in one:

Take honour from me, and my life is done:

Then, dear my liege, mine honour let me try;

In that I live and for that will I die.

KING RICHARD II:

Cousin, throw up your gage; do you begin.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

O, God defend my soul from such deep sin!

Shall I seem crest-fall'n in my father's sight?

Or with pale beggar-fear impeach my height

Before this out-dared dastard? Ere my tongue

Shall wound my honour with such feeble wrong,

Or sound so base a parle, my teeth shall tear

The slavish motive of recanting fear,

And spit it bleeding in his high disgrace,

Where shame doth harbour, even in Mowbray's face.

KING RICHARD II:

We were not born to sue, but to command;  
Which since we cannot do to make you friends,  
Be ready, as your lives shall answer it,  
At Coventry, upon Saint Lambert's day:  
There shall your swords and lances arbitrate  
The swelling difference of your settled hate:  
Since we can not atone you, we shall see  
Justice design the victor's chivalry.  
Lord marshal, command our officers at arms  
Be ready to direct these home alarms.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

Alas, the part I had in Woodstock's blood  
Doth more solicit me than your exclams,  
To stir against the butchers of his life!  
But since correction lieth in those hands  
Which made the fault that we cannot correct,  
Put we our quarrel to the will of heaven;  
Who, when they see the hours ripe on earth,  
Will rain hot vengeance on offenders' heads.

DUCHESS:

Finds brotherhood in thee no sharper spur?  
Hath love in thy old blood no living fire?  
Edward's seven sons, whereof thyself art one,  
Were as seven vials of his sacred blood,  
Or seven fair branches springing from one root:  
Some of those seven are dried by nature's course,  
Some of those branches by the Destinies cut;  
But Thomas, my dear lord, my life, my Gloucester,  
One vial full of Edward's sacred blood,  
One flourishing branch of his most royal root,  
Is crack'd, and all the precious liquor spilt,  
Is hack'd down, and his summer leaves all faded,  
By envy's hand and murder's bloody axe.  
Ah, Gaunt, his blood was thine! that bed, that womb,  
That metal, that self-mould, that fashion'd thee  
Made him a man; and though thou livest and breathest,  
Yet art thou slain in him: thou dost consent  
In some large measure to thy father's death,  
In that thou seest thy wretched brother die,  
Who was the model of thy father's life.  
Call it not patience, Gaunt; it is despair:  
In suffering thus thy brother to be slaughter'd,  
Thou showest the naked pathway to thy life,  
Teaching stern murder how to butcher thee:  
That which in mean men we intitle patience  
Is pale cold cowardice in noble breasts.



What shall I say? to safeguard thine own life,  
The best way is to venge my Gloucester's death.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

God's is the quarrel; for God's substitute,  
His deputy anointed in His sight,  
Hath caused his death: the which if wrongfully,  
Let heaven revenge; for I may never lift  
An angry arm against His minister.

DUCHESS:

Where then, alas, may I complain myself?

JOHN OF GAUNT:

To God, the widow's champion and defence.

DUCHESS:

Why, then, I will. Farewell, old Gaunt.  
Thou goest to Coventry, there to behold  
Our cousin Hereford and fell Mowbray fight:  
O, sit my husband's wrongs on Hereford's spear,  
That it may enter butcher Mowbray's breast!  
Or, if misfortune miss the first career,  
Be Mowbray's sins so heavy in his bosom,  
They may break his foaming courser's back,  
And throw the rider headlong in the lists,  
A caitiff recreant to my cousin Hereford!  
Farewell, old Gaunt: thy sometimes brother's wife  
With her companion grief must end her life.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

Sister, farewell; I must to Coventry:  
As much good stay with thee as go with me!

DUCHESS:

Yet one word more: grief boundeth where it falls,  
Not with the empty hollowness, but weight:  
I take my leave before I have begun,  
For sorrow ends not when it seemeth done.  
Commend me to thy brother, Edmund York.  
Lo, this is all:--nay, yet depart not so;  
Though this be all, do not so quickly go;  
I shall remember more. Bid him--ah, what?--  
With all good speed at Plashy visit me.  
Alack, and what shall good old York there see  
But empty lodgings and unfurnish'd walls,  
Unpeopled offices, untrodden stones?  
And what hear there for welcome but my groans?  
Therefore commend me; let him not come there,  
To seek out sorrow that dwells every where.

Desolate, desolate, will I hence and die:  
The last leave of thee takes my weeping eye.

Lord Marshal:  
My Lord Aumerle, is Harry Hereford arm'd?

DUKE OF AUMERLE:  
Yea, at all points; and longs to enter in.

Lord Marshal:  
The Duke of Norfolk, sprightly and bold,  
Stays but the summons of the appellant's trumpet.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:  
Why, then, the champions are prepared, and stay  
For nothing but his majesty's approach.

KING RICHARD II:  
Marshal, demand of yonder champion  
The cause of his arrival here in arms:  
Ask him his name and orderly proceed  
To swear him in the justice of his cause.

Lord Marshal:  
In God's name and the king's, say who thou art  
And why thou comest thus knightly clad in arms,  
Against what man thou comest, and what thy quarrel:  
Speak truly, on thy knighthood and thy oath;  
As so defend thee heaven and thy valour!

THOMAS MOWBRAY:  
My name is Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk;  
Who hither come engaged by my oath--  
Which God defend a knight should violate!--  
Both to defend my loyalty and truth  
To God, my king and my succeeding issue,  
Against the Duke of Hereford that appeals me  
And, by the grace of God and this mine arm,  
To prove him, in defending of myself,  
A traitor to my God, my king, and me:  
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!

KING RICHARD II:  
Marshal, ask yonder knight in arms,  
Both who he is and why he cometh hither  
Thus plated in habiliments of war,  
And formally, according to our law,  
Depose him in the justice of his cause.

Lord Marshal:

What is thy name? and wherefore comest thou hither,  
Before King Richard in his royal lists?  
Against whom comest thou? and what's thy quarrel?  
Speak like a true knight, so defend thee heaven!

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby  
Am I; who ready here do stand in arms,  
To prove, by God's grace and my body's valour,  
In lists, on Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk,  
That he is a traitor, foul and dangerous,  
To God of heaven, King Richard and to me;  
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!

Lord Marshal:

On pain of death, no person be so bold  
Or daring-hardy as to touch the lists,  
Except the marshal and such officers  
Appointed to direct these fair designs.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Lord marshal, let me kiss my sovereign's hand,  
And bow my knee before his majesty:  
For Mowbray and myself are like two men  
That vow a long and weary pilgrimage;  
Then let us take a ceremonious leave  
And loving farewell of our several friends.

Lord Marshal:

The appellant in all duty greets your highness,  
And craves to kiss your hand and take his leave.

KING RICHARD II:

We will descend and fold him in our arms.  
Cousin of Hereford, as thy cause is right,  
So be thy fortune in this royal fight!  
Farewell, my blood; which if to-day thou shed,  
Lament we may, but not revenge thee dead.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

O let no noble eye profane a tear  
For me, if I be gored with Mowbray's spear:  
As confident as is the falcon's flight  
Against a bird, do I with Mowbray fight.  
My loving lord, I take my leave of you;  
Of you, my noble cousin, Lord Aumerle;  
Not sick, although I have to do with death,  
But lusty, young, and cheerly drawing breath.  
Lo, as at English feasts, so I regreet  
The daintiest last, to make the end most sweet:

O thou, the earthly author of my blood,  
Whose youthful spirit, in me regenerate,  
Doth with a twofold vigour lift me up  
To reach at victory above my head,  
Add proof unto mine armour with thy prayers;  
And with thy blessings steel my lance's point,  
That it may enter Mowbray's waxen coat,  
And furbish new the name of John a Gaunt,  
Even in the lusty havior of his son.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

God in thy good cause make thee prosperous!  
Be swift like lightning in the execution;  
And let thy blows, doubly redoubled,  
Fall like amazing thunder on the casque  
Of thy adverse pernicious enemy:  
Rouse up thy youthful blood, be valiant and live.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Mine innocency and Saint George to thrive!

THOMAS MOWBRAY:

However God or fortune cast my lot,  
There lives or dies, true to King Richard's throne,  
A loyal, just and upright gentleman:  
Never did captive with a freer heart  
Cast off his chains of bondage and embrace  
His golden uncontroll'd enfranchisement,  
More than my dancing soul doth celebrate  
This feast of battle with mine adversary.  
Most mighty liege, and my companion peers,  
Take from my mouth the wish of happy years:  
As gentle and as jocund as to jest  
Go I to fight: truth hath a quiet breast.

KING RICHARD II:

Farewell, my lord: securely I espy  
Virtue with valour couched in thine eye.  
Order the trial, marshal, and begin.

Lord Marshal:

Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby,  
Receive thy lance; and God defend the right!

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Strong as a tower in hope, I cry amen.

Lord Marshal:

Go bear this lance to Thomas, Duke of Norfolk.

First Herald:

Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby,  
Stands here for God, his sovereign and himself,  
On pain to be found false and recreant,  
To prove the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray,  
A traitor to his God, his king and him;  
And dares him to set forward to the fight.

Second Herald:

Here standeth Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk,  
On pain to be found false and recreant,  
Both to defend himself and to approve  
Henry of Hereford, Lancaster, and Derby,  
To God, his sovereign and to him disloyal;  
Courageously and with a free desire  
Attending but the signal to begin.

Lord Marshal:

Sound, trumpets; and set forward, combatants.  
Stay, the king hath thrown his warder down.

KING RICHARD II:

Let them lay by their helmets and their spears,  
And both return back to their chairs again:  
Withdraw with us: and let the trumpets sound  
While we return these dukes what we decree.  
Draw near,  
And list what with our council we have done.  
For that our kingdom's earth should not be soil'd  
With that dear blood which it hath fostered;  
And for our eyes do hate the dire aspect  
Of civil wounds plough'd up with neighbours' sword;  
And for we think the eagle-winged pride  
Of sky-aspiring and ambitious thoughts,  
With rival-hating envy, set on you  
To wake our peace, which in our country's cradle  
Draws the sweet infant breath of gentle sleep;  
Which so roused up with boisterous untuned drums,  
With harsh resounding trumpets' dreadful bray,  
And grating shock of wrathful iron arms,  
Might from our quiet confines fright fair peace  
And make us wade even in our kindred's blood,  
Therefore, we banish you our territories:  
You, cousin Hereford, upon pain of life,  
Till twice five summers have enrich'd our fields  
Shall not regret our fair dominions,  
But tread the stranger paths of banishment.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Your will be done: this must my comfort be,

Sun that warms you here shall shine on me;  
And those his golden beams to you here lent  
Shall point on me and gild my banishment.

KING RICHARD II:

Norfolk, for thee remains a heavier doom,  
Which I with some unwillingness pronounce:  
The sly slow hours shall not determinate  
The dateless limit of thy dear exile;  
The hopeless word of 'never to return'  
Breathe I against thee, upon pain of life.

THOMAS MOWBRAY:

A heavy sentence, my most sovereign liege,  
And all unlook'd for from your highness' mouth:  
A dearer merit, not so deep a maim  
As to be cast forth in the common air,  
Have I deserved at your highness' hands.  
The language I have learn'd these forty years,  
My native English, now I must forego:  
And now my tongue's use is to me no more  
Than an unstringed viol or a harp,  
Or like a cunning instrument cased up,  
Or, being open, put into his hands  
That knows no touch to tune the harmony:  
Within my mouth you have engaol'd my tongue,  
Doubly portcullis'd with my teeth and lips;  
And dull unfeeling barren ignorance  
Is made my gaoler to attend on me.  
I am too old to fawn upon a nurse,  
Too far in years to be a pupil now:  
What is thy sentence then but speechless death,  
Which robs my tongue from breathing native breath?

KING RICHARD II:

It boots thee not to be compassionate:  
After our sentence plaining comes too late.

THOMAS MOWBRAY:

Then thus I turn me from my country's light,  
To dwell in solemn shades of endless night.

KING RICHARD II:

Return again, and take an oath with thee.  
Lay on our royal sword your banish'd hands;  
Swear by the duty that you owe to God--  
Our part therein we banish with yourselves--  
To keep the oath that we administer:  
You never shall, so help you truth and God!  
Embrace each other's love in banishment;

Nor never look upon each other's face;  
Nor never write, regret, nor reconcile  
This luring tempest of your home-bred hate;  
Nor never by advised purpose meet  
To plot, contrive, or complot any ill  
'Gainst us, our state, our subjects, or our land.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:  
I swear.

THOMAS MOWBRAY:  
And I, to keep all this.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:  
Norfolk, so far as to mine enemy:--  
By this time, had the king permitted us,  
One of our souls had wander'd in the air.  
Banish'd this frail sepulchre of our flesh,  
As now our flesh is banish'd from this land:  
Confess thy treasons ere thou fly the realm;  
Since thou hast far to go, bear not along  
The clogging burthen of a guilty soul.

THOMAS MOWBRAY:  
No, Bolingbroke: if ever I were traitor,  
My name be blotted from the book of life,  
And I from heaven banish'd as from hence!  
But what thou art, God, thou, and I do know;  
And all too soon, I fear, the king shall rue.  
Farewell, my liege. Now no way can I stray;  
Save back to England, all the world's my way.

KING RICHARD II:  
Uncle, even in the glasses of thine eyes  
I see thy grieved heart: thy sad aspect  
Hath from the number of his banish'd years  
Pluck'd four away.  
Six frozen winter spent,  
Return with welcome home from banishment.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:  
How long a time lies in one little word!  
Four lagging winters and four wanton springs  
End in a word: such is the breath of kings.

JOHN OF GAUNT:  
I thank my liege, that in regard of me  
He shortens four years of my son's exile:  
But little vantage shall I reap thereby;  
For, ere the six years that he hath to spend

Can change their moons and bring their times about  
My oil-dried lamp and time-bewasted light  
Shall be extinct with age and endless night;  
My inch of taper will be burnt and done,  
And blindfold death not let me see my son.

KING RICHARD II:  
Why uncle, thou hast many years to live.

JOHN OF GAUNT:  
But not a minute, king, that thou canst give:  
Shorten my days thou canst with sullen sorrow,  
And pluck nights from me, but not lend a morrow;  
Thou canst help time to furrow me with age,  
But stop no wrinkle in his pilgrimage;  
Thy word is current with him for my death,  
But dead, thy kingdom cannot buy my breath.

KING RICHARD II:  
Thy son is banish'd upon good advice,  
Whereto thy tongue a party-verdict gave:  
Why at our justice seem'st thou then to lour?

JOHN OF GAUNT:  
Things sweet to taste prove in digestion sour.  
You urged me as a judge; but I had rather  
You would have bid me argue like a father.  
O, had it been a stranger, not my child,  
To smooth his fault I should have been more mild:  
A partial slander sought I to avoid,  
And in the sentence my own life destroy'd.  
Alas, I look'd when some of you should say,  
I was too strict to make mine own away;  
But you gave leave to my unwilling tongue  
Against my will to do myself this wrong.

KING RICHARD II:  
Cousin, farewell; and, uncle, bid him so:  
Six years we banish him, and he shall go.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:  
Cousin, farewell: what presence must not know,  
From where you do remain let paper show.

Lord Marshal:  
My lord, no leave take I; for I will ride,  
As far as land will let me, by your side.

JOHN OF GAUNT:  
O, to what purpose dost thou hoard thy words,



That thou return'st no greeting to thy friends?

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

I have too few to take my leave of you,  
When the tongue's office should be prodigal  
To breathe the abundant dolour of the heart.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

Thy grief is but thy absence for a time.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Joy absent, grief is present for that time.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

What is six winters? they are quickly gone.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

To men in joy; but grief makes one hour ten.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

Call it a travel that thou takest for pleasure.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

My heart will sigh when I miscall it so,  
Which finds it an inforced pilgrimage.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

The sullen passage of thy weary steps  
Esteem as foil wherein thou art to set  
The precious jewel of thy home return.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Nay, rather, every tedious stride I make  
Will but remember me what a deal of world  
I wander from the jewels that I love.  
Must I not serve a long apprenticeship  
To foreign passages, and in the end,  
Having my freedom, boast of nothing else  
But that I was a journeyman to grief?

JOHN OF GAUNT:

All places that the eye of heaven visits  
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.  
Teach thy necessity to reason thus;  
There is no virtue like necessity.  
Think not the king did banish thee,  
But thou the king. Woe doth the heavier sit,  
Where it perceives it is but faintly borne.  
Go, say I sent thee forth to purchase honour  
And not the king exiled thee; or suppose

Devouring pestilence hangs in our air  
And thou art flying to a fresher clime:  
Look, what thy soul holds dear, imagine it  
To lie that way thou go'st, not whence thou comest:  
Suppose the singing birds musicians,  
The grass whereon thou tread'st the presence strew'd,  
The flowers fair ladies, and thy steps no more  
Than a delightful measure or a dance;  
For gnarling sorrow hath less power to bite  
The man that mocks at it and sets it light.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

O, who can hold a fire in his hand  
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?  
Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite  
By bare imagination of a feast?  
Or wallow naked in December snow  
By thinking on fantastic summer's heat?  
O, no! the apprehension of the good  
Gives but the greater feeling to the worse:  
Fell sorrow's tooth doth never rankle more  
Than when he bites, but lanceth not the sore.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

Come, come, my son, I'll bring thee on thy way:  
Had I thy youth and cause, I would not stay.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Then, England's ground, farewell; sweet soil, adieu;  
My mother, and my nurse, that bears me yet!  
Where'er I wander, boast of this I can,  
Though banish'd, yet a trueborn Englishman.

KING RICHARD II:

We did observe. Cousin Aumerle,  
How far brought you high Hereford on his way?

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

I brought high Hereford, if you call him so,  
But to the next highway, and there I left him.

KING RICHARD II:

And say, what store of parting tears were shed?

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Faith, none for me; except the north-east wind,  
Which then blew bitterly against our faces,  
Awaked the sleeping rheum, and so by chance  
Did grace our hollow parting with a tear.

KING RICHARD II:

What said our cousin when you parted with him?

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

'Farewell:'

And, for my heart disdained that my tongue  
Should so profane the word, that taught me craft  
To counterfeit oppression of such grief  
That words seem'd buried in my sorrow's grave.  
Marry, would the word 'farewell' have lengthen'd hours  
And added years to his short banishment,  
He should have had a volume of farewells;  
But since it would not, he had none of me.

KING RICHARD II:

He is our cousin, cousin; but 'tis doubt,  
When time shall call him home from banishment,  
Whether our kinsman come to see his friends.  
Ourself and Bushy, Bagot here and Green  
Observed his courtship to the common people;  
How he did seem to dive into their hearts  
With humble and familiar courtesy,  
What reverence he did throw away on slaves,  
Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles  
And patient underbearing of his fortune,  
As 'twere to banish their affects with him.  
Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench;  
A brace of draymen bid God speed him well  
And had the tribute of his supple knee,  
With 'Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends;'  
As were our England in reversion his,  
And he our subjects' next degree in hope.

GREEN:

Well, he is gone; and with him go these thoughts.  
Now for the rebels which stand out in Ireland,  
Expedient manage must be made, my liege,  
Ere further leisure yield them further means  
For their advantage and your highness' loss.

KING RICHARD II:

We will ourself in person to this war:  
And, for our coffers, with too great a court  
And liberal largess, are grown somewhat light,  
We are enforced to farm our royal realm;  
The revenue whereof shall furnish us  
For our affairs in hand: if that come short,  
Our substitutes at home shall have blank charters;  
Whereunto, when they shall know what men are rich,  
They shall subscribe them for large sums of gold

And send them after to supply our wants;  
For we will make for Ireland presently.  
Bushy, what news?

BUSHY:  
Old John of Gaunt is grievous sick, my lord,  
Suddenly taken; and hath sent post haste  
To entreat your majesty to visit him.

KING RICHARD II:  
Where lies he?

BUSHY:  
At Ely House.

KING RICHARD II:  
Now put it, God, in the physician's mind  
To help him to his grave immediately!  
The lining of his coffers shall make coats  
To deck our soldiers for these Irish wars.  
Come, gentlemen, let's all go visit him:  
Pray God we may make haste, and come too late!

All:  
Amen.

JOHN OF GAUNT:  
Will the king come, that I may breathe my last  
In wholesome counsel to his unstaid youth?

DUKE OF YORK:  
Vex not yourself, nor strive not with your breath;  
For all in vain comes counsel to his ear.

JOHN OF GAUNT:  
O, but they say the tongues of dying men  
Enforce attention like deep harmony:  
Where words are scarce, they are seldom spent in vain,  
For they breathe truth that breathe their words in pain.  
He that no more must say is listen'd more  
Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose;  
More are men's ends mark'd than their lives before:  
The setting sun, and music at the close,  
As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last,  
Writ in remembrance more than things long past:  
Though Richard my life's counsel would not hear,  
My death's sad tale may yet undeaf his ear.

DUKE OF YORK:  
No; it is stopp'd with other flattering sounds,

As praises, of whose taste the wise are fond,  
Lascivious metres, to whose venom sound  
The open ear of youth doth always listen;  
Report of fashions in proud Italy,  
Whose manners still our tardy apish nation  
Limps after in base imitation.  
Where doth the world thrust forth a vanity--  
So it be new, there's no respect how vile--  
That is not quickly buzzed into his ears?  
Then all too late comes counsel to be heard,  
Where will doth mutiny with wit's regard.  
Direct not him whose way himself will choose:  
'Tis breath thou lack'st, and that breath wilt thou lose.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

Methinks I am a prophet new inspired  
And thus expiring do foretell of him:  
His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last,  
For violent fires soon burn out themselves;  
Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short;  
He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes;  
With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder:  
Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,  
Consuming means, soon preys upon itself.  
This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise,  
This fortress built by Nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war,  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands,  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,  
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,  
Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth,  
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,  
For Christian service and true chivalry,  
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry,  
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son,  
This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,  
Dear for her reputation through the world,  
Is now leased out, I die pronouncing it,  
Like to a tenement or pelting farm:  
England, bound in with the triumphant sea  
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege  
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,  
With inky blots and rotten parchment bonds:  
That England, that was wont to conquer others,

Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.  
Ah, would the scandal vanish with my life,  
How happy then were my ensuing death!

DUKE OF YORK:

The king is come: deal mildly with his youth;  
For young hot colts being raged do rage the more.

QUEEN:

How fares our noble uncle, Lancaster?

KING RICHARD II:

What comfort, man? how is't with aged Gaunt?

JOHN OF GAUNT:

O how that name befits my composition!  
Old Gaunt indeed, and gaunt in being old:  
Within me grief hath kept a tedious fast;  
And who abstains from meat that is not gaunt?  
For sleeping England long time have I watch'd;  
Watching breeds leanness, leanness is all gaunt:  
The pleasure that some fathers feed upon,  
Is my strict fast; I mean, my children's looks;  
And therein fasting, hast thou made me gaunt:  
Gaunt am I for the grave, gaunt as a grave,  
Whose hollow womb inherits nought but bones.

KING RICHARD II:

Can sick men play so nicely with their names?

JOHN OF GAUNT:

No, misery makes sport to mock itself:  
Since thou dost seek to kill my name in me,  
I mock my name, great king, to flatter thee.

KING RICHARD II:

Should dying men flatter with those that live?

JOHN OF GAUNT:

No, no, men living flatter those that die.

KING RICHARD II:

Thou, now a-dying, say'st thou flatterest me.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

O, no! thou diest, though I the sicker be.

KING RICHARD II:

I am in health, I breathe, and see thee ill.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

Now He that made me knows I see thee ill;  
Ill in myself to see, and in thee seeing ill.  
Thy death-bed is no lesser than thy land  
Wherein thou liest in reputation sick;  
And thou, too careless patient as thou art,  
Commit'st thy anointed body to the cure  
Of those physicians that first wounded thee:  
A thousand flatterers sit within thy crown,  
Whose compass is no bigger than thy head;  
And yet, incaged in so small a verge,  
The waste is no whit lesser than thy land.  
O, had thy grandsire with a prophet's eye  
Seen how his son's son should destroy his sons,  
From forth thy reach he would have laid thy shame,  
Deposing thee before thou wert possess'd,  
Which art possess'd now to depose thyself.  
Why, cousin, wert thou regent of the world,  
It were a shame to let this land by lease;  
But for thy world enjoying but this land,  
Is it not more than shame to shame it so?  
Landlord of England art thou now, not king:  
Thy state of law is bondsman to the law; And thou--

KING RICHARD II:

A lunatic lean-witted fool,  
Presuming on an ague's privilege,  
Darest with thy frozen admonition  
Make pale our cheek, chasing the royal blood  
With fury from his native residence.  
Now, by my seat's right royal majesty,  
Wert thou not brother to great Edward's son,  
This tongue that runs so roundly in thy head  
Should run thy head from thy unreverent shoulders.

JOHN OF GAUNT:

O, spare me not, my brother Edward's son,  
For that I was his father Edward's son;  
That blood already, like the pelican,  
Hast thou tapp'd out and drunkenly caroused:  
My brother Gloucester, plain well-meaning soul,  
Whom fair befall in heaven 'mongst happy souls!  
May be a precedent and witness good  
That thou respect'st not spilling Edward's blood:  
Join with the present sickness that I have;  
And thy unkindness be like crooked age,  
To crop at once a too long wither'd flower.  
Live in thy shame, but die not shame with thee!  
These words hereafter thy tormentors be!  
Convey me to my bed, then to my grave:

Love they to live that love and honour have.

KING RICHARD II:

And let them die that age and sullens have;  
For both hast thou, and both become the grave.

DUKE OF YORK:

I do beseech your majesty, impute his words  
To wayward sickliness and age in him:  
He loves you, on my life, and holds you dear  
As Harry Duke of Hereford, were he here.

KING RICHARD II:

Right, you say true: as Hereford's love, so his;  
As theirs, so mine; and all be as it is.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

My liege, old Gaunt commends him to your majesty.

KING RICHARD II:

What says he?

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Nay, nothing; all is said  
His tongue is now a stringless instrument;  
Words, life and all, old Lancaster hath spent.

DUKE OF YORK:

Be York the next that must be bankrupt so!  
Though death be poor, it ends a mortal woe.

KING RICHARD II:

The ripest fruit first falls, and so doth he;  
His time is spent, our pilgrimage must be.  
So much for that. Now for our Irish wars:  
We must supplant those rough rug-headed kerns,  
Which live like venom where no venom else  
But only they have privilege to live.  
And for these great affairs do ask some charge,  
Towards our assistance we do seize to us  
The plate, corn, revenues and moveables,  
Whereof our uncle Gaunt did stand possess'd.

DUKE OF YORK:

How long shall I be patient? ah, how long  
Shall tender duty make me suffer wrong?  
Not Gloucester's death, nor Hereford's banishment  
Not Gaunt's rebukes, nor England's private wrongs,  
Nor the prevention of poor Bolingbroke  
About his marriage, nor my own disgrace,



Have ever made me sour my patient cheek,  
Or bend one wrinkle on my sovereign's face.  
I am the last of noble Edward's sons,  
Of whom thy father, Prince of Wales, was first:  
In war was never lion raged more fierce,  
In peace was never gentle lamb more mild,  
Than was that young and princely gentleman.  
His face thou hast, for even so look'd he,  
Accomplish'd with the number of thy hours;  
But when he frown'd, it was against the French  
And not against his friends; his noble hand  
Did will what he did spend and spent not that  
Which his triumphant father's hand had won;  
His hands were guilty of no kindred blood,  
But bloody with the enemies of his kin.  
O Richard! York is too far gone with grief,  
Or else he never would compare between.

KING RICHARD II:  
Why, uncle, what's the matter?

DUKE OF YORK:  
O my liege,  
Pardon me, if you please; if not, I, pleased  
Not to be pardon'd, am content withal.  
Seek you to seize and gripe into your hands  
The royalties and rights of banish'd Hereford?  
Is not Gaunt dead, and doth not Hereford live?  
Was not Gaunt just, and is not Harry true?  
Did not the one deserve to have an heir?  
Is not his heir a well-deserving son?  
Take Hereford's rights away, and take from Time  
His charters and his customary rights;  
Let not to-morrow then ensue to-day;  
Be not thyself; for how art thou a king  
But by fair sequence and succession?  
Now, afore God--God forbid I say true!--  
If you do wrongfully seize Hereford's rights,  
Call in the letters patent that he hath  
By his attorneys-general to sue  
His livery, and deny his offer'd homage,  
You pluck a thousand dangers on your head,  
You lose a thousand well-disposed hearts  
And prick my tender patience, to those thoughts  
Which honour and allegiance cannot think.

KING RICHARD II:  
Think what you will, we seize into our hands  
His plate, his goods, his money and his lands.

DUKE OF YORK:

I'll not be by the while: my liege, farewell:  
What will ensue hereof, there's none can tell;  
But by bad courses may be understood  
That their events can never fall out good.

KING RICHARD II:

Go, Bushy, to the Earl of Wiltshire straight:  
Bid him repair to us to Ely House  
To see this business. To-morrow next  
We will for Ireland; and 'tis time, I trow:  
And we create, in absence of ourself,  
Our uncle York lord governor of England;  
For he is just and always loved us well.  
Come on, our queen: to-morrow must we part;  
Be merry, for our time of stay is short

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Well, lords, the Duke of Lancaster is dead.

LORD ROSS:

And living too; for now his son is duke.

LORD WILLOUGHBY:

Barely in title, not in revenue.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Richly in both, if justice had her right.

LORD ROSS:

My heart is great; but it must break with silence,  
Ere't be disburden'd with a liberal tongue.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Nay, speak thy mind; and let him ne'er speak more  
That speaks thy words again to do thee harm!

LORD WILLOUGHBY:

Tends that thou wouldst speak to the Duke of Hereford?  
If it be so, out with it boldly, man;  
Quick is mine ear to hear of good towards him.

LORD ROSS:

No good at all that I can do for him;  
Unless you call it good to pity him,  
Bereft and gelded of his patrimony.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Now, afore God, 'tis shame such wrongs are borne  
In him, a royal prince, and many moe

Of noble blood in this declining land.  
The king is not himself, but basely led  
By flatterers; and what they will inform,  
Merely in hate, 'gainst any of us all,  
That will the king severely prosecute  
'Gainst us, our lives, our children, and our heirs.

LORD ROSS:

The commons hath he pill'd with grievous taxes,  
And quite lost their hearts: the nobles hath he fined  
For ancient quarrels, and quite lost their hearts.

LORD WILLOUGHBY:

And daily new exactions are devised,  
As blanks, benevolences, and I wot not what:  
But what, o' God's name, doth become of this?

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Wars have not wasted it, for warr'd he hath not,  
But basely yielded upon compromise  
That which his noble ancestors achieved with blows:  
More hath he spent in peace than they in wars.

LORD ROSS:

The Earl of Wiltshire hath the realm in farm.

LORD WILLOUGHBY:

The king's grown bankrupt, like a broken man.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Reproach and dissolution hangeth over him.

LORD ROSS:

He hath not money for these Irish wars,  
His burthenous taxations notwithstanding,  
But by the robbing of the banish'd duke.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

His noble kinsman: most degenerate king!  
But, lords, we hear this fearful tempest sing,  
Yet see no shelter to avoid the storm;  
We see the wind sit sore upon our sails,  
And yet we strike not, but securely perish.

LORD ROSS:

We see the very wreck that we must suffer;  
And unavoided is the danger now,  
For suffering so the causes of our wreck.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Not so; even through the hollow eyes of death  
I spy life peering; but I dare not say  
How near the tidings of our comfort is.

LORD WILLOUGHBY:

Nay, let us share thy thoughts, as thou dost ours.

LORD ROSS:

Be confident to speak, Northumberland:  
We three are but thyself; and, speaking so,  
Thy words are but as thoughts; therefore, be bold.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Then thus: I have from Port le Blanc, a bay  
In Brittany, received intelligence  
That Harry Duke of Hereford, Rainold Lord Cobham,  
That late broke from the Duke of Exeter,  
His brother, Archbishop late of Canterbury,  
Sir Thomas Erpingham, Sir John Ramston,  
Sir John Norbery, Sir Robert Waterton and Francis Quoint,  
All these well furnish'd by the Duke of Bretagne  
With eight tall ships, three thousand men of war,  
Are making hither with all due expedience  
And shortly mean to touch our northern shore:  
Perhaps they had ere this, but that they stay  
The first departing of the king for Ireland.  
If then we shall shake off our slavish yoke,  
Imp out our drooping country's broken wing,  
Redeem from broking pawn the blemish'd crown,  
Wipe off the dust that hides our sceptre's gilt  
And make high majesty look like itself,  
Away with me in post to Ravenspurgh;  
But if you faint, as fearing to do so,  
Stay and be secret, and myself will go.

LORD ROSS:

To horse, to horse! urge doubts to them that fear.

LORD WILLOUGHBY:

Hold out my horse, and I will first be there.

BUSHY:

Madam, your majesty is too much sad:  
You promised, when you parted with the king,  
To lay aside life-harming heaviness  
And entertain a cheerful disposition.

QUEEN:

To please the king I did; to please myself  
I cannot do it; yet I know no cause

Why I should welcome such a guest as grief,  
Save bidding farewell to so sweet a guest  
As my sweet Richard: yet again, methinks,  
Some unborn sorrow, ripe in fortune's womb,  
Is coming towards me, and my inward soul  
With nothing trembles: at some thing it grieves,  
More than with parting from my lord the king.

BUSHY:

Each substance of a grief hath twenty shadows,  
Which shows like grief itself, but is not so;  
For sorrow's eye, glazed with blinding tears,  
Divides one thing entire to many objects;  
Like perspectives, which rightly gazed upon  
Show nothing but confusion, eyed awry  
Distinguish form: so your sweet majesty,  
Looking awry upon your lord's departure,  
Find shapes of grief, more than himself, to wail;  
Which, look'd on as it is, is nought but shadows  
Of what it is not. Then, thrice-gracious queen,  
More than your lord's departure weep not: more's not seen;  
Or if it be, 'tis with false sorrow's eye,  
Which for things true weeps things imaginary.

QUEEN:

It may be so; but yet my inward soul  
Persuades me it is otherwise: howe'er it be,  
I cannot but be sad; so heavy sad  
As, though on thinking on no thought I think,  
Makes me with heavy nothing faint and shrink.

BUSHY:

'Tis nothing but conceit, my gracious lady.

QUEEN:

'Tis nothing less: conceit is still derived  
From some forefather grief; mine is not so,  
For nothing had begot my something grief;  
Or something hath the nothing that I grieve:  
'Tis in reversion that I do possess;  
But what it is, that is not yet known; what  
I cannot name; 'tis nameless woe, I wot.

GREEN:

God save your majesty! and well met, gentlemen:  
I hope the king is not yet shipp'd for Ireland.

QUEEN:

Why hopest thou so? 'tis better hope he is;  
For his designs crave haste, his haste good hope:

Then wherefore dost thou hope he is not shipp'd?

GREEN:

That he, our hope, might have retired his power,  
And driven into despair an enemy's hope,  
Who strongly hath set footing in this land:  
The banish'd Bolingbroke repeals himself,  
And with uplifted arms is safe arrived  
At Ravenspurgh.

QUEEN:

Now God in heaven forbid!

GREEN:

Ah, madam, 'tis too true: and that is worse,  
The Lord Northumberland, his son young Henry Percy,  
The Lords of Ross, Beaumont, and Willoughby,  
With all their powerful friends, are fled to him.

BUSHY:

Why have you not proclaim'd Northumberland  
And all the rest revolted faction traitors?

GREEN:

We have: whereupon the Earl of Worcester  
Hath broke his staff, resign'd his stewardship,  
And all the household servants fled with him  
To Bolingbroke.

QUEEN:

So, Green, thou art the midwife to my woe,  
And Bolingbroke my sorrow's dismal heir:  
Now hath my soul brought forth her prodigy,  
And I, a gasping new-deliver'd mother,  
Have woe to woe, sorrow to sorrow join'd.

BUSHY:

Despair not, madam.

QUEEN:

Who shall hinder me?  
I will despair, and be at enmity  
With cozening hope: he is a flatterer,  
A parasite, a keeper back of death,  
Who gently would dissolve the bands of life,  
Which false hope lingers in extremity.

GREEN:

Here comes the Duke of York.

QUEEN:

With signs of war about his aged neck:  
O, full of careful business are his looks!  
Uncle, for God's sake, speak comfortable words.

DUKE OF YORK:

Should I do so, I should belie my thoughts:  
Comfort's in heaven; and we are on the earth,  
Where nothing lives but crosses, cares and grief.  
Your husband, he is gone to save far off,  
Whilst others come to make him lose at home:  
Here am I left to underprop his land,  
Who, weak with age, cannot support myself:  
Now comes the sick hour that his surfeit made;  
Now shall he try his friends that flatter'd him.

Servant:

My lord, your son was gone before I came.

DUKE OF YORK:

He was? Why, so! go all which way it will!  
The nobles they are fled, the commons they are cold,  
And will, I fear, revolt on Hereford's side.  
Sirrah, get thee to Plashy, to my sister Gloucester;  
Bid her send me presently a thousand pound:  
Hold, take my ring.

Servant:

My lord, I had forgot to tell your lordship,  
To-day, as I came by, I called there;  
But I shall grieve you to report the rest.

DUKE OF YORK:

What is't, knave?

Servant:

An hour before I came, the duchess died.

DUKE OF YORK:

God for his mercy! what a tide of woes  
Comes rushing on this woeful land at once!  
I know not what to do: I would to God,  
So my untruth had not provoked him to it,  
The king had cut off my head with my brother's.  
What, are there no posts dispatch'd for Ireland?  
How shall we do for money for these wars?  
Come, sister,--cousin, I would say--pray, pardon me.  
Go, fellow, get thee home, provide some carts  
And bring away the armour that is there.  
Gentlemen, will you go muster men?

If I know how or which way to order these affairs  
Thus thrust disorderly into my hands,  
Never believe me. Both are my kinsmen:  
The one is my sovereign, whom both my oath  
And duty bids defend; the other again  
Is my kinsman, whom the king hath wrong'd,  
Whom conscience and my kindred bids to right.  
Well, somewhat we must do. Come, cousin, I'll  
Dispose of you.  
Gentlemen, go, muster up your men,  
And meet me presently at Berkeley.  
I should to Plashy too;  
But time will not permit: all is uneven,  
And every thing is left at six and seven.

BUSHY:

The wind sits fair for news to go to Ireland,  
But none returns. For us to levy power  
Proportionable to the enemy  
Is all impossible.

GREEN:

Besides, our nearness to the king in love  
Is near the hate of those love not the king.

BAGOT:

And that's the wavering commons: for their love  
Lies in their purses, and whoso empties them  
By so much fills their hearts with deadly hate.

BUSHY:

Wherein the king stands generally condemn'd.

BAGOT:

If judgement lie in them, then so do we,  
Because we ever have been near the king.

GREEN:

Well, I will for refuge straight to Bristol castle:  
The Earl of Wiltshire is already there.

BUSHY:

Thither will I with you; for little office  
The hateful commons will perform for us,  
Except like curs to tear us all to pieces.  
Will you go along with us?

BAGOT:

No; I will to Ireland to his majesty.  
Farewell: if heart's presages be not vain,



We three here art that ne'er shall meet again.

BUSHY:

That's as York thrives to beat back Bolingbroke.

GREEN:

Alas, poor duke! the task he undertakes  
Is numbering sands and drinking oceans dry:  
Where one on his side fights, thousands will fly.  
Farewell at once, for once, for all, and ever.

BUSHY:

Well, we may meet again.

BAGOT:

I fear me, never.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

How far is it, my lord, to Berkeley now?

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Believe me, noble lord,  
I am a stranger here in Gloucestershire:  
These high wild hills and rough uneven ways  
Draws out our miles, and makes them wearisome,  
And yet your fair discourse hath been as sugar,  
Making the hard way sweet and delectable.  
But I bethink me what a weary way  
From Ravenspurgh to Cotswold will be found  
In Ross and Willoughby, wanting your company,  
Which, I protest, hath very much beguiled  
The tediousness and process of my travel:  
But theirs is sweetened with the hope to have  
The present benefit which I possess;  
And hope to joy is little less in joy  
Than hope enjoy'd: by this the weary lords  
Shall make their way seem short, as mine hath done  
By sight of what I have, your noble company.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Of much less value is my company  
Than your good words. But who comes here?

NORTHUMBERLAND:

It is my son, young Harry Percy,  
Sent from my brother Worcester, whencesoever.  
Harry, how fares your uncle?

HENRY PERCY:

I had thought, my lord, to have learn'd his health of you.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Why, is he not with the queen?

HENRY PERCY:

No, my good Lord; he hath forsook the court,  
Broken his staff of office and dispersed  
The household of the king.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

What was his reason?

He was not so resolved when last we spake together.

HENRY PERCY:

Because your lordship was proclaimed traitor.  
But he, my lord, is gone to Ravenspurgh,  
To offer service to the Duke of Hereford,  
And sent me over by Berkeley, to discover  
What power the Duke of York had levied there;  
Then with directions to repair to Ravenspurgh.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Have you forgot the Duke of Hereford, boy?

HENRY PERCY:

No, my good lord, for that is not forgot  
Which ne'er I did remember: to my knowledge,  
I never in my life did look on him.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Then learn to know him now; this is the duke.

HENRY PERCY:

My gracious lord, I tender you my service,  
Such as it is, being tender, raw and young:  
Which elder days shall ripen and confirm  
To more approved service and desert.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

I thank thee, gentle Percy; and be sure  
I count myself in nothing else so happy  
As in a soul remembering my good friends;  
And, as my fortune ripens with thy love,  
It shall be still thy true love's recompense:  
My heart this covenant makes, my hand thus seals it.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

How far is it to Berkeley? and what stir  
Keeps good old York there with his men of war?

HENRY PERCY:

There stands the castle, by yon tuft of trees,  
Mann'd with three hundred men, as I have heard;  
And in it are the Lords of York, Berkeley, and Seymour;  
None else of name and noble estimate.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Here come the Lords of Ross and Willoughby,  
Bloody with spurring, fiery-red with haste.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Welcome, my lords. I wot your love pursues  
A banish'd traitor: all my treasury  
Is yet but unfelt thanks, which more enrich'd  
Shall be your love and labour's recompense.

LORD ROSS:

Your presence makes us rich, most noble lord.

LORD WILLOUGHBY:

And far surmounts our labour to attain it.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Evermore thanks, the exchequer of the poor;  
Which, till my infant fortune comes to years,  
Stands for my bounty. But who comes here?

NORTHUMBERLAND:

It is my Lord of Berkeley, as I guess.

LORD BERKELEY:

My Lord of Hereford, my message is to you.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

My lord, my answer is--to Lancaster;  
And I am come to seek that name in England;  
And I must find that title in your tongue,  
Before I make reply to aught you say.

LORD BERKELEY:

Mistake me not, my lord; 'tis not my meaning  
To raze one title of your honour out:  
To you, my lord, I come, what lord you will,  
From the most gracious regent of this land,  
The Duke of York, to know what pricks you on  
To take advantage of the absent time  
And fright our native peace with self-born arms.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

I shall not need transport my words by you;

Here comes his grace in person. My noble uncle!

DUKE OF YORK:

Show me thy humble heart, and not thy knee,  
Whose duty is deceiveable and false.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

My gracious uncle--

DUKE OF YORK:

Tut, tut!

Grace me no grace, nor uncle me no uncle:  
I am no traitor's uncle; and that word 'grace.'  
In an ungracious mouth is but profane.  
Why have those banish'd and forbidden legs  
Dared once to touch a dust of England's ground?  
But then more 'why?' why have they dared to march  
So many miles upon her peaceful bosom,  
Frighting her pale-faced villages with war  
And ostentation of despised arms?  
Comest thou because the anointed king is hence?  
Why, foolish boy, the king is left behind,  
And in my loyal bosom lies his power.  
Were I but now the lord of such hot youth  
As when brave Gaunt, thy father, and myself  
Rescued the Black Prince, that young Mars of men,  
From forth the ranks of many thousand French,  
O, then how quickly should this arm of mine.  
Now prisoner to the palsy, chastise thee  
And minister correction to thy fault!

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

My gracious uncle, let me know my fault:  
On what condition stands it and wherein?

DUKE OF YORK:

Even in condition of the worst degree,  
In gross rebellion and detested treason:  
Thou art a banish'd man, and here art come  
Before the expiration of thy time,  
In braving arms against thy sovereign.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

As I was banish'd, I was banish'd Hereford;  
But as I come, I come for Lancaster.  
And, noble uncle, I beseech your grace  
Look on my wrongs with an indifferent eye:  
You are my father, for methinks in you  
I see old Gaunt alive; O, then, my father,  
Will you permit that I shall stand condemn'd

A wandering vagabond; my rights and royalties  
Pluck'd from my arms perforce and given away  
To upstart unthrifths? Wherefore was I born?  
If that my cousin king be King of England,  
It must be granted I am Duke of Lancaster.  
You have a son, Aumerle, my noble cousin;  
Had you first died, and he been thus trod down,  
He should have found his uncle Gaunt a father,  
To rouse his wrongs and chase them to the bay.  
I am denied to sue my livery here,  
And yet my letters-patents give me leave:  
My father's goods are all distrain'd and sold,  
And these and all are all amiss employ'd.  
What would you have me do? I am a subject,  
And I challenge law: attorneys are denied me;  
And therefore, personally I lay my claim  
To my inheritance of free descent.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

The noble duke hath been too much abused.

LORD ROSS:

It stands your grace upon to do him right.

LORD WILLOUGHBY:

Base men by his endowments are made great.

DUKE OF YORK:

My lords of England, let me tell you this:  
I have had feeling of my cousin's wrongs  
And laboured all I could to do him right;  
But in this kind to come, in braving arms,  
Be his own carver and cut out his way,  
To find out right with wrong, it may not be;  
And you that do abet him in this kind  
Cherish rebellion and are rebels all.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

The noble duke hath sworn his coming is  
But for his own; and for the right of that  
We all have strongly sworn to give him aid;  
And let him ne'er see joy that breaks that oath!

DUKE OF YORK:

Well, well, I see the issue of these arms:  
I cannot mend it, I must needs confess,  
Because my power is weak and all ill left:  
But if I could, by Him that gave me life,  
I would attach you all and make you stoop  
Unto the sovereign mercy of the king;

But since I cannot, be it known to you  
I do remain as neuter. So, fare you well;  
Unless you please to enter in the castle  
And there repose you for this night.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

An offer, uncle, that we will accept:  
But we must win your grace to go with us  
To Bristol castle, which they say is held  
By Bushy, Bagot and their complices,  
The caterpillars of the commonwealth,  
Which I have sworn to weed and pluck away.

DUKE OF YORK:

It may be I will go with you: but yet I'll pause;  
For I am loath to break our country's laws.  
Nor friends nor foes, to me welcome you are:  
Things past redress are now with me past care.

Captain:

My lord of Salisbury, we have stay'd ten days,  
And hardly kept our countrymen together,  
And yet we hear no tidings from the king;  
Therefore we will disperse ourselves: farewell.

EARL OF SALISBURY:

Stay yet another day, thou trusty Welshman:  
The king reposeth all his confidence in thee.

Captain:

'Tis thought the king is dead; we will not stay.  
The bay-trees in our country are all wither'd  
And meteors fright the fixed stars of heaven;  
The pale-faced moon looks bloody on the earth  
And lean-look'd prophets whisper fearful change;  
Rich men look sad and ruffians dance and leap,  
The one in fear to lose what they enjoy,  
The other to enjoy by rage and war:  
These signs forerun the death or fall of kings.  
Farewell: our countrymen are gone and fled,  
As well assured Richard their king is dead.

EARL OF SALISBURY:

Ah, Richard, with the eyes of heavy mind  
I see thy glory like a shooting star  
Fall to the base earth from the firmament.  
Thy sun sets weeping in the lowly west,  
Witnessing storms to come, woe and unrest:  
Thy friends are fled to wait upon thy foes,  
And crossly to thy good all fortune goes.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Bring forth these men.

Bushy and Green, I will not vex your souls--  
Since presently your souls must part your bodies--  
With too much urging your pernicious lives,  
For 'twere no charity; yet, to wash your blood  
From off my hands, here in the view of men  
I will unfold some causes of your deaths.  
You have misled a prince, a royal king,  
A happy gentleman in blood and lineaments,  
By you unhappied and disfigured clean:  
You have in manner with your sinful hours  
Made a divorce betwixt his queen and him,  
Broke the possession of a royal bed  
And stain'd the beauty of a fair queen's cheeks  
With tears drawn from her eyes by your foul wrongs.  
Myself, a prince by fortune of my birth,  
Near to the king in blood, and near in love  
Till you did make him misinterpret me,  
Have stoop'd my neck under your injuries,  
And sigh'd my English breath in foreign clouds,  
Eating the bitter bread of banishment;  
Whilst you have fed upon my signories,  
Dispark'd my parks and fell'd my forest woods,  
From my own windows torn my household coat,  
Razed out my imprese, leaving me no sign,  
Save men's opinions and my living blood,  
To show the world I am a gentleman.  
This and much more, much more than twice all this,  
Condemns you to the death. See them deliver'd over  
To execution and the hand of death.

BUSHY:

More welcome is the stroke of death to me  
Than Bolingbroke to England. Lords, farewell.

GREEN:

My comfort is that heaven will take our souls  
And plague injustice with the pains of hell.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

My Lord Northumberland, see them dispatch'd.  
Uncle, you say the queen is at your house;  
For God's sake, fairly let her be entreated:  
Tell her I send to her my kind commends;  
Take special care my greetings be deliver'd.

DUKE OF YORK:

A gentleman of mine I have dispatch'd

With letters of your love to her at large.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Thank, gentle uncle. Come, lords, away.  
To fight with Glendower and his complices:  
Awhile to work, and after holiday.

KING RICHARD II:

Barkloughly castle call they this at hand?

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Yea, my lord. How brooks your grace the air,  
After your late tossing on the breaking seas?

KING RICHARD II:

Needs must I like it well: I weep for joy  
To stand upon my kingdom once again.  
Dear earth, I do salute thee with my hand,  
Though rebels wound thee with their horses' hoofs:  
As a long-parted mother with her child  
Plays fondly with her tears and smiles in meeting,  
So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee, my earth,  
And do thee favours with my royal hands.  
Feed not thy sovereign's foe, my gentle earth,  
Nor with thy sweets comfort his ravenous sense;  
But let thy spiders, that suck up thy venom,  
And heavy-gaited toads lie in their way,  
Doing annoyance to the treacherous feet  
Which with usurping steps do trample thee:  
Yield stinging nettles to mine enemies;  
And when they from thy bosom pluck a flower,  
Guard it, I pray thee, with a lurking adder  
Whose double tongue may with a mortal touch  
Throw death upon thy sovereign's enemies.  
Mock not my senseless conjuration, lords:  
This earth shall have a feeling and these stones  
Prove armed soldiers, ere her native king  
Shall falter under foul rebellion's arms.

BISHOP OF CARLISLE:

Fear not, my lord: that Power that made you king  
Hath power to keep you king in spite of all.  
The means that heaven yields must be embraced,  
And not neglected; else, if heaven would,  
And we will not, heaven's offer we refuse,  
The proffer'd means of succor and redress.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

He means, my lord, that we are too remiss;  
Whilst Bolingbroke, through our security,



Grows strong and great in substance and in power.

KING RICHARD II:

Discomfortable cousin! know'st thou not  
That when the searching eye of heaven is hid,  
Behind the globe, that lights the lower world,  
Then thieves and robbers range abroad unseen  
In murders and in outrage, boldly here;  
But when from under this terrestrial ball  
He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines  
And darts his light through every guilty hole,  
Then murders, treasons and detested sins,  
The cloak of night being pluck'd from off their backs,  
Stand bare and naked, trembling at themselves?  
So when this thief, this traitor, Bolingbroke,  
Who all this while hath revell'd in the night  
Whilst we were wandering with the antipodes,  
Shall see us rising in our throne, the east,  
His treasons will sit blushing in his face,  
Not able to endure the sight of day,  
But self-affrighted tremble at his sin.  
Not all the water in the rough rude sea  
Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;  
The breath of worldly men cannot depose  
The deputy elected by the Lord:  
For every man that Bolingbroke hath press'd  
To lift shrewd steel against our golden crown,  
God for his Richard hath in heavenly pay  
A glorious angel: then, if angels fight,  
Weak men must fall, for heaven still guards the right.  
Welcome, my lord how far off lies your power?

EARL OF SALISBURY:

Nor near nor farther off, my gracious lord,  
Than this weak arm: discomfort guides my tongue  
And bids me speak of nothing but despair.  
One day too late, I fear me, noble lord,  
Hath clouded all thy happy days on earth:  
O, call back yesterday, bid time return,  
And thou shalt have twelve thousand fighting men!  
To-day, to-day, unhappy day, too late,  
O'erthrows thy joys, friends, fortune and thy state:  
For all the Welshmen, hearing thou wert dead,  
Are gone to Bolingbroke, dispersed and fled.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Comfort, my liege; why looks your grace so pale?

KING RICHARD II:

But now the blood of twenty thousand men

Did triumph in my face, and they are fled;  
And, till so much blood thither come again,  
Have I not reason to look pale and dead?  
All souls that will be safe fly from my side,  
For time hath set a blot upon my pride.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:  
Comfort, my liege; remember who you are.

KING RICHARD II:  
I had forgot myself; am I not king?  
Awake, thou coward majesty! thou sleepest.  
Is not the king's name twenty thousand names?  
Arm, arm, my name! a puny subject strikes  
At thy great glory. Look not to the ground,  
Ye favourites of a king: are we not high?  
High be our thoughts: I know my uncle York  
Hath power enough to serve our turn. But who comes here?

SIR STEPHEN SCROOP:  
More health and happiness betide my liege  
Than can my care-tuned tongue deliver him!

KING RICHARD II:  
Mine ear is open and my heart prepared;  
The worst is worldly loss thou canst unfold.  
Say, is my kingdom lost? why, 'twas my care  
And what loss is it to be rid of care?  
Strives Bolingbroke to be as great as we?  
Greater he shall not be; if he serve God,  
We'll serve Him too and be his fellow so:  
Revolt our subjects? that we cannot mend;  
They break their faith to God as well as us:  
Cry woe, destruction, ruin and decay:  
The worst is death, and death will have his day.

SIR STEPHEN SCROOP:  
Glad am I that your highness is so arm'd  
To bear the tidings of calamity.  
Like an unseasonable stormy day,  
Which makes the silver rivers drown their shores,  
As if the world were all dissolved to tears,  
So high above his limits swells the rage  
Of Bolingbroke, covering your fearful land  
With hard bright steel and hearts harder than steel.  
White-beards have arm'd their thin and hairless scalps  
Against thy majesty; boys, with women's voices,  
Strive to speak big and clap their female joints  
In stiff unwieldy arms against thy crown:  
The very beadsmen learn to bend their bows

Of double-fatal yew against thy state;  
Yea, distaff-women manage rusty bills  
Against thy seat: both young and old rebel,  
And all goes worse than I have power to tell.

KING RICHARD II:

Too well, too well thou tell'st a tale so ill.  
Where is the Earl of Wiltshire? where is Bagot?  
What is become of Bushy? where is Green?  
That they have let the dangerous enemy  
Measure our confines with such peaceful steps?  
If we prevail, their heads shall pay for it:  
I warrant they have made peace with Bolingbroke.

SIR STEPHEN SCROOP:

Peace have they made with him indeed, my lord.

KING RICHARD II:

O villains, vipers, damn'd without redemption!  
Dogs, easily won to fawn on any man!  
Snakes, in my heart-blood warm'd, that sting my heart!  
Three Judases, each one thrice worse than Judas!  
Would they make peace? terrible hell make war  
Upon their spotted souls for this offence!

SIR STEPHEN SCROOP:

Sweet love, I see, changing his property,  
Turns to the sourest and most deadly hate:  
Again uncurse their souls; their peace is made  
With heads, and not with hands; those whom you curse  
Have felt the worst of death's destroying wound  
And lie full low, grav'd in the hollow ground.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Is Bushy, Green, and the Earl of Wiltshire dead?

SIR STEPHEN SCROOP:

Ay, all of them at Bristol lost their heads.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Where is the duke my father with his power?

KING RICHARD II:

No matter where; of comfort no man speak:  
Let's talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs;  
Make dust our paper and with rainy eyes  
Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth,  
Let's choose executors and talk of wills:  
And yet not so, for what can we bequeath  
Save our deposed bodies to the ground?

Our lands, our lives and all are Bolingbroke's,  
And nothing can we call our own but death  
And that small model of the barren earth  
Which serves as paste and cover to our bones.  
For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground  
And tell sad stories of the death of kings;  
How some have been deposed; some slain in war,  
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed;  
Some poison'd by their wives: some sleeping kill'd;  
All murder'd: for within the hollow crown  
That rounds the mortal temples of a king  
Keeps Death his court and there the antic sits,  
Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,  
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,  
To monarchize, be fear'd and kill with looks,  
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,  
As if this flesh which walls about our life,  
Were brass impregnable, and humour'd thus  
Comes at the last and with a little pin  
Bores through his castle wall, and farewell king!  
Cover your heads and mock not flesh and blood  
With solemn reverence: throw away respect,  
Tradition, form and ceremonious duty,  
For you have but mistook me all this while:  
I live with bread like you, feel want,  
Taste grief, need friends: subjected thus,  
How can you say to me, I am a king?

BISHOP OF CARLISLE:

My lord, wise men ne'er sit and wail their woes,  
But presently prevent the ways to wail.  
To fear the foe, since fear oppresses strength,  
Gives in your weakness strength unto your foe,  
And so your follies fight against yourself.  
Fear and be slain; no worse can come to fight:  
And fight and die is death destroying death;  
Where fearing dying pays death servile breath.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

My father hath a power; inquire of him  
And learn to make a body of a limb.

KING RICHARD II:

Thou chidest me well: proud Bolingbroke, I come  
To change blows with thee for our day of doom.  
This ague fit of fear is over-blown;  
An easy task it is to win our own.  
Say, Scroop, where lies our uncle with his power?  
Speak sweetly, man, although thy looks be sour.

SIR STEPHEN SCROOP:

Men judge by the complexion of the sky  
The state and inclination of the day:  
So may you by my dull and heavy eye,  
My tongue hath but a heavier tale to say.  
I play the torturer, by small and small  
To lengthen out the worst that must be spoken:  
Your uncle York is join'd with Bolingbroke,  
And all your northern castles yielded up,  
And all your southern gentlemen in arms  
Upon his party.

KING RICHARD II:

Thou hast said enough.  
Beshrew thee, cousin, which didst lead me forth  
Of that sweet way I was in to despair!  
What say you now? what comfort have we now?  
By heaven, I'll hate him everlastingly  
That bids me be of comfort any more.  
Go to Flint castle: there I'll pine away;  
A king, woe's slave, shall kingly woe obey.  
That power I have, discharge; and let them go  
To ear the land that hath some hope to grow,  
For I have none: let no man speak again  
To alter this, for counsel is but vain.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

My liege, one word.

KING RICHARD II:

He does me double wrong  
That wounds me with the flatteries of his tongue.  
Discharge my followers: let them hence away,  
From Richard's night to Bolingbroke's fair day.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

So that by this intelligence we learn  
The Welshmen are dispersed, and Salisbury  
Is gone to meet the king, who lately landed  
With some few private friends upon this coast.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

The news is very fair and good, my lord:  
Richard not far from hence hath hid his head.

DUKE OF YORK:

It would beseem the Lord Northumberland  
To say 'King Richard:' alack the heavy day  
When such a sacred king should hide his head.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Your grace mistakes; only to be brief  
Left I his title out.

DUKE OF YORK:

The time hath been,  
Would you have been so brief with him, he would  
Have been so brief with you, to shorten you,  
For taking so the head, your whole head's length.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Mistake not, uncle, further than you should.

DUKE OF YORK:

Take not, good cousin, further than you should.  
Lest you mistake the heavens are o'er our heads.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

I know it, uncle, and oppose not myself  
Against their will. But who comes here?  
Welcome, Harry: what, will not this castle yield?

HENRY PERCY:

The castle royally is mann'd, my lord,  
Against thy entrance.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Royally!  
Why, it contains no king?

HENRY PERCY:

Yes, my good lord,  
It doth contain a king; King Richard lies  
Within the limits of yon lime and stone:  
And with him are the Lord Aumerle, Lord Salisbury,  
Sir Stephen Scroop, besides a clergyman  
Of holy reverence; who, I cannot learn.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

O, belike it is the Bishop of Carlisle.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Noble lords,  
Go to the rude ribs of that ancient castle;  
Through brazen trumpet send the breath of parley  
Into his ruin'd ears, and thus deliver:  
Henry Bolingbroke  
On both his knees doth kiss King Richard's hand  
And sends allegiance and true faith of heart  
To his most royal person, hither come

Even at his feet to lay my arms and power,  
Provided that my banishment repeal'd  
And lands restored again be freely granted:  
If not, I'll use the advantage of my power  
And lay the summer's dust with showers of blood  
Rain'd from the wounds of slaughter'd Englishmen:  
The which, how far off from the mind of Bolingbroke  
It is, such crimson tempest should bedrench  
The fresh green lap of fair King Richard's land,  
My stooping duty tenderly shall show.  
Go, signify as much, while here we march  
Upon the grassy carpet of this plain.  
Let's march without the noise of threatening drum,  
That from this castle's tatter'd battlements  
Our fair appointments may be well perused.  
Methinks King Richard and myself should meet  
With no less terror than the elements  
Of fire and water, when their thundering shock  
At meeting tears the cloudy cheeks of heaven.  
Be he the fire, I'll be the yielding water:  
The rage be his, whilst on the earth I rain  
My waters; on the earth, and not on him.  
March on, and mark King Richard how he looks.  
See, see, King Richard doth himself appear,  
As doth the blushing discontented sun  
From out the fiery portal of the east,  
When he perceives the envious clouds are bent  
To dim his glory and to stain the track  
Of his bright passage to the occident.

DUKE OF YORK:

Yet looks he like a king: behold, his eye,  
As bright as is the eagle's, lightens forth  
Controlling majesty: alack, alack, for woe,  
That any harm should stain so fair a show!

KING RICHARD II:

We are amazed; and thus long have we stood  
To watch the fearful bending of thy knee,  
Because we thought ourself thy lawful king:  
And if we be, how dare thy joints forget  
To pay their awful duty to our presence?  
If we be not, show us the hand of God  
That hath dismissed us from our stewardship;  
For well we know, no hand of blood and bone  
Can gripe the sacred handle of our sceptre,  
Unless he do profane, steal, or usurp.  
And though you think that all, as you have done,  
Have torn their souls by turning them from us,  
And we are barren and bereft of friends;

Yet know, my master, God omnipotent,  
Is mustering in his clouds on our behalf  
Armies of pestilence; and they shall strike  
Your children yet unborn and unbegot,  
That lift your vassal hands against my head  
And threat the glory of my precious crown.  
Tell Bolingbroke--for yond methinks he stands--  
That every stride he makes upon my land  
Is dangerous treason: he is come to open  
The purple testament of bleeding war;  
But ere the crown he looks for live in peace,  
Ten thousand bloody crowns of mothers' sons  
Shall ill become the flower of England's face,  
Change the complexion of her maid-pale peace  
To scarlet indignation and bedew  
Her pastures' grass with faithful English blood.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

The king of heaven forbid our lord the king  
Should so with civil and uncivil arms  
Be rush'd upon! Thy thrice noble cousin  
Harry Bolingbroke doth humbly kiss thy hand;  
And by the honourable tomb he swears,  
That stands upon your royal grandsire's bones,  
And by the royalties of both your bloods,  
Currents that spring from one most gracious head,  
And by the buried hand of warlike Gaunt,  
And by the worth and honour of himself,  
Comprising all that may be sworn or said,  
His coming hither hath no further scope  
Than for his lineal royalties and to beg  
Enfranchisement immediate on his knees:  
Which on thy royal party granted once,  
His glittering arms he will commend to rust,  
His barbed steeds to stables, and his heart  
To faithful service of your majesty.  
This swears he, as he is a prince, is just;  
And, as I am a gentleman, I credit him.

KING RICHARD II:

Northumberland, say thus the king returns:  
His noble cousin is right welcome hither;  
And all the number of his fair demands  
Shall be accomplish'd without contradiction:  
With all the gracious utterance thou hast  
Speak to his gentle hearing kind commends.  
We do debase ourselves, cousin, do we not,  
To look so poorly and to speak so fair?  
Shall we call back Northumberland, and send  
Defiance to the traitor, and so die?



DUKE OF AUMERLE:

No, good my lord; let's fight with gentle words  
Till time lend friends and friends their helpful swords.

KING RICHARD II:

O God, O God! that e'er this tongue of mine,  
That laid the sentence of dread banishment  
On yon proud man, should take it off again  
With words of sooth! O that I were as great  
As is my grief, or lesser than my name!  
Or that I could forget what I have been,  
Or not remember what I must be now!  
Swell'st thou, proud heart? I'll give thee scope to beat,  
Since foes have scope to beat both thee and me.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Northumberland comes back from Bolingbroke.

KING RICHARD II:

What must the king do now? must he submit?  
The king shall do it: must he be deposed?  
The king shall be contented: must he lose  
The name of king? o' God's name, let it go:  
I'll give my jewels for a set of beads,  
My gorgeous palace for a hermitage,  
My gay apparel for an almsman's gown,  
My figured goblets for a dish of wood,  
My sceptre for a palmer's walking staff,  
My subjects for a pair of carved saints  
And my large kingdom for a little grave,  
A little little grave, an obscure grave;  
Or I'll be buried in the king's highway,  
Some way of common trade, where subjects' feet  
May hourly trample on their sovereign's head;  
For on my heart they tread now whilst I live;  
And buried once, why not upon my head?  
Aumerle, thou weep'st, my tender-hearted cousin!  
We'll make foul weather with despised tears;  
Our sighs and they shall lodge the summer corn,  
And make a dearth in this revolting land.  
Or shall we play the wantons with our woes,  
And make some pretty match with shedding tears?  
As thus, to drop them still upon one place,  
Till they have fretted us a pair of graves  
Within the earth; and, therein laid,—there lies  
Two kinsmen digg'd their graves with weeping eyes.  
Would not this ill do well? Well, well, I see  
I talk but idly, and you laugh at me.  
Most mighty prince, my Lord Northumberland,

What says King Bolingbroke? will his majesty  
Give Richard leave to live till Richard die?  
You make a leg, and Bolingbroke says ay.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

My lord, in the base court he doth attend  
To speak with you; may it please you to come down.

KING RICHARD II:

Down, down I come; like glistering Phaethon,  
Wanting the manage of unruly jades.  
In the base court? Base court, where kings grow base,  
To come at traitors' calls and do them grace.  
In the base court? Come down? Down, court!  
down, king!  
For night-owls shriek where mounting larks  
should sing.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

What says his majesty?

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Sorrow and grief of heart  
Makes him speak fondly, like a frantic man  
Yet he is come.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Stand all apart,  
And show fair duty to his majesty.  
My gracious lord,--

KING RICHARD II:

Fair cousin, you debase your princely knee  
To make the base earth proud with kissing it:  
Me rather had my heart might feel your love  
Than my displeased eye see your courtesy.  
Up, cousin, up; your heart is up, I know,  
Thus high at least, although your knee be low.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

My gracious lord, I come but for mine own.

KING RICHARD II:

Your own is yours, and I am yours, and all.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

So far be mine, my most redoubted lord,  
As my true service shall deserve your love.

KING RICHARD II:

Well you deserve: they well deserve to have,  
That know the strong'st and surest way to get.  
Uncle, give me your hands: nay, dry your eyes;  
Tears show their love, but want their remedies.  
Cousin, I am too young to be your father,  
Though you are old enough to be my heir.  
What you will have, I'll give, and willing too;  
For do we must what force will have us do.  
Set on towards London, cousin, is it so?

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:  
Yea, my good lord.

KING RICHARD II:  
Then I must not say no.

QUEEN:  
What sport shall we devise here in this garden,  
To drive away the heavy thought of care?

Lady:  
Madam, we'll play at bowls.

QUEEN:  
'Twill make me think the world is full of rubs,  
And that my fortune rubs against the bias.

Lady:  
Madam, we'll dance.

QUEEN:  
My legs can keep no measure in delight,  
When my poor heart no measure keeps in grief:  
Therefore, no dancing, girl; some other sport.

Lady:  
Madam, we'll tell tales.

QUEEN:  
Of sorrow or of joy?

Lady:  
Of either, madam.

QUEEN:  
Of neither, girl:  
For of joy, being altogether wanting,  
It doth remember me the more of sorrow;  
Or if of grief, being altogether had,  
It adds more sorrow to my want of joy:

For what I have I need not to repeat;  
And what I want it boots not to complain.

Lady:  
Madam, I'll sing.

QUEEN:  
'Tis well that thou hast cause  
But thou shouldst please me better, wouldst thou weep.

Lady:  
I could weep, madam, would it do you good.

QUEEN:  
And I could sing, would weeping do me good,  
And never borrow any tear of thee.  
But stay, here come the gardeners:  
Let's step into the shadow of these trees.  
My wretchedness unto a row of pins,  
They'll talk of state; for every one doth so  
Against a change; woe is forerun with woe.

Gardener:  
Go, bind thou up yon dangling apricocks,  
Which, like unruly children, make their sire  
Stoop with oppression of their prodigal weight:  
Give some supportance to the bending twigs.  
Go thou, and like an executioner,  
Cut off the heads of too fast growing sprays,  
That look too lofty in our commonwealth:  
All must be even in our government.  
You thus employ'd, I will go root away  
The noisome weeds, which without profit suck  
The soil's fertility from wholesome flowers.

Servant:  
Why should we in the compass of a pale  
Keep law and form and due proportion,  
Showing, as in a model, our firm estate,  
When our sea-walled garden, the whole land,  
Is full of weeds, her fairest flowers choked up,  
Her fruit-trees all upturned, her hedges ruin'd,  
Her knots disorder'd and her wholesome herbs  
Swarming with caterpillars?

Gardener:  
Hold thy peace:  
He that hath suffer'd this disorder'd spring  
Hath now himself met with the fall of leaf:  
The weeds which his broad-spreading leaves did shelter,

That seem'd in eating him to hold him up,  
Are pluck'd up root and all by Bolingbroke,  
I mean the Earl of Wiltshire, Bushy, Green.

Servant:  
What, are they dead?

Gardener:  
They are; and Bolingbroke  
Hath seized the wasteful king. O, what pity is it  
That he had not so trimm'd and dress'd his land  
As we this garden! We at time of year  
Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit-trees,  
Lest, being over-proud in sap and blood,  
With too much riches it confound itself:  
Had he done so to great and growing men,  
They might have lived to bear and he to taste  
Their fruits of duty: superfluous branches  
We lop away, that bearing boughs may live:  
Had he done so, himself had borne the crown,  
Which waste of idle hours hath quite thrown down.

Servant:  
What, think you then the king shall be deposed?

Gardener:  
Depress'd he is already, and deposed  
'Tis doubt he will be: letters came last night  
To a dear friend of the good Duke of York's,  
That tell black tidings.

QUEEN:  
O, I am press'd to death through want of speaking!  
Thou, old Adam's likeness, set to dress this garden,  
How dares thy harsh rude tongue sound this displeasing news?  
What Eve, what serpent, hath suggested thee  
To make a second fall of cursed man?  
Why dost thou say King Richard is deposed?  
Darest thou, thou little better thing than earth,  
Divine his downfall? Say, where, when, and how,  
Camest thou by this ill tidings? speak, thou wretch.

Gardener:  
Pardon me, madam: little joy have I  
To breathe this news; yet what I say is true.  
King Richard, he is in the mighty hold  
Of Bolingbroke: their fortunes both are weigh'd:  
In your lord's scale is nothing but himself,  
And some few vanities that make him light;  
But in the balance of great Bolingbroke,

Besides himself, are all the English peers,  
And with that odds he weighs King Richard down.  
Post you to London, and you will find it so;  
I speak no more than every one doth know.

QUEEN:

Nimble mischance, that art so light of foot,  
Doth not thy embassy belong to me,  
And am I last that knows it? O, thou think'st  
To serve me last, that I may longest keep  
Thy sorrow in my breast. Come, ladies, go,  
To meet at London London's king in woe.  
What, was I born to this, that my sad look  
Should grace the triumph of great Bolingbroke?  
Gardener, for telling me these news of woe,  
Pray God the plants thou graft'st may never grow.

GARDENER:

Poor queen! so that thy state might be no worse,  
I would my skill were subject to thy curse.  
Here did she fall a tear; here in this place  
I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace:  
Rue, even for ruth, here shortly shall be seen,  
In the remembrance of a weeping queen.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Call forth Bagot.  
Now, Bagot, freely speak thy mind;  
What thou dost know of noble Gloucester's death,  
Who wrought it with the king, and who perform'd  
The bloody office of his timeless end.

BAGOT:

Then set before my face the Lord Aumerle.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Cousin, stand forth, and look upon that man.

BAGOT:

My Lord Aumerle, I know your daring tongue  
Scorns to unsay what once it hath deliver'd.  
In that dead time when Gloucester's death was plotted,  
I heard you say, 'Is not my arm of length,  
That reacheth from the restful English court  
As far as Calais, to mine uncle's head?'  
Amongst much other talk, that very time,  
I heard you say that you had rather refuse  
The offer of an hundred thousand crowns  
Than Bolingbroke's return to England;  
Adding withal how blest this land would be

In this your cousin's death.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Princes and noble lords,  
What answer shall I make to this base man?  
Shall I so much dishonour my fair stars,  
On equal terms to give him chastisement?  
Either I must, or have mine honour soil'd  
With the attainder of his slanderous lips.  
There is my gage, the manual seal of death,  
That marks thee out for hell: I say, thou liest,  
And will maintain what thou hast said is false  
In thy heart-blood, though being all too base  
To stain the temper of my knightly sword.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Bagot, forbear; thou shalt not take it up.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Excepting one, I would he were the best  
In all this presence that hath moved me so.

LORD FITZWATER:

If that thy valour stand on sympathy,  
There is my gage, Aumerle, in gage to thine:  
By that fair sun which shows me where thou stand'st,  
I heard thee say, and vauntingly thou spakest it  
That thou wert cause of noble Gloucester's death.  
If thou deny'st it twenty times, thou liest;  
And I will turn thy falsehood to thy heart,  
Where it was forged, with my rapier's point.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Thou darest not, coward, live to see that day.

LORD FITZWATER:

Now by my soul, I would it were this hour.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Fitzwater, thou art damn'd to hell for this.

HENRY PERCY:

Aumerle, thou liest; his honour is as true  
In this appeal as thou art all unjust;  
And that thou art so, there I throw my gage,  
To prove it on thee to the extremest point  
Of mortal breathing: seize it, if thou darest.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

An if I do not, may my hands rot off

And never brandish more revengeful steel  
Over the glittering helmet of my foe!

Lord:

I task the earth to the like, forsworn Aumerle;  
And spur thee on with full as many lies  
As may be holloa'd in thy treacherous ear  
From sun to sun: there is my honour's pawn;  
Engage it to the trial, if thou darest.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Who sets me else? by heaven, I'll throw at all:  
I have a thousand spirits in one breast,  
To answer twenty thousand such as you.

DUKE OF SURREY:

My Lord Fitzwater, I do remember well  
The very time Aumerle and you did talk.

LORD FITZWATER:

'Tis very true: you were in presence then;  
And you can witness with me this is true.

DUKE OF SURREY:

As false, by heaven, as heaven itself is true.

LORD FITZWATER:

Surrey, thou liest.

DUKE OF SURREY:

Dishonourable boy!  
That lie shall lie so heavy on my sword,  
That it shall render vengeance and revenge  
Till thou the lie-giver and that lie do lie  
In earth as quiet as thy father's skull:  
In proof whereof, there is my honour's pawn;  
Engage it to the trial, if thou darest.

LORD FITZWATER:

How fondly dost thou spur a forward horse!  
If I dare eat, or drink, or breathe, or live,  
I dare meet Surrey in a wilderness,  
And spit upon him, whilst I say he lies,  
And lies, and lies: there is my bond of faith,  
To tie thee to my strong correction.  
As I intend to thrive in this new world,  
Aumerle is guilty of my true appeal:  
Besides, I heard the banish'd Norfolk say  
That thou, Aumerle, didst send two of thy men  
To execute the noble duke at Calais.



DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Some honest Christian trust me with a gage  
That Norfolk lies: here do I throw down this,  
If he may be repeal'd, to try his honour.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

These differences shall all rest under gage  
Till Norfolk be repeal'd: repeal'd he shall be,  
And, though mine enemy, restored again  
To all his lands and signories: when he's return'd,  
Against Aumerle we will enforce his trial.

BISHOP OF CARLISLE:

That honourable day shall ne'er be seen.  
Many a time hath banish'd Norfolk fought  
For Jesu Christ in glorious Christian field,  
Streaming the ensign of the Christian cross  
Against black pagans, Turks, and Saracens:  
And toil'd with works of war, retired himself  
To Italy; and there at Venice gave  
His body to that pleasant country's earth,  
And his pure soul unto his captain Christ,  
Under whose colours he had fought so long.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Why, bishop, is Norfolk dead?

BISHOP OF CARLISLE:

As surely as I live, my lord.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Sweet peace conduct his sweet soul to the bosom  
Of good old Abraham! Lords appellants,  
Your differences shall all rest under gage  
Till we assign you to your days of trial.

DUKE OF YORK:

Great Duke of Lancaster, I come to thee  
From plume-pluck'd Richard; who with willing soul  
Adopts thee heir, and his high sceptre yields  
To the possession of thy royal hand:  
Ascend his throne, descending now from him;  
And long live Henry, fourth of that name!

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

In God's name, I'll ascend the regal throne.

BISHOP OF CARLISLE:

Marry. God forbid!

Worst in this royal presence may I speak,  
Yet best beseeming me to speak the truth.  
Would God that any in this noble presence  
Were enough noble to be upright judge  
Of noble Richard! then true noblesse would  
Learn him forbearance from so foul a wrong.  
What subject can give sentence on his king?  
And who sits here that is not Richard's subject?  
Thieves are not judged but they are by to hear,  
Although apparent guilt be seen in them;  
And shall the figure of God's majesty,  
His captain, steward, deputy-elect,  
Anointed, crowned, planted many years,  
Be judged by subject and inferior breath,  
And he himself not present? O, forbend it, God,  
That in a Christian climate souls refined  
Should show so heinous, black, obscene a deed!  
I speak to subjects, and a subject speaks,  
Stirr'd up by God, thus boldly for his king:  
My Lord of Hereford here, whom you call king,  
Is a foul traitor to proud Hereford's king:  
And if you crown him, let me prophesy:  
The blood of English shall manure the ground,  
And future ages groan for this foul act;  
Peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels,  
And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars  
Shall kin with kin and kind with kind confound;  
Disorder, horror, fear and mutiny  
Shall here inhabit, and this land be call'd  
The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls.  
O, if you raise this house against this house,  
It will the woofullest division prove  
That ever fell upon this cursed earth.  
Prevent it, resist it, let it not be so,  
Lest child, child's children, cry against you woe!

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Well have you argued, sir; and, for your pains,  
Of capital treason we arrest you here.  
My Lord of Westminster, be it your charge  
To keep him safely till his day of trial.  
May it please you, lords, to grant the commons' suit.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Fetch hither Richard, that in common view  
He may surrender; so we shall proceed  
Without suspicion.

DUKE OF YORK:

I will be his conduct.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Lords, you that here are under our arrest,  
Procure your sureties for your days of answer.  
Little are we beholding to your love,  
And little look'd for at your helping hands.

KING RICHARD II:

Alack, why am I sent for to a king,  
Before I have shook off the regal thoughts  
Wherewith I reign'd? I hardly yet have learn'd  
To insinuate, flatter, bow, and bend my limbs:  
Give sorrow leave awhile to tutor me  
To this submission. Yet I well remember  
The favours of these men: were they not mine?  
Did they not sometime cry, 'all hail!' to me?  
So Judas did to Christ: but he, in twelve,  
Found truth in all but one: I, in twelve thousand, none.  
God save the king! Will no man say amen?  
Am I both priest and clerk? well then, amen.  
God save the king! although I be not he;  
And yet, amen, if heaven do think him me.  
To do what service am I sent for hither?

DUKE OF YORK:

To do that office of thine own good will  
Which tired majesty did make thee offer,  
The resignation of thy state and crown  
To Henry Bolingbroke.

KING RICHARD II:

Give me the crown. Here, cousin, seize the crown;  
Here cousin:  
On this side my hand, and on that side yours.  
Now is this golden crown like a deep well  
That owes two buckets, filling one another,  
The emptier ever dancing in the air,  
The other down, unseen and full of water:  
That bucket down and full of tears am I,  
Drinking my griefs, whilst you mount up on high.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

I thought you had been willing to resign.

KING RICHARD II:

My crown I am; but still my griefs are mine:  
You may my glories and my state depose,  
But not my griefs; still am I king of those.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Part of your cares you give me with your crown.

KING RICHARD II:

Your cares set up do not pluck my cares down.  
My care is loss of care, by old care done;  
Your care is gain of care, by new care won:  
The cares I give I have, though given away;  
They tend the crown, yet still with me they stay.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Are you contented to resign the crown?

KING RICHARD II:

Ay, no; no, ay; for I must nothing be;  
Therefore no no, for I resign to thee.  
Now mark me, how I will undo myself;  
I give this heavy weight from off my head  
And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand,  
The pride of kingly sway from out my heart;  
With mine own tears I wash away my balm,  
With mine own hands I give away my crown,  
With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,  
With mine own breath release all duty's rites:  
All pomp and majesty I do forswear;  
My manors, rents, revenues I forego;  
My acts, decrees, and statutes I deny:  
God pardon all oaths that are broke to me!  
God keep all vows unbroke that swear to thee!  
Make me, that nothing have, with nothing grieved,  
And thou with all pleased, that hast all achieved!  
Long mayst thou live in Richard's seat to sit,  
And soon lie Richard in an earthly pit!  
God save King Harry, unking'd Richard says,  
And send him many years of sunshine days!  
What more remains?

NORTHUMBERLAND:

No more, but that you read  
These accusations and these grievous crimes  
Committed by your person and your followers  
Against the state and profit of this land;  
That, by confessing them, the souls of men  
May deem that you are worthily deposed.

KING RICHARD II:

Must I do so? and must I ravel out  
My weaved-up folly? Gentle Northumberland,  
If thy offences were upon record,  
Would it not shame thee in so fair a troop  
To read a lecture of them? If thou wouldst,

There shouldst thou find one heinous article,  
Containing the deposing of a king  
And cracking the strong warrant of an oath,  
Mark'd with a blot, damn'd in the book of heaven:  
Nay, all of you that stand and look upon,  
Whilst that my wretchedness doth bait myself,  
Though some of you with Pilate wash your hands  
Showing an outward pity; yet you Pilates  
Have here deliver'd me to my sour cross,  
And water cannot wash away your sin.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

My lord, dispatch; read o'er these articles.

KING RICHARD II:

Mine eyes are full of tears, I cannot see:  
And yet salt water blinds them not so much  
But they can see a sort of traitors here.  
Nay, if I turn mine eyes upon myself,  
I find myself a traitor with the rest;  
For I have given here my soul's consent  
To undeck the pompous body of a king;  
Made glory base and sovereignty a slave,  
Proud majesty a subject, state a peasant.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

My lord,--

KING RICHARD II:

No lord of thine, thou haught insulting man,  
Nor no man's lord; I have no name, no title,  
No, not that name was given me at the font,  
But 'tis usurp'd: alack the heavy day,  
That I have worn so many winters out,  
And know not now what name to call myself!  
O that I were a mockery king of snow,  
Standing before the sun of Bolingbroke,  
To melt myself away in water-drops!  
Good king, great king, and yet not greatly good,  
An if my word be sterling yet in England,  
Let it command a mirror hither straight,  
That it may show me what a face I have,  
Since it is bankrupt of his majesty.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Go some of you and fetch a looking-glass.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Read o'er this paper while the glass doth come.

KING RICHARD II:

Fiend, thou torment'st me ere I come to hell!

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Urge it no more, my Lord Northumberland.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

The commons will not then be satisfied.

KING RICHARD II:

They shall be satisfied: I'll read enough,  
When I do see the very book indeed  
Where all my sins are writ, and that's myself.  
Give me the glass, and therein will I read.  
No deeper wrinkles yet? hath sorrow struck  
So many blows upon this face of mine,  
And made no deeper wounds? O flattering glass,  
Like to my followers in prosperity,  
Thou dost beguile me! Was this face the face  
That every day under his household roof  
Did keep ten thousand men? was this the face  
That, like the sun, did make beholders wink?  
Was this the face that faced so many follies,  
And was at last out-faced by Bolingbroke?  
A brittle glory shineth in this face:  
As brittle as the glory is the face;  
For there it is, crack'd in a hundred shivers.  
Mark, silent king, the moral of this sport,  
How soon my sorrow hath destroy'd my face.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

The shadow of your sorrow hath destroy'd  
The shadow or your face.

KING RICHARD II:

Say that again.  
The shadow of my sorrow! ha! let's see:  
'Tis very true, my grief lies all within;  
And these external manners of laments  
Are merely shadows to the unseen grief  
That swells with silence in the tortured soul;  
There lies the substance: and I thank thee, king,  
For thy great bounty, that not only givest  
Me cause to wail but teachest me the way  
How to lament the cause. I'll beg one boon,  
And then be gone and trouble you no more.  
Shall I obtain it?

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Name it, fair cousin.

KING RICHARD II:

'Fair cousin'? I am greater than a king:  
For when I was a king, my flatterers  
Were then but subjects; being now a subject,  
I have a king here to my flatterer.  
Being so great, I have no need to beg.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Yet ask.

KING RICHARD II:

And shall I have?

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

You shall.

KING RICHARD II:

Then give me leave to go.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Whither?

KING RICHARD II:

Whither you will, so I were from your sights.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Go, some of you convey him to the Tower.

KING RICHARD II:

O, good! convey? conveyers are you all,  
That rise thus nimbly by a true king's fall.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

On Wednesday next we solemnly set down  
Our coronation: lords, prepare yourselves.

Abbot:

A woeful pageant have we here beheld.

BISHOP OF CARLISLE:

The woe's to come; the children yet unborn.  
Shall feel this day as sharp to them as thorn.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

You holy clergymen, is there no plot  
To rid the realm of this pernicious blot?

Abbot:

My lord,

Before I freely speak my mind herein,  
You shall not only take the sacrament  
To bury mine intents, but also to effect  
Whatever I shall happen to devise.  
I see your brows are full of discontent,  
Your hearts of sorrow and your eyes of tears:  
Come home with me to supper; and I'll lay  
A plot shall show us all a merry day.

QUEEN:

This way the king will come; this is the way  
To Julius Caesar's ill-erected tower,  
To whose flint bosom my condemned lord  
Is doom'd a prisoner by proud Bolingbroke:  
Here let us rest, if this rebellious earth  
Have any resting for her true king's queen.  
But soft, but see, or rather do not see,  
My fair rose wither: yet look up, behold,  
That you in pity may dissolve to dew,  
And wash him fresh again with true-love tears.  
Ah, thou, the model where old Troy did stand,  
Thou map of honour, thou King Richard's tomb,  
And not King Richard; thou most beauteous inn,  
Why should hard-favour'd grief be lodged in thee,  
When triumph is become an alehouse guest?

KING RICHARD II:

Join not with grief, fair woman, do not so,  
To make my end too sudden: learn, good soul,  
To think our former state a happy dream;  
From which awaked, the truth of what we are  
Shows us but this: I am sworn brother, sweet,  
To grim Necessity, and he and I  
Will keep a league till death. Hie thee to France  
And cloister thee in some religious house:  
Our holy lives must win a new world's crown,  
Which our profane hours here have stricken down.

QUEEN:

What, is my Richard both in shape and mind  
Transform'd and weaken'd? hath Bolingbroke deposed  
Thine intellect? hath he been in thy heart?  
The lion dying thrusteth forth his paw,  
And wounds the earth, if nothing else, with rage  
To be o'erpower'd; and wilt thou, pupil-like,  
Take thy correction mildly, kiss the rod,  
And fawn on rage with base humility,  
Which art a lion and a king of beasts?

KING RICHARD II:



A king of beasts, indeed; if aught but beasts,  
I had been still a happy king of men.  
Good sometime queen, prepare thee hence for France:  
Think I am dead and that even here thou takest,  
As from my death-bed, thy last living leave.  
In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire  
With good old folks and let them tell thee tales  
Of woeful ages long ago betid;  
And ere thou bid good night, to quit their griefs,  
Tell thou the lamentable tale of me  
And send the hearers weeping to their beds:  
For why, the senseless brands will sympathize  
The heavy accent of thy moving tongue  
And in compassion weep the fire out;  
And some will mourn in ashes, some coal-black,  
For the deposing of a rightful king.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

My lord, the mind of Bolingbroke is changed:  
You must to Pomfret, not unto the Tower.  
And, madam, there is order ta'en for you;  
With all swift speed you must away to France.

KING RICHARD II:

Northumberland, thou ladder wherewithal  
The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne,  
The time shall not be many hours of age  
More than it is ere foul sin gathering head  
Shalt break into corruption: thou shalt think,  
Though he divide the realm and give thee half,  
It is too little, helping him to all;  
And he shall think that thou, which know'st the way  
To plant unrightful kings, wilt know again,  
Being ne'er so little urged, another way  
To pluck him headlong from the usurped throne.  
The love of wicked men converts to fear;  
That fear to hate, and hate turns one or both  
To worthy danger and deserved death.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

My guilt be on my head, and there an end.  
Take leave and part; for you must part forthwith.

KING RICHARD II:

Doubly divorced! Bad men, you violate  
A twofold marriage, 'twixt my crown and me,  
And then betwixt me and my married wife.  
Let me unkiss the oath 'twixt thee and me;  
And yet not so, for with a kiss 'twas made.  
Part us, Northumberland; I toward the north,

Where shivering cold and sickness pines the clime;  
My wife to France: from whence, set forth in pomp,  
She came adorned hither like sweet May,  
Sent back like Hallowmas or short'st of day.

QUEEN:

And must we be divided? must we part?

KING RICHARD II:

Ay, hand from hand, my love, and heart from heart.

QUEEN:

Banish us both and send the king with me.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

That were some love but little policy.

QUEEN:

Then whither he goes, thither let me go.

KING RICHARD II:

So two, together weeping, make one woe.  
Weep thou for me in France, I for thee here;  
Better far off than near, be ne'er the near.  
Go, count thy way with sighs; I mine with groans.

QUEEN:

So longest way shall have the longest moans.

KING RICHARD II:

Twice for one step I'll groan, the way being short,  
And piece the way out with a heavy heart.  
Come, come, in wooing sorrow let's be brief,  
Since, wedding it, there is such length in grief;  
One kiss shall stop our mouths, and dumbly part;  
Thus give I mine, and thus take I thy heart.

QUEEN:

Give me mine own again; 'twere no good part  
To take on me to keep and kill thy heart.  
So, now I have mine own again, be gone,  
That I might strive to kill it with a groan.

KING RICHARD II:

We make woe wanton with this fond delay:  
Once more, adieu; the rest let sorrow say.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

My lord, you told me you would tell the rest,  
When weeping made you break the story off,

of our two cousins coming into London.

DUKE OF YORK:

Where did I leave?

DUCHESS OF YORK:

At that sad stop, my lord,  
Where rude misgovern'd hands from windows' tops  
Threw dust and rubbish on King Richard's head.

DUKE OF YORK:

Then, as I said, the duke, great Bolingbroke,  
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed  
Which his aspiring rider seem'd to know,  
With slow but stately pace kept on his course,  
Whilst all tongues cried 'God save thee,  
Bolingbroke!'  
You would have thought the very windows spake,  
So many greedy looks of young and old  
Through casements darted their desiring eyes  
Upon his visage, and that all the walls  
With painted imagery had said at once  
'Jesu preserve thee! welcome, Bolingbroke!'  
Whilst he, from the one side to the other turning,  
Bareheaded, lower than his proud steed's neck,  
Bespake them thus: 'I thank you, countrymen:'  
And thus still doing, thus he pass'd along.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Alack, poor Richard! where rode he the whilst?

DUKE OF YORK:

As in a theatre, the eyes of men,  
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,  
Are idly bent on him that enters next,  
Thinking his prattle to be tedious;  
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes  
Did scowl on gentle Richard; no man cried 'God save him!'  
No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home:  
But dust was thrown upon his sacred head:  
Which with such gentle sorrow he shook off,  
His face still combating with tears and smiles,  
The badges of his grief and patience,  
That had not God, for some strong purpose, steel'd  
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted  
And barbarism itself have pitied him.  
But heaven hath a hand in these events,  
To whose high will we bound our calm contents.  
To Bolingbroke are we sworn subjects now,  
Whose state and honour I for aye allow.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
Here comes my son Aumerle.

DUKE OF YORK:  
Aumerle that was;  
But that is lost for being Richard's friend,  
And, madam, you must call him Rutland now:  
I am in parliament pledge for his truth  
And lasting fealty to the new-made king.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
Welcome, my son: who are the violets now  
That strew the green lap of the new come spring?

DUKE OF AUMERLE:  
Madam, I know not, nor I greatly care not:  
God knows I had as lief be none as one.

DUKE OF YORK:  
Well, bear you well in this new spring of time,  
Lest you be cropp'd before you come to prime.  
What news from Oxford? hold those justs and triumphs?

DUKE OF AUMERLE:  
For aught I know, my lord, they do.

DUKE OF YORK:  
You will be there, I know.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:  
If God prevent not, I purpose so.

DUKE OF YORK:  
What seal is that, that hangs without thy bosom?  
Yea, look'st thou pale? let me see the writing.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:  
My lord, 'tis nothing.

DUKE OF YORK:  
No matter, then, who see it;  
I will be satisfied; let me see the writing.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:  
I do beseech your grace to pardon me:  
It is a matter of small consequence,  
Which for some reasons I would not have seen.

DUKE OF YORK:

Which for some reasons, sir, I mean to see.  
I fear, I fear,--

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
What should you fear?  
'Tis nothing but some bond, that he is enter'd into  
For gay apparel 'gainst the triumph day.

DUKE OF YORK:  
Bound to himself! what doth he with a bond  
That he is bound to? Wife, thou art a fool.  
Boy, let me see the writing.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:  
I do beseech you, pardon me; I may not show it.

DUKE OF YORK:  
I will be satisfied; let me see it, I say.  
Treason! foul treason! Villain! traitor! slave!

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
What is the matter, my lord?

DUKE OF YORK:  
Ho! who is within there?  
Saddle my horse.  
God for his mercy, what treachery is here!

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
Why, what is it, my lord?

DUKE OF YORK:  
Give me my boots, I say; saddle my horse.  
Now, by mine honour, by my life, by my troth,  
I will appeach the villain.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
What is the matter?

DUKE OF YORK:  
Peace, foolish woman.

DUCHESS OF YORK:  
I will not peace. What is the matter, Aumerle.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:  
Good mother, be content; it is no more  
Than my poor life must answer.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Thy life answer!

DUKE OF YORK:

Bring me my boots: I will unto the king.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Strike him, Aumerle. Poor boy, thou art amazed.  
Hence, villain! never more come in my sight.

DUKE OF YORK:

Give me my boots, I say.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Why, York, what wilt thou do?  
Wilt thou not hide the trespass of thine own?  
Have we more sons? or are we like to have?  
Is not my teeming date drunk up with time?  
And wilt thou pluck my fair son from mine age,  
And rob me of a happy mother's name?  
Is he not like thee? is he not thine own?

DUKE OF YORK:

Thou fond mad woman,  
Wilt thou conceal this dark conspiracy?  
A dozen of them here have ta'en the sacrament,  
And interchangeably set down their hands,  
To kill the king at Oxford.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

He shall be none;  
We'll keep him here: then what is that to him?

DUKE OF YORK:

Away, fond woman! were he twenty times my son,  
I would appeach him.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Hadst thou groan'd for him  
As I have done, thou wouldst be more pitiful.  
But now I know thy mind; thou dost suspect  
That I have been disloyal to thy bed,  
And that he is a bastard, not thy son:  
Sweet York, sweet husband, be not of that mind:  
He is as like thee as a man may be,  
Not like to me, or any of my kin,  
And yet I love him.

DUKE OF YORK:

Make way, unruly woman!

DUCHESS OF YORK:

After, Aumerle! mount thee upon his horse;  
Spur post, and get before him to the king,  
And beg thy pardon ere he do accuse thee.  
I'll not be long behind; though I be old,  
I doubt not but to ride as fast as York:  
And never will I rise up from the ground  
Till Bolingbroke have pardon'd thee. Away, be gone!

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Can no man tell me of my unthrifty son?  
'Tis full three months since I did see him last;  
If any plague hang over us, 'tis he.  
I would to God, my lords, he might be found:  
Inquire at London, 'mongst the taverns there,  
For there, they say, he daily doth frequent,  
With unrestrained loose companions,  
Even such, they say, as stand in narrow lanes,  
And beat our watch, and rob our passengers;  
Which he, young wanton and effeminate boy,  
Takes on the point of honour to support  
So dissolute a crew.

HENRY PERCY:

My lord, some two days since I saw the prince,  
And told him of those triumphs held at Oxford.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

And what said the gallant?

HENRY PERCY:

His answer was, he would unto the stews,  
And from the common'st creature pluck a glove,  
And wear it as a favour; and with that  
He would unhorse the lustiest challenger.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

As dissolute as desperate; yet through both  
I see some sparks of better hope, which elder years  
May happily bring forth. But who comes here?

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Where is the king?

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

What means our cousin, that he stares and looks  
So wildly?

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

God save your grace! I do beseech your majesty,

To have some conference with your grace alone.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Withdraw yourselves, and leave us here alone.  
What is the matter with our cousin now?

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

For ever may my knees grow to the earth,  
My tongue cleave to my roof within my mouth  
Unless a pardon ere I rise or speak.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Intended or committed was this fault?  
If on the first, how heinous e'er it be,  
To win thy after-love I pardon thee.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Then give me leave that I may turn the key,  
That no man enter till my tale be done.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Have thy desire.

DUKE OF YORK:

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Villain, I'll make thee safe.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Stay thy revengeful hand; thou hast no cause to fear.

DUKE OF YORK:

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

What is the matter, uncle? speak;  
Recover breath; tell us how near is danger,  
That we may arm us to encounter it.

DUKE OF YORK:

Peruse this writing here, and thou shalt know  
The treason that my haste forbids me show.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Remember, as thou read'st, thy promise pass'd:  
I do repent me; read not my name there  
My heart is not confederate with my hand.

DUKE OF YORK:

It was, villain, ere thy hand did set it down.  
I tore it from the traitor's bosom, king;



Fear, and not love, begets his penitence:  
Forget to pity him, lest thy pity prove  
A serpent that will sting thee to the heart.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

O heinous, strong and bold conspiracy!  
O loyal father of a treacherous son!  
Thou sheer, immaculate and silver fountain,  
From when this stream through muddy passages  
Hath held his current and defiled himself!  
Thy overflow of good converts to bad,  
And thy abundant goodness shall excuse  
This deadly blot in thy digressing son.

DUKE OF YORK:

So shall my virtue be his vice's bawd;  
And he shall spend mine honour with his shame,  
As thriftless sons their scraping fathers' gold.  
Mine honour lives when his dishonour dies,  
Or my shamed life in his dishonour lies:  
Thou kill'st me in his life; giving him breath,  
The traitor lives, the true man's put to death.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

What shrill-voiced suppliant makes this eager cry?

DUCHESS OF YORK:

A woman, and thy aunt, great king; 'tis I.  
Speak with me, pity me, open the door.  
A beggar begs that never begg'd before.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Our scene is alter'd from a serious thing,  
And now changed to 'The Beggar and the King.'  
My dangerous cousin, let your mother in:  
I know she is come to pray for your foul sin.

DUKE OF YORK:

If thou do pardon, whosoever pray,  
More sins for this forgiveness prosper may.  
This fester'd joint cut off, the rest rest sound;  
This let alone will all the rest confound.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

O king, believe not this hard-hearted man!  
Love loving not itself none other can.

DUKE OF YORK:

Thou frantic woman, what dost thou make here?  
Shall thy old dugs once more a traitor rear?

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Sweet York, be patient. Hear me, gentle liege.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Rise up, good aunt.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Not yet, I thee beseech:

For ever will I walk upon my knees,  
And never see day that the happy sees,  
Till thou give joy; until thou bid me joy,  
By pardoning Rutland, my transgressing boy.

DUKE OF AUMERLE:

Unto my mother's prayers I bend my knee.

DUKE OF YORK:

Against them both my true joints bended be.  
Ill mayst thou thrive, if thou grant any grace!

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Pleads he in earnest? look upon his face;  
His eyes do drop no tears, his prayers are in jest;  
His words come from his mouth, ours from our breast:  
He prays but faintly and would be denied;  
We pray with heart and soul and all beside:  
His weary joints would gladly rise, I know;  
Our knees shall kneel till to the ground they grow:  
His prayers are full of false hypocrisy;  
Ours of true zeal and deep integrity.  
Our prayers do out-pray his; then let them have  
That mercy which true prayer ought to have.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Good aunt, stand up.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Nay, do not say, 'stand up;'  
Say, 'pardon' first, and afterwards 'stand up.'  
And if I were thy nurse, thy tongue to teach,  
'Pardon' should be the first word of thy speech.  
I never long'd to hear a word till now;  
Say 'pardon,' king; let pity teach thee how:  
The word is short, but not so short as sweet;  
No word like 'pardon' for kings' mouths so meet.

DUKE OF YORK:

Speak it in French, king; say, 'pardonne moi.'

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Dost thou teach pardon pardon to destroy?  
Ah, my sour husband, my hard-hearted lord,  
That set'st the word itself against the word!  
Speak 'pardon' as 'tis current in our land;  
The chopping French we do not understand.  
Thine eye begins to speak; set thy tongue there;  
Or in thy piteous heart plant thou thine ear;  
That hearing how our complaints and prayers do pierce,  
Pity may move thee 'pardon' to rehearse.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Good aunt, stand up.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

I do not sue to stand;  
Pardon is all the suit I have in hand.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

I pardon him, as God shall pardon me.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

O happy vantage of a kneeling knee!  
Yet am I sick for fear: speak it again;  
Twice saying 'pardon' doth not pardon twain,  
But makes one pardon strong.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

With all my heart  
I pardon him.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

A god on earth thou art.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

But for our trusty brother-in-law and the abbot,  
With all the rest of that consorted crew,  
Destruction straight shall dog them at the heels.  
Good uncle, help to order several powers  
To Oxford, or where'er these traitors are:  
They shall not live within this world, I swear,  
But I will have them, if I once know where.  
Uncle, farewell: and, cousin too, adieu:  
Your mother well hath pray'd, and prove you true.

DUCHESS OF YORK:

Come, my old son: I pray God make thee new.

EXTON:

Didst thou not mark the king, what words he spake,  
'Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?'  
Was it not so?

Servant:

These were his very words.

EXTON:

'Have I no friend?' quoth he: he spake it twice,  
And urged it twice together, did he not?

Servant:

He did.

EXTON:

And speaking it, he wistly look'd on me,  
And who should say, 'I would thou wert the man'  
That would divorce this terror from my heart;  
Meaning the king at Pomfret. Come, let's go:  
I am the king's friend, and will rid his foe.

KING RICHARD II:

I have been studying how I may compare  
This prison where I live unto the world:  
And for because the world is populous  
And here is not a creature but myself,  
I cannot do it; yet I'll hammer it out.  
My brain I'll prove the female to my soul,  
My soul the father; and these two beget  
A generation of still-breeding thoughts,  
And these same thoughts people this little world,  
In humours like the people of this world,  
For no thought is contented. The better sort,  
As thoughts of things divine, are intermix'd  
With scruples and do set the word itself  
Against the word:  
As thus, 'Come, little ones,' and then again,  
'It is as hard to come as for a camel  
To thread the postern of a small needle's eye.'  
Thoughts tending to ambition, they do plot  
Unlikely wonders; how these vain weak nails  
May tear a passage through the flinty ribs  
Of this hard world, my ragged prison walls,  
And, for they cannot, die in their own pride.  
Thoughts tending to content flatter themselves  
That they are not the first of fortune's slaves,  
Nor shall not be the last; like silly beggars  
Who sitting in the stocks refuge their shame,  
That many have and others must sit there;

And in this thought they find a kind of ease,  
Bearing their own misfortunes on the back  
Of such as have before endured the like.  
Thus play I in one person many people,  
And none contented: sometimes am I king;  
Then treasons make me wish myself a beggar,  
And so I am: then crushing penury  
Persuades me I was better when a king;  
Then am I king'd again: and by and by  
Think that I am unking'd by Bolingbroke,  
And straight am nothing: but whate'er I be,  
Nor I nor any man that but man is  
With nothing shall be pleased, till he be eased  
With being nothing. Music do I hear?  
Ha, ha! keep time: how sour sweet music is,  
When time is broke and no proportion kept!  
So is it in the music of men's lives.  
And here have I the daintiness of ear  
To cheque time broke in a disorder'd string;  
But for the concord of my state and time  
Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.  
I wasted time, and now doth time waste me;  
For now hath time made me his numbering clock:  
My thoughts are minutes; and with sighs they jar  
Their watches on unto mine eyes, the outward watch,  
Whereto my finger, like a dial's point,  
Is pointing still, in cleansing them from tears.  
Now sir, the sound that tells what hour it is  
Are clamorous groans, which strike upon my heart,  
Which is the bell: so sighs and tears and groans  
Show minutes, times, and hours: but my time  
Runs posting on in Bolingbroke's proud joy,  
While I stand fooling here, his Jack o' the clock.  
This music mads me; let it sound no more;  
For though it have help madmen to their wits,  
In me it seems it will make wise men mad.  
Yet blessing on his heart that gives it me!  
For 'tis a sign of love; and love to Richard  
Is a strange brooch in this all-hating world.

Groom:  
Hail, royal prince!

KING RICHARD II:  
Thanks, noble peer;  
The cheapest of us is ten groats too dear.  
What art thou? and how comest thou hither,  
Where no man never comes but that sad dog  
That brings me food to make misfortune live?

Groom:

I was a poor groom of thy stable, king,  
When thou wert king; who, travelling towards York,  
With much ado at length have gotten leave  
To look upon my sometimes royal master's face.  
O, how it yearn'd my heart when I beheld  
In London streets, that coronation-day,  
When Bolingbroke rode on roan Barbary,  
That horse that thou so often hast bestrid,  
That horse that I so carefully have dress'd!

KING RICHARD II:

Rode he on Barbary? Tell me, gentle friend,  
How went he under him?

Groom:

So proudly as if he disdain'd the ground.

KING RICHARD II:

So proud that Bolingbroke was on his back!  
That jade hath eat bread from my royal hand;  
This hand hath made him proud with clapping him.  
Would he not stumble? would he not fall down,  
Since pride must have a fall, and break the neck  
Of that proud man that did usurp his back?  
Forgiveness, horse! why do I rail on thee,  
Since thou, created to be awed by man,  
Wast born to bear? I was not made a horse;  
And yet I bear a burthen like an ass,  
Spurr'd, gall'd and tired by jouncing Bolingbroke.

Keeper:

Fellow, give place; here is no longer stay.

KING RICHARD II:

If thou love me, 'tis time thou wert away.

Groom:

What my tongue dares not, that my heart shall say.

Keeper:

My lord, will't please you to fall to?

KING RICHARD II:

Taste of it first, as thou art wont to do.

Keeper:

My lord, I dare not: Sir Pierce of Exton, who  
lately came from the king, commands the contrary.

KING RICHARD II:

The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee!  
Patience is stale, and I am weary of it.

Keeper:

Help, help, help!

KING RICHARD II:

How now! what means death in this rude assault?  
Villain, thy own hand yields thy death's instrument.  
Go thou, and fill another room in hell.  
That hand shall burn in never-quenching fire  
That staggers thus my person. Exton, thy fierce hand  
Hath with the king's blood stain'd the king's own land.  
Mount, mount, my soul! thy seat is up on high;  
Whilst my gross flesh sinks downward, here to die.

EXTON:

As full of valour as of royal blood:  
Both have I spill'd; O would the deed were good!  
For now the devil, that told me I did well,  
Says that this deed is chronicled in hell.  
This dead king to the living king I'll bear  
Take hence the rest, and give them burial here.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Kind uncle York, the latest news we hear  
Is that the rebels have consumed with fire  
Our town of Cicester in Gloucestershire;  
But whether they be ta'en or slain we hear not.  
Welcome, my lord what is the news?

NORTHUMBERLAND:

First, to thy sacred state wish I all happiness.  
The next news is, I have to London sent  
The heads of Oxford, Salisbury, Blunt, and Kent:  
The manner of their taking may appear  
At large discoursed in this paper here.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

We thank thee, gentle Percy, for thy pains;  
And to thy worth will add right worthy gains.

LORD FITZWATER:

My lord, I have from Oxford sent to London  
The heads of Brocas and Sir Bennet Seely,  
Two of the dangerous consorted traitors  
That sought at Oxford thy dire overthrow.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Thy pains, Fitzwater, shall not be forgot;  
Right noble is thy merit, well I wot.

HENRY PERCY:

The grand conspirator, Abbot of Westminster,  
With clog of conscience and sour melancholy  
Hath yielded up his body to the grave;  
But here is Carlisle living, to abide  
Thy kingly doom and sentence of his pride.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Carlisle, this is your doom:  
Choose out some secret place, some reverend room,  
More than thou hast, and with it joy thy life;  
So as thou livest in peace, die free from strife:  
For though mine enemy thou hast ever been,  
High sparks of honour in thee have I seen.

EXTON:

Great king, within this coffin I present  
Thy buried fear: herein all breathless lies  
The mightiest of thy greatest enemies,  
Richard of Bordeaux, by me hither brought.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

Exton, I thank thee not; for thou hast wrought  
A deed of slander with thy fatal hand  
Upon my head and all this famous land.

EXTON:

From your own mouth, my lord, did I this deed.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE:

They love not poison that do poison need,  
Nor do I thee: though I did wish him dead,  
I hate the murderer, love him murdered.  
The guilt of conscience take thou for thy labour,  
But neither my good word nor princely favour:  
With Cain go wander through shades of night,  
And never show thy head by day nor light.  
Lords, I protest, my soul is full of woe,  
That blood should sprinkle me to make me grow:  
Come, mourn with me for that I do lament,  
And put on sullen black incontinent:  
I'll make a voyage to the Holy Land,  
To wash this blood off from my guilty hand:  
March sadly after; grace my mournings here;  
In weeping after this untimely bier.



SAMPSON:  
Gregory, o' my word, we'll not carry coals.

GREGORY:  
No, for then we should be colliers.

SAMPSON:  
I mean, an we be in choler, we'll draw.

GREGORY:  
Ay, while you live, draw your neck out o' the collar.

SAMPSON:  
I strike quickly, being moved.

GREGORY:  
But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

SAMPSON:  
A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

GREGORY:  
To move is to stir; and to be valiant is to stand:  
therefore, if thou art moved, thou runn'st away.

SAMPSON:  
A dog of that house shall move me to stand: I will  
take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.

GREGORY:  
That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes  
to the wall.

SAMPSON:  
True; and therefore women, being the weaker vessels,  
are ever thrust to the wall: therefore I will push  
Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids  
to the wall.

GREGORY:  
The quarrel is between our masters and us their men.

SAMPSON:  
'Tis all one, I will show myself a tyrant: when I  
have fought with the men, I will be cruel with the  
maids, and cut off their heads.

GREGORY:  
The heads of the maids?

SAMPSON:

Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads;  
take it in what sense thou wilt.

GREGORY:

They must take it in sense that feel it.

SAMPSON:

Me they shall feel while I am able to stand: and  
'tis known I am a pretty piece of flesh.

GREGORY:

'Tis well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou  
hadst been poor John. Draw thy tool! here comes  
two of the house of the Montagues.

SAMPSON:

My naked weapon is out: quarrel, I will back thee.

GREGORY:

How! turn thy back and run?

SAMPSON:

Fear me not.

GREGORY:

No, marry; I fear thee!

SAMPSON:

Let us take the law of our sides; let them begin.

GREGORY:

I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as  
they list.

SAMPSON:

Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them;  
which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.

ABRAHAM:

Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON:

I do bite my thumb, sir.

ABRAHAM:

Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON:

GREGORY:

No.

SAMPSON:

No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir, but I bite my thumb, sir.

GREGORY:

Do you quarrel, sir?

ABRAHAM:

Quarrel sir! no, sir.

SAMPSON:

If you do, sir, I am for you: I serve as good a man as you.

ABRAHAM:

No better.

SAMPSON:

Well, sir.

GREGORY:

Say 'better:' here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

SAMPSON:

Yes, better, sir.

ABRAHAM:

You lie.

SAMPSON:

Draw, if you be men. Gregory, remember thy swashing blow.

BENVOLIO:

Part, fools!

Put up your swords; you know not what you do.

TYBALT:

What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?

Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

BENVOLIO:

I do but keep the peace: put up thy sword,  
Or manage it to part these men with me.

TYBALT:

What, drawn, and talk of peace! I hate the word,  
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee:  
Have at thee, coward!

First Citizen:

Clubs, bills, and partisans! strike! beat them down!  
Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!

CAPULET:

What noise is this? Give me my long sword, ho!

LADY CAPULET:

A crutch, a crutch! why call you for a sword?

CAPULET:

My sword, I say! Old Montague is come,  
And flourishes his blade in spite of me.

MONTAGUE:

Thou villain Capulet,--Hold me not, let me go.

LADY MONTAGUE:

Thou shalt not stir a foot to seek a foe.

PRINCE:

Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,  
Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel,--  
Will they not hear? What, ho! you men, you beasts,  
That quench the fire of your pernicious rage  
With purple fountains issuing from your veins,  
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands  
Throw your mistemper'd weapons to the ground,  
And hear the sentence of your moved prince.  
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,  
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,  
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets,  
And made Verona's ancient citizens  
Cast by their grave beseeming ornaments,  
To wield old partisans, in hands as old,  
Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd hate:  
If ever you disturb our streets again,  
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.  
For this time, all the rest depart away:  
You Capulet; shall go along with me:  
And, Montague, come you this afternoon,  
To know our further pleasure in this case,  
To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.  
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

MONTAGUE:

Who set this ancient quarrel new abroach?  
Speak, nephew, were you by when it began?

BENVOLIO:

Here were the servants of your adversary,  
And yours, close fighting ere I did approach:  
I drew to part them: in the instant came  
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepared,  
Which, as he breathed defiance to my ears,  
He swung about his head and cut the winds,  
Who nothing hurt withal hiss'd him in scorn:  
While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,  
Came more and more and fought on part and part,  
Till the prince came, who parted either part.

LADY MONTAGUE:

O, where is Romeo? saw you him to-day?  
Right glad I am he was not at this fray.

BENVOLIO:

Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun  
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east,  
A troubled mind drave me to walk abroad;  
Where, underneath the grove of sycamore  
That westward rooteth from the city's side,  
So early walking did I see your son:  
Towards him I made, but he was ware of me  
And stole into the covert of the wood:  
I, measuring his affections by my own,  
That most are busied when they're most alone,  
Pursued my humour not pursuing his,  
And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me.

MONTAGUE:

Many a morning hath he there been seen,  
With tears augmenting the fresh morning dew.  
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs;  
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun  
Should in the furthest east begin to draw  
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,  
Away from the light steals home my heavy son,  
And private in his chamber pens himself,  
Shuts up his windows, locks far daylight out  
And makes himself an artificial night:  
Black and portentous must this humour prove,  
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

BENVOLIO:

My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

MONTAGUE:

I neither know it nor can learn of him.

BENVOLIO:

Have you importuned him by any means?

MONTAGUE:

Both by myself and many other friends:  
But he, his own affections' counsellor,  
Is to himself--I will not say how true--  
But to himself so secret and so close,  
So far from sounding and discovery,  
As is the bud bit with an envious worm,  
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,  
Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.  
Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow.  
We would as willingly give cure as know.

BENVOLIO:

See, where he comes: so please you, step aside;  
I'll know his grievance, or be much denied.

MONTAGUE:

I would thou wert so happy by thy stay,  
To hear true shrift. Come, madam, let's away.

BENVOLIO:

Good-morrow, cousin.

ROMEO:

Is the day so young?

BENVOLIO:

But new struck nine.

ROMEO:

Ay me! sad hours seem long.  
Was that my father that went hence so fast?

BENVOLIO:

It was. What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?

ROMEO:

Not having that, which, having, makes them short.

BENVOLIO:

In love?

ROMEO:

Out--

BENVOLIO:

Of love?

ROMEO:

Out of her favour, where I am in love.

BENVOLIO:

Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,  
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!

ROMEO:

Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,  
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will!  
Where shall we dine? O me! What fray was here?  
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.  
Here's much to do with hate, but more with love.  
Why, then, O brawling love! O loving hate!  
O any thing, of nothing first create!  
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!  
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!  
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire,  
sick health!  
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!  
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.  
Dost thou not laugh?

BENVOLIO:

No, coz, I rather weep.

ROMEO:

Good heart, at what?

BENVOLIO:

At thy good heart's oppression.

ROMEO:

Why, such is love's transgression.  
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,  
Which thou wilt propagate, to have it prest  
With more of thine: this love that thou hast shown  
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.  
Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;  
Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;  
Being vex'd a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:  
What is it else? a madness most discreet,  
A choking gall and a preserving sweet.  
Farewell, my coz.

BENVOLIO:

Soft! I will go along;  
An if you leave me so, you do me wrong.

ROMEO:

Tut, I have lost myself; I am not here;  
This is not Romeo, he's some other where.

BENVOLIO:

Tell me in sadness, who is that you love.

ROMEO:

What, shall I groan and tell thee?

BENVOLIO:

Groan! why, no.  
But sadly tell me who.

ROMEO:

Bid a sick man in sadness make his will:  
Ah, word ill urged to one that is so ill!  
In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

BENVOLIO:

I aim'd so near, when I supposed you loved.

ROMEO:

A right good mark-man! And she's fair I love.

BENVOLIO:

A right fair mark, fair coz, is soonest hit.

ROMEO:

Well, in that hit you miss: she'll not be hit  
With Cupid's arrow; she hath Dian's wit;  
And, in strong proof of chastity well arm'd,  
From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.  
She will not stay the siege of loving terms,  
Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes,  
Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold:  
O, she is rich in beauty, only poor,  
That when she dies with beauty dies her store.

BENVOLIO:

Then she hath sworn that she will still live chaste?

ROMEO:

She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste,  
For beauty starved with her severity  
Cuts beauty off from all posterity.  
She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair,  
To merit bliss by making me despair:  
She hath forsworn to love, and in that vow  
Do I live dead that live to tell it now.



BENVOLIO:

Be ruled by me, forget to think of her.

ROMEO:

O, teach me how I should forget to think.

BENVOLIO:

By giving liberty unto thine eyes;  
Examine other beauties.

ROMEO:

'Tis the way  
To call hers exquisite, in question more:  
These happy masks that kiss fair ladies' brows  
Being black put us in mind they hide the fair;  
He that is stricken blind cannot forget  
The precious treasure of his eyesight lost:  
Show me a mistress that is passing fair,  
What doth her beauty serve, but as a note  
Where I may read who pass'd that passing fair?  
Farewell: thou canst not teach me to forget.

BENVOLIO:

I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.

CAPULET:

But Montague is bound as well as I,  
In penalty alike; and 'tis not hard, I think,  
For men so old as we to keep the peace.

PARIS:

Of honourable reckoning are you both;  
And pity 'tis you lived at odds so long.  
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?

CAPULET:

But saying o'er what I have said before:  
My child is yet a stranger in the world;  
She hath not seen the change of fourteen years,  
Let two more summers wither in their pride,  
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

PARIS:

Younger than she are happy mothers made.

CAPULET:

And too soon marr'd are those so early made.  
The earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she,  
She is the hopeful lady of my earth:

But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,  
My will to her consent is but a part;  
An she agree, within her scope of choice  
Lies my consent and fair according voice.  
This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,  
Whereto I have invited many a guest,  
Such as I love; and you, among the store,  
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.  
At my poor house look to behold this night  
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light:  
Such comfort as do lusty young men feel  
When well-apparell'd April on the heel  
Of limping winter treads, even such delight  
Among fresh female buds shall you this night  
Inherit at my house; hear all, all see,  
And like her most whose merit most shall be:  
Which on more view, of many mine being one  
May stand in number, though in reckoning none,  
Come, go with me.  
Go, sirrah, trudge about  
Through fair Verona; find those persons out  
Whose names are written there, and to them say,  
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

Servant:

Find them out whose names are written here! It is  
written, that the shoemaker should meddle with his  
yard, and the tailor with his last, the fisher with  
his pencil, and the painter with his nets; but I am  
sent to find those persons whose names are here  
writ, and can never find what names the writing  
person hath here writ. I must to the learned.--In good time.

BENVOLIO:

Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning,  
One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish;  
Turn giddy, and be holp by backward turning;  
One desperate grief cures with another's languish:  
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,  
And the rank poison of the old will die.

ROMEO:

Your plaintain-leaf is excellent for that.

BENVOLIO:

For what, I pray thee?

ROMEO:

For your broken shin.

BENVOLIO:

Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

ROMEO:

Not mad, but bound more than a mad-man is;  
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,  
Whipp'd and tormented and--God-den, good fellow.

Servant:

God gi' god-den. I pray, sir, can you read?

ROMEO:

Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

Servant:

Perhaps you have learned it without book: but, I  
pray, can you read any thing you see?

ROMEO:

Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

Servant:

Ye say honestly: rest you merry!

ROMEO:

Stay, fellow; I can read.  
'Signior Martino and his wife and daughters;  
County Anselme and his beauteous sisters; the lady  
widow of Vitravio; Signior Placentio and his lovely  
nieces; Mercutio and his brother Valentine; mine  
uncle Capulet, his wife and daughters; my fair niece  
Rosaline; Livia; Signior Valentio and his cousin  
Tybalt, Lucio and the lively Helena.' A fair  
assembly: whither should they come?

Servant:

Up.

ROMEO:

Whither?

Servant:

To supper; to our house.

ROMEO:

Whose house?

Servant:

My master's.

ROMEO:

Indeed, I should have ask'd you that before.

Servant:

Now I'll tell you without asking: my master is the great rich Capulet; and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray, come and crush a cup of wine. Rest you merry!

BENVOLIO:

At this same ancient feast of Capulet's  
Supps the fair Rosaline whom thou so lovest,  
With all the admired beauties of Verona:  
Go thither; and, with unattainted eye,  
Compare her face with some that I shall show,  
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

ROMEO:

When the devout religion of mine eye  
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires;  
And these, who often drown'd could never die,  
Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars!  
One fairer than my love! the all-seeing sun  
Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

BENVOLIO:

Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,  
Herself poised with herself in either eye:  
But in that crystal scales let there be weigh'd  
Your lady's love against some other maid  
That I will show you shining at this feast,  
And she shall scant show well that now shows best.

ROMEO:

I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,  
But to rejoice in splendor of mine own.

LADY CAPULET:

Nurse, where's my daughter? call her forth to me.

Nurse:

Now, by my maidenhead, at twelve year old,  
I bade her come. What, lamb! what, ladybird!  
God forbid! Where's this girl? What, Juliet!

JULIET:

How now! who calls?

Nurse:

Your mother.

JULIET:

Madam, I am here.

What is your will?

LADY CAPULET:

This is the matter:--Nurse, give leave awhile,  
We must talk in secret:--nurse, come back again;  
I have remember'd me, thou's hear our counsel.  
Thou know'st my daughter's of a pretty age.

Nurse:

Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

LADY CAPULET:

She's not fourteen.

Nurse:

I'll lay fourteen of my teeth,--  
And yet, to my teeth be it spoken, I have but four--  
She is not fourteen. How long is it now  
To Lammas-tide?

LADY CAPULET:

A fortnight and odd days.

Nurse:

Even or odd, of all days in the year,  
Come Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen.  
Susan and she--God rest all Christian souls!--  
Were of an age: well, Susan is with God;  
She was too good for me: but, as I said,  
On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen;  
That shall she, marry; I remember it well.  
'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years;  
And she was wean'd,--I never shall forget it,--  
Of all the days of the year, upon that day:  
For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,  
Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall;  
My lord and you were then at Mantua:--  
Nay, I do bear a brain:--but, as I said,  
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple  
Of my dug and felt it bitter, pretty fool,  
To see it tetchy and fall out with the dug!  
Shake quoth the dove-house: 'twas no need, I trow,  
To bid me trudge:  
And since that time it is eleven years;  
For then she could stand alone; nay, by the rood,  
She could have run and waddled all about;  
For even the day before, she broke her brow:

And then my husband--God be with his soul!  
A' was a merry man--took up the child:  
'Yea,' quoth he, 'dost thou fall upon thy face?  
Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit;  
Wilt thou not, Jule?' and, by my holidame,  
The pretty wretch left crying and said 'Ay.'  
To see, now, how a jest shall come about!  
I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,  
I never should forget it: 'Wilt thou not, Jule?' quoth he;  
And, pretty fool, it stinted and said 'Ay.'

LADY CAPULET:  
Enough of this; I pray thee, hold thy peace.

Nurse:  
Yes, madam: yet I cannot choose but laugh,  
To think it should leave crying and say 'Ay.'  
And yet, I warrant, it had upon its brow  
A bump as big as a young cockerel's stone;  
A parlous knock; and it cried bitterly:  
'Yea,' quoth my husband, 'fall'st upon thy face?  
Thou wilt fall backward when thou comest to age;  
Wilt thou not, Jule?' it stinted and said 'Ay.'

JULIET:  
And stint thou too, I pray thee, nurse, say I.

Nurse:  
Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace!  
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nursed:  
An I might live to see thee married once,  
I have my wish.

LADY CAPULET:  
Marry, that 'marry' is the very theme  
I came to talk of. Tell me, daughter Juliet,  
How stands your disposition to be married?

JULIET:  
It is an honour that I dream not of.

Nurse:  
An honour! were not I thine only nurse,  
I would say thou hadst suck'd wisdom from thy teat.

LADY CAPULET:  
Well, think of marriage now; younger than you,  
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,  
Are made already mothers: by my count,  
I was your mother much upon these years

That you are now a maid. Thus then in brief:  
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

Nurse:

A man, young lady! lady, such a man  
As all the world--why, he's a man of wax.

LADY CAPULET:

Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

Nurse:

Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a very flower.

LADY CAPULET:

What say you? can you love the gentleman?  
This night you shall behold him at our feast;  
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,  
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;  
Examine every married lineament,  
And see how one another lends content  
And what obscured in this fair volume lies  
Find written in the margent of his eyes.  
This precious book of love, this unbound lover,  
To beautify him, only lacks a cover:  
The fish lives in the sea, and 'tis much pride  
For fair without the fair within to hide:  
That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,  
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;  
So shall you share all that he doth possess,  
By having him, making yourself no less.

Nurse:

No less! nay, bigger; women grow by men.

LADY CAPULET:

Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

JULIET:

I'll look to like, if looking liking move:  
But no more deep will I endart mine eye  
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

Servant:

Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you  
called, my young lady asked for, the nurse cursed in  
the pantry, and every thing in extremity. I must  
hence to wait; I beseech you, follow straight.

LADY CAPULET:

We follow thee.

Juliet, the county stays.

Nurse:

Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

ROMEO:

What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?  
Or shall we on without a apology?

BENVOLIO:

The date is out of such prolixity:  
We'll have no Cupid hoodwink'd with a scarf,  
Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,  
Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper;  
Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke  
After the prompter, for our entrance:  
But let them measure us by what they will;  
We'll measure them a measure, and be gone.

ROMEO:

Give me a torch: I am not for this ambling;  
Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

MERCUTIO:

Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

ROMEO:

Not I, believe me: you have dancing shoes  
With nimble soles: I have a soul of lead  
So stakes me to the ground I cannot move.

MERCUTIO:

You are a lover; borrow Cupid's wings,  
And soar with them above a common bound.

ROMEO:

I am too sore enpierced with his shaft  
To soar with his light feathers, and so bound,  
I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe:  
Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

MERCUTIO:

And, to sink in it, should you burden love;  
Too great oppression for a tender thing.

ROMEO:

Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,  
Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn.

MERCUTIO:



If love be rough with you, be rough with love;  
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.  
Give me a case to put my visage in:  
A visor for a visor! what care I  
What curious eye doth quote deformities?  
Here are the beetle brows shall blush for me.

BENVOLIO:  
Come, knock and enter; and no sooner in,  
But every man betake him to his legs.

ROMEO:  
A torch for me: let wantons light of heart  
Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels,  
For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase;  
I'll be a candle-holder, and look on.  
The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.

MERCUTIO:  
Tut, dun's the mouse, the constable's own word:  
If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire  
Of this sir-reverence love, wherein thou stick'st  
Up to the ears. Come, we burn daylight, ho!

ROMEO:  
Nay, that's not so.

MERCUTIO:  
I mean, sir, in delay  
We waste our lights in vain, like lamps by day.  
Take our good meaning, for our judgment sits  
Five times in that ere once in our five wits.

ROMEO:  
And we mean well in going to this mask;  
But 'tis no wit to go.

MERCUTIO:  
Why, may one ask?

ROMEO:  
I dream'd a dream to-night.

MERCUTIO:  
And so did I.

ROMEO:  
Well, what was yours?

MERCUTIO:

That dreamers often lie.

ROMEO:

In bed asleep, while they do dream things true.

MERCUTIO:

O, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.  
She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes  
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone  
On the fore-finger of an alderman,  
Drawn with a team of little atomies  
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep;  
Her wagon-spokes made of long spiders' legs,  
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,  
The traces of the smallest spider's web,  
The collars of the moonshine's watery beams,  
Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,  
Her wagoner a small grey-coated gnat,  
Not so big as a round little worm  
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid;  
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut  
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,  
Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.  
And in this state she gallops night by night  
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;  
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight,  
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees,  
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,  
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,  
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are:  
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,  
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;  
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail  
Tickling a parson's nose as a' lies asleep,  
Then dreams, he of another benefice:  
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,  
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,  
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,  
Of healths five-fathom deep; and then anon  
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,  
And being thus frightened swears a prayer or two  
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab  
That plats the manes of horses in the night,  
And bakes the elflocks in foul sluttish hairs,  
Which once untangled, much misfortune bodes:  
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,  
That presses them and learns them first to bear,  
Making them women of good carriage:  
This is she--

ROMEO:

Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace!  
Thou talk'st of nothing.

MERCUTIO:

True, I talk of dreams,  
Which are the children of an idle brain,  
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy,  
Which is as thin of substance as the air  
And more inconstant than the wind, who wooes  
Even now the frozen bosom of the north,  
And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,  
Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.

BENVOLIO:

This wind, you talk of, blows us from ourselves;  
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

ROMEO:

I fear, too early: for my mind misgives  
Some consequence yet hanging in the stars  
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date  
With this night's revels and expire the term  
Of a despised life closed in my breast  
By some vile forfeit of untimely death.  
But He, that hath the steerage of my course,  
Direct my sail! On, lusty gentlemen.

BENVOLIO:

Strike, drum.

First Servant:

Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take away? He  
shift a trencher? he scrape a trencher!

Second Servant:

When good manners shall lie all in one or two men's  
hands and they unwashed too, 'tis a foul thing.

First Servant:

Away with the joint-stools, remove the  
court-cupboard, look to the plate. Good thou, save  
me a piece of marchpane; and, as thou lovest me, let  
the porter let in Susan Grindstone and Nell.  
Antony, and Potpan!

Second Servant:

Ay, boy, ready.

First Servant:

You are looked for and called for, asked for and sought for, in the great chamber.

Second Servant:

We cannot be here and there too. Cheerly, boys; be brisk awhile, and the longer liver take all.

CAPULET:

Welcome, gentlemen! ladies that have their toes  
Unplagued with corns will have a bout with you.  
Ah ha, my mistresses! which of you all  
Will now deny to dance? she that makes dainty,  
She, I'll swear, hath corns; am I come near ye now?  
Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day  
That I have worn a visor and could tell  
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,  
Such as would please: 'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone:  
You are welcome, gentlemen! come, musicians, play.  
A hall, a hall! give room! and foot it, girls.  
More light, you knaves; and turn the tables up,  
And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot.  
Ah, sirrah, this unlook'd-for sport comes well.  
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet;  
For you and I are past our dancing days:  
How long is't now since last yourself and I  
Were in a mask?

Second Capulet:

By'r lady, thirty years.

CAPULET:

What, man! 'tis not so much, 'tis not so much:  
'Tis since the nuptials of Lucentio,  
Come pentecost as quickly as it will,  
Some five and twenty years; and then we mask'd.

Second Capulet:

'Tis more, 'tis more, his son is elder, sir;  
His son is thirty.

CAPULET:

Will you tell me that?  
His son was but a ward two years ago.

ROMEO:

Servant:

I know not, sir.

ROMEO:

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!  
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night  
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear;  
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!  
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,  
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.  
The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,  
And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.  
Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!  
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

TYBALT:  
This, by his voice, should be a Montague.  
Fetch me my rapier, boy. What dares the slave  
Come hither, cover'd with an antic face,  
To fleer and scorn at our solemnity?  
Now, by the stock and honour of my kin,  
To strike him dead, I hold it not a sin.

CAPULET:  
Why, how now, kinsman! wherefore storm you so?

TYBALT:  
Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe,  
A villain that is hither come in spite,  
To scorn at our solemnity this night.

CAPULET:  
Young Romeo is it?

TYBALT:  
'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

CAPULET:  
Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone;  
He bears him like a portly gentleman;  
And, to say truth, Verona brags of him  
To be a virtuous and well-govern'd youth:  
I would not for the wealth of all the town  
Here in my house do him disparagement:  
Therefore be patient, take no note of him:  
It is my will, the which if thou respect,  
Show a fair presence and put off these frowns,  
And ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.

TYBALT:  
It fits, when such a villain is a guest:  
I'll not endure him.

CAPULET:

He shall be endured:  
What, goodman boy! I say, he shall: go to;  
Am I the master here, or you? go to.  
You'll not endure him! God shall mend my soul!  
You'll make a mutiny among my guests!  
You will set cock-a-hoop! you'll be the man!

TYBALT:  
Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

CAPULET:  
Go to, go to;  
You are a saucy boy: is't so, indeed?  
This trick may chance to scathe you, I know what:  
You must contrary me! marry, 'tis time.  
Well said, my hearts! You are a princex; go:  
Be quiet, or—More light, more light! For shame!  
I'll make you quiet. What, cheerly, my hearts!

TYBALT:  
Patience perforce with wilful choler meeting  
Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.  
I will withdraw: but this intrusion shall  
Now seeming sweet convert to bitter gall.

ROMEO:

JULIET:  
Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,  
Which mannerly devotion shows in this;  
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,  
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

ROMEO:  
Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

JULIET:  
Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

ROMEO:  
O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do;  
They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

JULIET:  
Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

ROMEO:  
Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.  
Thus from my lips, by yours, my sin is purged.

JULIET:

Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

ROMEO:

Sin from thy lips? O trespass sweetly urged!  
Give me my sin again.

JULIET:

You kiss by the book.

Nurse:

Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

ROMEO:

What is her mother?

Nurse:

Marry, bachelor,  
Her mother is the lady of the house,  
And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous  
I nursed her daughter, that you talk'd withal;  
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her  
Shall have the chinks.

ROMEO:

Is she a Capulet?  
O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.

BENVOLIO:

Away, begone; the sport is at the best.

ROMEO:

Ay, so I fear; the more is my unrest.

CAPULET:

Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone;  
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.  
Is it e'en so? why, then, I thank you all  
I thank you, honest gentlemen; good night.  
More torches here! Come on then, let's to bed.  
Ah, sirrah, by my fay, it waxes late:  
I'll to my rest.

JULIET:

Come hither, nurse. What is yond gentleman?

Nurse:

The son and heir of old Tiberio.

JULIET:

What's he that now is going out of door?

Nurse:

Marry, that, I think, be young Petrucio.

JULIET:

What's he that follows there, that would not dance?

Nurse:

I know not.

JULIET:

Go ask his name: if he be married.

My grave is like to be my wedding bed.

Nurse:

His name is Romeo, and a Montague;

The only son of your great enemy.

JULIET:

My only love sprung from my only hate!

Too early seen unknown, and known too late!

Prodigious birth of love it is to me,

That I must love a loathed enemy.

Nurse:

What's this? what's this?

JULIET:

A rhyme I learn'd even now

Of one I danced withal.

Nurse:

Anon, anon!

Come, let's away; the strangers all are gone.

Chorus:

Now old desire doth in his death-bed lie,

And young affection gapes to be his heir;

That fair for which love groan'd for and would die,

With tender Juliet match'd, is now not fair.

Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,

Alike betwitched by the charm of looks,

But to his foe supposed he must complain,

And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks:

Being held a foe, he may not have access

To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear;

And she as much in love, her means much less

To meet her new-beloved any where:

But passion lends them power, time means, to meet



Tempering extremities with extreme sweet.

ROMEO:

Can I go forward when my heart is here?  
Turn back, dull earth, and find thy centre out.

BENVOLIO:

Romeo! my cousin Romeo!

MERCUTIO:

He is wise;  
And, on my lie, hath stol'n him home to bed.

BENVOLIO:

He ran this way, and leap'd this orchard wall:  
Call, good Mercutio.

MERCUTIO:

Nay, I'll conjure too.  
Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!  
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh:  
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied;  
Cry but 'Ay me!' pronounce but 'love' and 'dove';  
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,  
One nick-name for her purblind son and heir,  
Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim,  
When King Cophetua loved the beggar-maid!  
He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not;  
The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.  
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,  
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,  
By her fine foot, straight leg and quivering thigh  
And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,  
That in thy likeness thou appear to us!

BENVOLIO:

And if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

MERCUTIO:

This cannot anger him: 'twould anger him  
To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle  
Of some strange nature, letting it there stand  
Till she had laid it and conjured it down;  
That were some spite: my invocation  
Is fair and honest, and in his mistress' name  
I conjure only but to raise up him.

BENVOLIO:

Come, he hath hid himself among these trees,  
To be consorted with the humorous night:

Blind is his love and best befits the dark.

MERCUTIO:

If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.  
Now will he sit under a medlar tree,  
And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit  
As maids call medlars, when they laugh alone.  
Romeo, that she were, O, that she were  
An open et caetera, thou a poperin pear!  
Romeo, good night: I'll to my truckle-bed;  
This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep:  
Come, shall we go?

BENVOLIO:

Go, then; for 'tis in vain  
To seek him here that means not to be found.

ROMEO:

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.  
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?  
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.  
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,  
Who is already sick and pale with grief,  
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:  
Be not her maid, since she is envious;  
Her vestal livery is but sick and green  
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.  
It is my lady, O, it is my love!  
O, that she knew she were!  
She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?  
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.  
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:  
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,  
Having some business, do entreat her eyes  
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.  
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?  
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,  
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven  
Would through the airy region stream so bright  
That birds would sing and think it were not night.  
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!  
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,  
That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET:

Ay me!

ROMEO:

She speaks:  
O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art

As glorious to this night, being o'er my head  
As is a winged messenger of heaven  
Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes  
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him  
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds  
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

JULIET:  
O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?  
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;  
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,  
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

ROMEO:

JULIET:  
'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;  
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.  
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,  
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part  
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!  
What's in a name? that which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet;  
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,  
Retain that dear perfection which he owes  
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,  
And for that name which is no part of thee  
Take all myself.

ROMEO:  
I take thee at thy word:  
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;  
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

JULIET:  
What man art thou that thus bescreen'd in night  
So stumblest on my counsel?

ROMEO:  
By a name  
I know not how to tell thee who I am:  
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,  
Because it is an enemy to thee;  
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

JULIET:  
My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words  
Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound:  
Art thou not Romeo and a Montague?

ROMEO:

Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

JULIET:

How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?  
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,  
And the place death, considering who thou art,  
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

ROMEO:

With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls;  
For stony limits cannot hold love out,  
And what love can do that dares love attempt;  
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

JULIET:

If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

ROMEO:

Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye  
Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet,  
And I am proof against their enmity.

JULIET:

I would not for the world they saw thee here.

ROMEO:

I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight;  
And but thou love me, let them find me here:  
My life were better ended by their hate,  
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

JULIET:

By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

ROMEO:

By love, who first did prompt me to inquire;  
He lent me counsel and I lent him eyes.  
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far  
As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,  
I would adventure for such merchandise.

JULIET:

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,  
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek  
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night  
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny  
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!  
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay,'  
And I will take thy word: yet if thou swear'st,

Thou mayst prove false; at lovers' perjuries  
Then say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,  
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:  
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,  
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,  
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.  
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,  
And therefore thou mayst think my 'havior light:  
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true  
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.  
I should have been more strange, I must confess,  
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,  
My true love's passion: therefore pardon me,  
And not impute this yielding to light love,  
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

ROMEO:

Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear  
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops--

JULIET:

O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,  
That monthly changes in her circled orb,  
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

ROMEO:

What shall I swear by?

JULIET:

Do not swear at all;  
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,  
Which is the god of my idolatry,  
And I'll believe thee.

ROMEO:

If my heart's dear love--

JULIET:

Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,  
I have no joy of this contract to-night:  
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;  
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be  
Ere one can say 'It lightens.' Sweet, good night!  
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,  
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.  
Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest  
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

ROMEO:

O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET:

What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

ROMEO:

The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

JULIET:

I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:  
And yet I would it were to give again.

ROMEO:

Wouldst thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

JULIET:

But to be frank, and give it thee again.  
And yet I wish but for the thing I have:  
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,  
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,  
The more I have, for both are infinite.  
I hear some noise within; dear love, adieu!  
Anon, good nurse! Sweet Montague, be true.  
Stay but a little, I will come again.

ROMEO:

O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard.  
Being in night, all this is but a dream,  
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

JULIET:

Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.  
If that thy bent of love be honourable,  
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,  
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,  
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite;  
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay  
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

Nurse:

JULIET:

I come, anon.--But if thou mean'st not well,  
I do beseech thee--

Nurse:

JULIET:

By and by, I come:--  
To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief:  
To-morrow will I send.

ROMEO:  
So thrive my soul--

JULIET:  
A thousand times good night!

ROMEO:  
A thousand times the worse, to want thy light.  
Love goes toward love, as schoolboys from  
their books,  
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.

JULIET:  
Hist! Romeo, hist! O, for a falconer's voice,  
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!  
Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;  
Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,  
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine,  
With repetition of my Romeo's name.

ROMEO:  
It is my soul that calls upon my name:  
How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,  
Like softest music to attending ears!

JULIET:  
Romeo!

ROMEO:  
My dear?

JULIET:  
At what o'clock to-morrow  
Shall I send to thee?

ROMEO:  
At the hour of nine.

JULIET:  
I will not fail: 'tis twenty years till then.  
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

ROMEO:  
Let me stand here till thou remember it.

JULIET:  
I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,  
Remembering how I love thy company.

ROMEO:

And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,  
Forgetting any other home but this.

JULIET:

'Tis almost morning; I would have thee gone:  
And yet no further than a wanton's bird;  
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,  
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,  
And with a silk thread plucks it back again,  
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

ROMEO:

I would I were thy bird.

JULIET:

Sweet, so would I:  
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.  
Good night, good night! parting is such  
sweet sorrow,  
That I shall say good night till it be morrow.

ROMEO:

Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!  
Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!  
Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell,  
His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

The grey-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,  
Chequering the eastern clouds with streaks of light,  
And flecked darkness like a drunkard reels  
From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels:  
Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye,  
The day to cheer and night's dank dew to dry,  
I must up-fill this osier cage of ours  
With baleful weeds and precious-juiced flowers.  
The earth that's nature's mother is her tomb;  
What is her burying grave that is her womb,  
And from her womb children of divers kind  
We sucking on her natural bosom find,  
Many for many virtues excellent,  
None but for some and yet all different.  
O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies  
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:  
For nought so vile that on the earth doth live  
But to the earth some special good doth give,  
Nor aught so good but strain'd from that fair use  
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:  
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied;



And vice sometimes by action dignified.  
Within the infant rind of this small flower  
Poison hath residence and medicine power:  
For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part;  
Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.  
Two such opposed kings encamp them still  
In man as well as herbs, grace and rude will;  
And where the worser is predominant,  
Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

ROMEO:  
Good morrow, father.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
Benedicite!  
What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?  
Young son, it argues a distemper'd head  
So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed:  
Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,  
And where care lodges, sleep will never lie;  
But where unbruised youth with unstuff'd brain  
Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign:  
Therefore thy earliness doth me assure  
Thou art up-roused by some distemperature;  
Or if not so, then here I hit it right,  
Our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night.

ROMEO:  
That last is true; the sweeter rest was mine.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
God pardon sin! wast thou with Rosaline?

ROMEO:  
With Rosaline, my ghostly father? no;  
I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
That's my good son: but where hast thou been, then?

ROMEO:  
I'll tell thee, ere thou ask it me again.  
I have been feasting with mine enemy,  
Where on a sudden one hath wounded me,  
That's by me wounded: both our remedies  
Within thy help and holy physic lies:  
I bear no hatred, blessed man, for, lo,  
My intercession likewise steads my foe.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift;  
Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.

ROMEO:

Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set  
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet:  
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine;  
And all combined, save what thou must combine  
By holy marriage: when and where and how  
We met, we woo'd and made exchange of vow,  
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,  
That thou consent to marry us to-day.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here!  
Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear,  
So soon forsaken? young men's love then lies  
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.  
Jesu Maria, what a deal of brine  
Hath wash'd thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!  
How much salt water thrown away in waste,  
To season love, that of it doth not taste!  
The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,  
Thy old groans ring yet in my ancient ears;  
Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit  
Of an old tear that is not wash'd off yet:  
If e'er thou wast thyself and these woes thine,  
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline:  
And art thou changed? pronounce this sentence then,  
Women may fall, when there's no strength in men.

ROMEO:

Thou chid'st me oft for loving Rosaline.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.

ROMEO:

And bad'st me bury love.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Not in a grave,  
To lay one in, another out to have.

ROMEO:

I pray thee, chide not; she whom I love now  
Doth grace for grace and love for love allow;  
The other did not so.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

O, she knew well  
Thy love did read by rote and could not spell.  
But come, young waverer, come, go with me,  
In one respect I'll thy assistant be;  
For this alliance may so happy prove,  
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

ROMEO:  
O, let us hence; I stand on sudden haste.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
Wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast.

MERCUTIO:  
Where the devil should this Romeo be?  
Came he not home to-night?

BENVOLIO:  
Not to his father's; I spoke with his man.

MERCUTIO:  
Ah, that same pale hard-hearted wench, that Rosaline.  
Torments him so, that he will sure run mad.

BENVOLIO:  
Tybalt, the kinsman of old Capulet,  
Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

MERCUTIO:  
A challenge, on my life.

BENVOLIO:  
Romeo will answer it.

MERCUTIO:  
Any man that can write may answer a letter.

BENVOLIO:  
Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he  
dares, being dared.

MERCUTIO:  
Alas poor Romeo! he is already dead; stabbed with a  
white wench's black eye; shot through the ear with a  
love-song; the very pin of his heart cleft with the  
blind bow-boy's butt-shaft: and is he a man to  
encounter Tybalt?

BENVOLIO:  
Why, what is Tybalt?

MERCUTIO:

More than prince of cats, I can tell you. O, he is the courageous captain of compliments. He fights as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance, and proportion; rests me his minim rest, one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button, a duellist, a duellist; a gentleman of the very first house, of the first and second cause: ah, the immortal passado! the punto reverso! the hai!

BENVOLIO:

The what?

MERCUTIO:

The pox of such antic, lisping, affecting fantasticoes; these new tuners of accents! 'By Jesu, a very good blade! a very tall man! a very good whore!' Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandsire, that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these perdona-mi's, who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot at ease on the old bench? O, their bones, their bones!

BENVOLIO:

Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

MERCUTIO:

Without his roe, like a dried herring: flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified! Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flowed in: Laura to his lady was but a kitchen-wench; marry, she had a better love to be-rhyme her; Dido a dowdy; Cleopatra a gipsy; Helen and Hero hildings and harlots; Thisbe a grey eye or so, but not to the purpose. Signior Romeo, bon jour! there's a French salutation to your French slop. You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

ROMEO:

Good morrow to you both. What counterfeit did I give you?

MERCUTIO:

The ship, sir, the slip; can you not conceive?

ROMEO:

Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great; and in such a case as mine a man may strain courtesy.

MERCUTIO:

That's as much as to say, such a case as yours  
constrains a man to bow in the hams.

ROMEO:

Meaning, to court'sy.

MERCUTIO:

Thou hast most kindly hit it.

ROMEO:

A most courteous exposition.

MERCUTIO:

Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

ROMEO:

Pink for flower.

MERCUTIO:

Right.

ROMEO:

Why, then is my pump well flowered.

MERCUTIO:

Well said: follow me this jest now till thou hast  
worn out thy pump, that when the single sole of it  
is worn, the jest may remain after the wearing sole singular.

ROMEO:

O single-soled jest, solely singular for the  
singleness.

MERCUTIO:

Come between us, good Benvolio; my wits faint.

ROMEO:

Switch and spurs, switch and spurs; or I'll cry a match.

MERCUTIO:

Nay, if thy wits run the wild-geese chase, I have  
done, for thou hast more of the wild-geese in one of  
thy wits than, I am sure, I have in my whole five:  
was I with you there for the goose?

ROMEO:

Thou wast never with me for any thing when thou wast  
not there for the goose.

MERCUTIO:

I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

ROMEO:

Nay, good goose, bite not.

MERCUTIO:

Thy wit is a very bitter sweeting; it is a most sharp sauce.

ROMEO:

And is it not well served in to a sweet goose?

MERCUTIO:

O here's a wit of cheveril, that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad!

ROMEO:

I stretch it out for that word 'broad;' which added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

MERCUTIO:

Why, is not this better now than groaning for love? now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature: for this drivelling love is like a great natural, that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole.

BENVOLIO:

Stop there, stop there.

MERCUTIO:

Thou desirest me to stop in my tale against the hair.

BENVOLIO:

Thou wouldst else have made thy tale large.

MERCUTIO:

O, thou art deceived; I would have made it short: for I was come to the whole depth of my tale; and meant, indeed, to occupy the argument no longer.

ROMEO:

Here's goodly gear!

MERCUTIO:

A sail, a sail!

BENVOLIO:

Two, two; a shirt and a smock.

Nurse:  
Peter!

PETER:  
Anon!

Nurse:  
My fan, Peter.

MERCUTIO:  
Good Peter, to hide her face; for her fan's the  
fairer face.

Nurse:  
God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

MERCUTIO:  
God ye good den, fair gentlewoman.

Nurse:  
Is it good den?

MERCUTIO:  
'Tis no less, I tell you, for the bawdy hand of the  
dial is now upon the prick of noon.

Nurse:  
Out upon you! what a man are you!

ROMEO:  
One, gentlewoman, that God hath made for himself to  
mar.

Nurse:  
By my troth, it is well said; 'for himself to mar,'  
quoth a'? Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I  
may find the young Romeo?

ROMEO:  
I can tell you; but young Romeo will be older when  
you have found him than he was when you sought him:  
I am the youngest of that name, for fault of a worse.

Nurse:  
You say well.

MERCUTIO:  
Yea, is the worst well? very well took, i' faith;

wisely, wisely.

Nurse:

if you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you.

BENVOLIO:

She will indite him to some supper.

MERCUTIO:

A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! so ho!

ROMEO:

What hast thou found?

MERCUTIO:

No hare, sir; unless a hare, sir, in a lenten pie, that is something stale and hoar ere it be spent.

An old hare hoar,

And an old hare hoar,

Is very good meat in lent

But a hare that is hoar

Is too much for a score,

When it hoars ere it be spent.

Romeo, will you come to your father's? we'll to dinner, thither.

ROMEO:

I will follow you.

MERCUTIO:

Farewell, ancient lady; farewell,

'lady, lady, lady.'

Nurse:

Marry, farewell! I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his ropery?

ROMEO:

A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk, and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.

Nurse:

An a' speak any thing against me, I'll take him down, an a' were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks; and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills; I am none of his skains-mates. And thou must stand by too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?



PETER:

I saw no man use you a pleasure; if I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you: I dare draw as soon as another man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel, and the law on my side.

Nurse:

Now, afore God, I am so vexed, that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave! Pray you, sir, a word: and as I told you, my young lady bade me inquire you out; what she bade me say, I will keep to myself: but first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behavior, as they say: for the gentlewoman is young; and, therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

ROMEO:

Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee--

Nurse:

Good heart, and, i' faith, I will tell her as much: Lord, Lord, she will be a joyful woman.

ROMEO:

What wilt thou tell her, nurse? thou dost not mark me.

Nurse:

I will tell her, sir, that you do protest; which, as I take it, is a gentlemanlike offer.

ROMEO:

Bid her devise  
Some means to come to shrift this afternoon;  
And there she shall at Friar Laurence' cell  
Be shrived and married. Here is for thy pains.

Nurse:

No truly sir; not a penny.

ROMEO:

Go to; I say you shall.

Nurse:

This afternoon, sir? well, she shall be there.

ROMEO:

And stay, good nurse, behind the abbey wall:  
Within this hour my man shall be with thee  
And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair;  
Which to the high top-gallant of my joy  
Must be my convoy in the secret night.  
Farewell; be trusty, and I'll quit thy pains:  
Farewell; commend me to thy mistress.

Nurse:  
Now God in heaven bless thee! Hark you, sir.

ROMEO:  
What say'st thou, my dear nurse?

Nurse:  
Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say,  
Two may keep counsel, putting one away?

ROMEO:  
I warrant thee, my man's as true as steel.

NURSE:  
Well, sir; my mistress is the sweetest lady--Lord,  
Lord! when 'twas a little prating thing--O, there  
is a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain  
lay knife aboard; but she, good soul, had as lief  
see a toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her  
sometimes and tell her that Paris is the properer  
man; but, I'll warrant you, when I say so, she looks  
as pale as any clout in the versal world. Doth not  
rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?

ROMEO:  
Ay, nurse; what of that? both with an R.

Nurse:  
Ah. mocker! that's the dog's name; R is for  
the--No; I know it begins with some other  
letter--and she hath the prettiest sententious of  
it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good  
to hear it.

ROMEO:  
Commend me to thy lady.

Nurse:  
Ay, a thousand times.  
Peter!

PETER:

Anon!

Nurse:

Peter, take my fan, and go before and apace.

JULIET:

The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse;  
In half an hour she promised to return.  
Perchance she cannot meet him: that's not so.  
O, she is lame! love's heralds should be thoughts,  
Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,  
Driving back shadows over louring hills:  
Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love,  
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.  
Now is the sun upon the highmost hill  
Of this day's journey, and from nine till twelve  
Is three long hours, yet she is not come.  
Had she affections and warm youthful blood,  
She would be as swift in motion as a ball;  
My words would bandy her to my sweet love,  
And his to me:  
But old folks, many feign as they were dead;  
Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.  
O God, she comes!  
O honey nurse, what news?  
Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

Nurse:

Peter, stay at the gate.

JULIET:

Now, good sweet nurse,--O Lord, why look'st thou sad?  
Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;  
If good, thou shamest the music of sweet news  
By playing it to me with so sour a face.

Nurse:

I am a-weary, give me leave awhile:  
Fie, how my bones ache! what a jaunt have I had!

JULIET:

I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news:  
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak; good, good nurse, speak.

Nurse:

Jesu, what haste? can you not stay awhile?  
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

JULIET:

How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath

To say to me that thou art out of breath?  
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay  
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.  
Is thy news good, or bad? answer to that;  
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:  
Let me be satisfied, is't good or bad?

Nurse:

Well, you have made a simple choice; you know not  
how to choose a man: Romeo! no, not he; though his  
face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels  
all men's; and for a hand, and a foot, and a body,  
though they be not to be talked on, yet they are  
past compare: he is not the flower of courtesy,  
but, I'll warrant him, as gentle as a lamb. Go thy  
ways, wench; serve God. What, have you dined at home?

JULIET:

No, no: but all this did I know before.  
What says he of our marriage? what of that?

Nurse:

Lord, how my head aches! what a head have I!  
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.  
My back o' t' other side,—O, my back, my back!  
Beshrew your heart for sending me about,  
To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

JULIET:

I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well.  
Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

Nurse:

Your love says, like an honest gentleman, and a  
courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, and, I  
warrant, a virtuous,—Where is your mother?

JULIET:

Where is my mother! why, she is within;  
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest!  
'Your love says, like an honest gentleman,  
Where is your mother?'

Nurse:

O God's lady dear!  
Are you so hot? marry, come up, I trow;  
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?  
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

JULIET:

Here's such a coil! come, what says Romeo?

Nurse:

Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

JULIET:

I have.

Nurse:

Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence' cell;  
There stays a husband to make you a wife:  
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,  
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.  
Hie you to church; I must another way,  
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love  
Must climb a bird's nest soon when it is dark:  
I am the drudge and toil in your delight,  
But you shall bear the burden soon at night.  
Go; I'll to dinner: hie you to the cell.

JULIET:

Hie to high fortune! Honest nurse, farewell.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

So smile the heavens upon this holy act,  
That after hours with sorrow chide us not!

ROMEO:

Amen, amen! but come what sorrow can,  
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy  
That one short minute gives me in her sight:  
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,  
Then love-devouring death do what he dare;  
It is enough I may but call her mine.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

These violent delights have violent ends  
And in their triumph die, like fire and powder,  
Which as they kiss consume: the sweetest honey  
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness  
And in the taste confounds the appetite:  
Therefore love moderately; long love doth so;  
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.  
Here comes the lady: O, so light a foot  
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint:  
A lover may bestride the gossamer  
That idles in the wanton summer air,  
And yet not fall; so light is vanity.

JULIET:

Good even to my ghostly confessor.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

JULIET:

As much to him, else is his thanks too much.

ROMEO:

Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy  
Be heap'd like mine and that thy skill be more  
To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath  
This neighbour air, and let rich music's tongue  
Unfold the imagined happiness that both  
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

JULIET:

Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,  
Braggs of his substance, not of ornament:  
They are but beggars that can count their worth;  
But my true love is grown to such excess  
I cannot sum up sum of half my wealth.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Come, come with me, and we will make short work;  
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone  
Till holy church incorporate two in one.

BENVOLIO:

I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire:  
The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,  
And, if we meet, we shall not scape a brawl;  
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

MERCUTIO:

Thou art like one of those fellows that when he  
enters the confines of a tavern claps me his sword  
upon the table and says 'God send me no need of  
thee!' and by the operation of the second cup draws  
it on the drawer, when indeed there is no need.

BENVOLIO:

Am I like such a fellow?

MERCUTIO:

Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as  
any in Italy, and as soon moved to be moody, and as  
soon moody to be moved.

BENVOLIO:

And what to?

MERCUTIO:

Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou! why, thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard, than thou hast: thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes: what eye but such an eye would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat, and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg for quarrelling: thou hast quarrelled with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun: didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? with another, for tying his new shoes with old riband? and yet thou wilt tutor me from quarrelling!

BENVOLIO:

An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee-simple of my life for an hour and a quarter.

MERCUTIO:

The fee-simple! O simple!

BENVOLIO:

By my head, here come the Capulets.

MERCUTIO:

By my heel, I care not.

TYBALT:

Follow me close, for I will speak to them.  
Gentlemen, good den: a word with one of you.

MERCUTIO:

And but one word with one of us? couple it with something; make it a word and a blow.

TYBALT:

You shall find me apt enough to that, sir, an you will give me occasion.

MERCUTIO:

Could you not take some occasion without giving?

TYBALT:

Mercutio, thou consort'st with Romeo,--

MERCUTIO:

Consort! what, dost thou make us minstrels? an  
thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but  
discords: here's my fiddlestick; here's that shall  
make you dance. 'Zounds, consort!

BENVOLIO:

We talk here in the public haunt of men:  
Either withdraw unto some private place,  
And reason coldly of your grievances,  
Or else depart; here all eyes gaze on us.

MERCUTIO:

Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze;  
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

TYBALT:

Well, peace be with you, sir: here comes my man.

MERCUTIO:

But I'll be hanged, sir, if he wear your livery:  
Marry, go before to field, he'll be your follower;  
Your worship in that sense may call him 'man.'

TYBALT:

Romeo, the hate I bear thee can afford  
No better term than this,—thou art a villain.

ROMEO:

Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee  
Doth much excuse the appertaining rage  
To such a greeting: villain am I none;  
Therefore farewell; I see thou know'st me not.

TYBALT:

Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries  
That thou hast done me; therefore turn and draw.

ROMEO:

I do protest, I never injured thee,  
But love thee better than thou canst devise,  
Till thou shalt know the reason of my love:  
And so, good Capulet,—which name I tender  
As dearly as my own,—be satisfied.

MERCUTIO:

O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!  
Alla stoccata carries it away.  
Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?



TYBALT:

What wouldst thou have with me?

MERCUTIO:

Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives; that I mean to make bold withal, and as you shall use me hereafter, drybeat the rest of the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his pitcher by the ears? make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

TYBALT:

I am for you.

ROMEO:

Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

MERCUTIO:

Come, sir, your passado.

ROMEO:

Draw, Benvolio; beat down their weapons.  
Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage!  
Tybalt, Mercutio, the prince expressly hath  
Forbidden bandying in Verona streets:  
Hold, Tybalt! good Mercutio!

MERCUTIO:

I am hurt.

A plague o' both your houses! I am sped.  
Is he gone, and hath nothing?

BENVOLIO:

What, art thou hurt?

MERCUTIO:

Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, 'tis enough.  
Where is my page? Go, villain, fetch a surgeon.

ROMEO:

Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

MERCUTIO:

No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world. A plague o' both your houses! 'Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! a braggart, a

rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic! Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

ROMEO:

I thought all for the best.

MERCUTIO:

Help me into some house, Benvolio,  
Or I shall faint. A plague o' both your houses!  
They have made worms' meat of me: I have it,  
And soundly too: your houses!

ROMEO:

This gentleman, the prince's near ally,  
My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt  
In my behalf; my reputation stain'd  
With Tybalt's slander,--Tybalt, that an hour  
Hath been my kinsman! O sweet Juliet,  
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate  
And in my temper soften'd valour's steel!

BENVOLIO:

O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio's dead!  
That gallant spirit hath aspired the clouds,  
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

ROMEO:

This day's black fate on more days doth depend;  
This but begins the woe, others must end.

BENVOLIO:

Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

ROMEO:

Alive, in triumph! and Mercutio slain!  
Away to heaven, respective lenity,  
And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now!  
Now, Tybalt, take the villain back again,  
That late thou gavest me; for Mercutio's soul  
Is but a little way above our heads,  
Staying for thine to keep him company:  
Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.

TYBALT:

Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here,  
Shalt with him hence.

ROMEO:

This shall determine that.

BENVOLIO:

Romeo, away, be gone!

The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain.

Stand not amazed: the prince will doom thee death,  
If thou art taken: hence, be gone, away!

ROMEO:

O, I am fortune's fool!

BENVOLIO:

Why dost thou stay?

First Citizen:

Which way ran he that kill'd Mercutio?

Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he?

BENVOLIO:

There lies that Tybalt.

First Citizen:

Up, sir, go with me;

I charge thee in the prince's name, obey.

PRINCE:

Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

BENVOLIO:

O noble prince, I can discover all

The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl:

There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,

That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

LADY CAPULET:

Tybalt, my cousin! O my brother's child!

O prince! O cousin! husband! O, the blood is spilt

O my dear kinsman! Prince, as thou art true,

For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.

O cousin, cousin!

PRINCE:

Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

BENVOLIO:

Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay;

Romeo that spoke him fair, bade him bethink

How nice the quarrel was, and urged withal

Your high displeasure: all this uttered

With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bow'd,

Could not take truce with the unruly spleen

Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts  
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast,  
Who all as hot, turns deadly point to point,  
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats  
Cold death aside, and with the other sends  
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity,  
Retorts it: Romeo he cries aloud,  
'Hold, friends! friends, part!' and, swifter than  
his tongue,  
His agile arm beats down their fatal points,  
And 'twixt them rushes; underneath whose arm  
An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life  
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled;  
But by and by comes back to Romeo,  
Who had but newly entertain'd revenge,  
And to 't they go like lightning, for, ere I  
Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain.  
And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly.  
This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

LADY CAPULET:

He is a kinsman to the Montague;  
Affection makes him false; he speaks not true:  
Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,  
And all those twenty could but kill one life.  
I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give;  
Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

PRINCE:

Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio;  
Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

MONTAGUE:

Not Romeo, prince, he was Mercutio's friend;  
His fault concludes but what the law should end,  
The life of Tybalt.

PRINCE:

And for that offence  
Immediately we do exile him hence:  
I have an interest in your hate's proceeding,  
My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a-bleeding;  
But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine  
That you shall all repent the loss of mine:  
I will be deaf to pleading and excuses;  
Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out abuses:  
Therefore use none: let Romeo hence in haste,  
Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.  
Bear hence this body and attend our will:  
Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.

JULIET:

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,  
Towards Phoebus' lodging: such a wagoner  
As Phaethon would whip you to the west,  
And bring in cloudy night immediately.  
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,  
That runaway's eyes may wink and Romeo  
Leap to these arms, untalk'd of and unseen.  
Lovers can see to do their amorous rites  
By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,  
It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,  
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,  
And learn me how to lose a winning match,  
Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods:  
Hood my unmann'd blood, bating in my cheeks,  
With thy black mantle; till strange love, grown bold,  
Think true love acted simple modesty.  
Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night;  
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night  
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.  
Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd night,  
Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,  
Take him and cut him out in little stars,  
And he will make the face of heaven so fine  
That all the world will be in love with night  
And pay no worship to the garish sun.  
O, I have bought the mansion of a love,  
But not possess'd it, and, though I am sold,  
Not yet enjoy'd: so tedious is this day  
As is the night before some festival  
To an impatient child that hath new robes  
And may not wear them. O, here comes my nurse,  
And she brings news; and every tongue that speaks  
But Romeo's name speaks heavenly eloquence.  
Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there? the cords  
That Romeo bid thee fetch?

Nurse:

Ay, ay, the cords.

JULIET:

Ay me! what news? why dost thou wring thy hands?

Nurse:

Ah, well-a-day! he's dead, he's dead, he's dead!  
We are undone, lady, we are undone!  
Alack the day! he's gone, he's kill'd, he's dead!

JULIET:

Can heaven be so envious?

Nurse:

Romeo can,  
Though heaven cannot: O Romeo, Romeo!  
Who ever would have thought it? Romeo!

JULIET:

What devil art thou, that dost torment me thus?  
This torture should be roar'd in dismal hell.  
Hath Romeo slain himself? say thou but 'I,'  
And that bare vowel 'I' shall poison more  
Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice:  
I am not I, if there be such an I;  
Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer 'I.'  
If he be slain, say 'I'; or if not, no:  
Brief sounds determine of my weal or woe.

Nurse:

I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes,—  
God save the mark!--here on his manly breast:  
A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse;  
Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaub'd in blood,  
All in gore-blood; I swounded at the sight.

JULIET:

O, break, my heart! poor bankrupt, break at once!  
To prison, eyes, ne'er look on liberty!  
Vile earth, to earth resign; end motion here;  
And thou and Romeo press one heavy bier!

Nurse:

O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had!  
O courteous Tybalt! honest gentleman!  
That ever I should live to see thee dead!

JULIET:

What storm is this that blows so contrary?  
Is Romeo slaughter'd, and is Tybalt dead?  
My dear-loved cousin, and my dearer lord?  
Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom!  
For who is living, if those two are gone?

Nurse:

Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished;  
Romeo that kill'd him, he is banished.

JULIET:

O God! did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?

Nurse:

It did, it did; alas the day, it did!

JULIET:

O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!  
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?  
Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!  
Dove-feather'd raven! volkish-ravens lamb!  
Despised substance of divinest show!  
Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,  
A damned saint, an honourable villain!  
O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell,  
When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend  
In moral paradise of such sweet flesh?  
Was ever book containing such vile matter  
So fairly bound? O that deceit should dwell  
In such a gorgeous palace!

Nurse:

There's no trust,  
No faith, no honesty in men; all perjured,  
All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers.  
Ah, where's my man? give me some aqua vitae:  
These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.  
Shame come to Romeo!

JULIET:

Blister'd be thy tongue  
For such a wish! he was not born to shame:  
Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit;  
For 'tis a throne where honour may be crown'd  
Sole monarch of the universal earth.  
O, what a beast was I to chide at him!

Nurse:

Will you speak well of him that kill'd your cousin?

JULIET:

Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?  
Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,  
When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it?  
But, wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?  
That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:  
Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring;  
Your tributary drops belong to woe,  
Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.  
My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;  
And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my husband:  
All this is comfort; wherefore weep I then?  
Some word there was, worser than Tybalt's death,

That murder'd me: I would forget it fain;  
But, O, it presses to my memory,  
Like damned guilty deeds to sinners' minds:  
'Tybalt is dead, and Romeo--banished;'  
That 'banished,' that one word 'banished,'  
Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death  
Was woe enough, if it had ended there:  
Or, if sour woe delights in fellowship  
And needly will be rank'd with other griefs,  
Why follow'd not, when she said 'Tybalt's dead,'  
Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,  
Which modern lamentations might have moved?  
But with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,  
'Romeo is banished,' to speak that word,  
Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,  
All slain, all dead. 'Romeo is banished!'  
There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,  
In that word's death; no words can that woe sound.  
Where is my father, and my mother, nurse?

Nurse:

Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse:  
Will you go to them? I will bring you thither.

JULIET:

Wash they his wounds with tears: mine shall be spent,  
When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.  
Take up those cords: poor ropes, you are beguiled,  
Both you and I; for Romeo is exiled:  
He made you for a highway to my bed;  
But I, a maid, die maiden-widowed.  
Come, cords, come, nurse; I'll to my wedding-bed;  
And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead!

Nurse:

Hie to your chamber: I'll find Romeo  
To comfort you: I wot well where he is.  
Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night:  
I'll to him; he is hid at Laurence' cell.

JULIET:

O, find him! give this ring to my true knight,  
And bid him come to take his last farewell.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Romeo, come forth; come forth, thou fearful man:  
Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,  
And thou art wedded to calamity.

ROMEO:



Father, what news? what is the prince's doom?  
What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand,  
That I yet know not?

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
Too familiar  
Is my dear son with such sour company:  
I bring thee tidings of the prince's doom.

ROMEO:  
What less than dooms-day is the prince's doom?

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
A gentler judgment vanish'd from his lips,  
Not body's death, but body's banishment.

ROMEO:  
Ha, banishment! be merciful, say 'death;'  
For exile hath more terror in his look,  
Much more than death: do not say 'banishment.'

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
Hence from Verona art thou banished:  
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

ROMEO:  
There is no world without Verona walls,  
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.  
Hence-banished is banish'd from the world,  
And world's exile is death: then banished,  
Is death mis-term'd: calling death banishment,  
Thou cutt'st my head off with a golden axe,  
And smilest upon the stroke that murders me.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!  
Thy fault our law calls death; but the kind prince,  
Taking thy part, hath rush'd aside the law,  
And turn'd that black word death to banishment:  
This is dear mercy, and thou seest it not.

ROMEO:  
'Tis torture, and not mercy: heaven is here,  
Where Juliet lives; and every cat and dog  
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,  
Live here in heaven and may look on her;  
But Romeo may not: more validity,  
More honourable state, more courtship lives  
In carrion-flies than Romeo: they may seize  
On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand

And steal immortal blessing from her lips,  
Who even in pure and vestal modesty,  
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin;  
But Romeo may not; he is banished:  
Flies may do this, but I from this must fly:  
They are free men, but I am banished.  
And say'st thou yet that exile is not death?  
Hadst thou no poison mix'd, no sharp-ground knife,  
No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,  
But 'banished' to kill me?--'banished'?  
O friar, the damned use that word in hell;  
Howlings attend it: how hast thou the heart,  
Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,  
A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd,  
To mangle me with that word 'banished'?

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Thou fond mad man, hear me but speak a word.

ROMEO:

O, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

I'll give thee armour to keep off that word:  
Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,  
To comfort thee, though thou art banished.

ROMEO:

Yet 'banished'? Hang up philosophy!  
Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,  
Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom,  
It helps not, it prevails not: talk no more.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

O, then I see that madmen have no ears.

ROMEO:

How should they, when that wise men have no eyes?

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Let me dispute with thee of thy estate.

ROMEO:

Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel:  
Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,  
An hour but married, Tybalt murdered,  
Doting like me and like me banished,  
Then mightst thou speak, then mightst thou tear thy hair,  
And fall upon the ground, as I do now,  
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Arise; one knocks; good Romeo, hide thyself.

ROMEO:

Not I; unless the breath of heartsick groans,  
Mist-like, infold me from the search of eyes.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Hark, how they knock! Who's there? Romeo, arise;  
Thou wilt be taken. Stay awhile! Stand up;  
Run to my study. By and by! God's will,  
What simpleness is this! I come, I come!  
Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what's your will?

Nurse:

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Welcome, then.

Nurse:

O holy friar, O, tell me, holy friar,  
Where is my lady's lord, where's Romeo?

FRIAR LAURENCE:

There on the ground, with his own tears made drunk.

Nurse:

O, he is even in my mistress' case,  
Just in her case! O woful sympathy!  
Piteous predicament! Even so lies she,  
Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering.  
Stand up, stand up; stand, and you be a man:  
For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand;  
Why should you fall into so deep an O?

ROMEO:

Nurse!

Nurse:

Ah sir! ah sir! Well, death's the end of all.

ROMEO:

Spakest thou of Juliet? how is it with her?  
Doth she not think me an old murderer,  
Now I have stain'd the childhood of our joy  
With blood removed but little from her own?  
Where is she? and how doth she? and what says  
My conceal'd lady to our cancell'd love?

Nurse:

O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps;  
And now falls on her bed; and then starts up,  
And Tybalt calls; and then on Romeo cries,  
And then down falls again.

ROMEO:

As if that name,  
Shot from the deadly level of a gun,  
Did murder her; as that name's cursed hand  
Murder'd her kinsman. O, tell me, friar, tell me,  
In what vile part of this anatomy  
Doth my name lodge? tell me, that I may sack  
The hateful mansion.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Hold thy desperate hand:  
Art thou a man? thy form cries out thou art:  
Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote  
The unreasonable fury of a beast:  
Unseemly woman in a seeming man!  
Or ill-beseeming beast in seeming both!  
Thou hast amazed me: by my holy order,  
I thought thy disposition better temper'd.  
Hast thou slain Tybalt? wilt thou slay thyself?  
And stay thy lady too that lives in thee,  
By doing damned hate upon thyself?  
Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and earth?  
Since birth, and heaven, and earth, all three do meet  
In thee at once; which thou at once wouldst lose.  
Fie, fie, thou shamest thy shape, thy love, thy wit;  
Which, like a usurer, abound'st in all,  
And usest none in that true use indeed  
Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit:  
Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,  
Digressing from the valour of a man;  
Thy dear love sworn but hollow perjury,  
Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish;  
Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,  
Misshapen in the conduct of them both,  
Like powder in a skitless soldier's flask,  
Is set afire by thine own ignorance,  
And thou dismember'd with thine own defence.  
What, rouse thee, man! thy Juliet is alive,  
For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead;  
There art thou happy: Tybalt would kill thee,  
But thou slew'st Tybalt; there art thou happy too:  
The law that threaten'd death becomes thy friend  
And turns it to exile; there art thou happy:  
A pack of blessings lights up upon thy back;

Happiness courts thee in her best array;  
But, like a misbehaved and sullen wench,  
Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love:  
Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.  
Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed,  
Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her:  
But look thou stay not till the watch be set,  
For then thou canst not pass to Mantua;  
Where thou shalt live, till we can find a time  
To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,  
Beg pardon of the prince, and call thee back  
With twenty hundred thousand times more joy  
Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.  
Go before, nurse: commend me to thy lady;  
And bid her hasten all the house to bed,  
Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto:  
Romeo is coming.

Nurse:

O Lord, I could have stay'd here all the night  
To hear good counsel: O, what learning is!  
My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

ROMEO:

Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide.

Nurse:

Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir:  
Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late.

ROMEO:

How well my comfort is revived by this!

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Go hence; good night; and here stands all your state:  
Either be gone before the watch be set,  
Or by the break of day disguised from hence:  
Sojourn in Mantua; I'll find out your man,  
And he shall signify from time to time  
Every good hap to you that chances here:  
Give me thy hand; 'tis late: farewell; good night.

ROMEO:

But that a joy past joy calls out on me,  
It were a grief, so brief to part with thee: Farewell.

CAPULET:

Things have fall'n out, sir, so unluckily,  
That we have had no time to move our daughter:  
Look you, she loved her kinsman Tybalt dearly,

And so did I:--Well, we were born to die.  
'Tis very late, she'll not come down to-night:  
I promise you, but for your company,  
I would have been a-bed an hour ago.

PARIS:  
These times of woe afford no time to woo.  
Madam, good night: commend me to your daughter.

LADY CAPULET:  
I will, and know her mind early to-morrow;  
To-night she is mew'd up to her heaviness.

CAPULET:  
Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender  
Of my child's love: I think she will be ruled  
In all respects by me; nay, more, I doubt it not.  
Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed;  
Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love;  
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next--  
But, soft! what day is this?

PARIS:  
Monday, my lord,

CAPULET:  
Monday! ha, ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon,  
O' Thursday let it be: o' Thursday, tell her,  
She shall be married to this noble earl.  
Will you be ready? do you like this haste?  
We'll keep no great ado,--a friend or two;  
For, hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,  
It may be thought we held him carelessly,  
Being our kinsman, if we revel much:  
Therefore we'll have some half a dozen friends,  
And there an end. But what say you to Thursday?

PARIS:  
My lord, I would that Thursday were to-morrow.

CAPULET:  
Well get you gone: o' Thursday be it, then.  
Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed,  
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding-day.  
Farewell, my lord. Light to my chamber, ho!  
Afore me! it is so very very late,  
That we may call it early by and by.  
Good night.

JULIET:

Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:  
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,  
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear;  
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate-tree:  
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

ROMEO:

It was the lark, the herald of the morn,  
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks  
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:  
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day  
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.  
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

JULIET:

Yon light is not day-light, I know it, I:  
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,  
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,  
And light thee on thy way to Mantua:  
Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.

ROMEO:

Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;  
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.  
I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,  
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;  
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat  
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads:  
I have more care to stay than will to go:  
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.  
How is't, my soul? let's talk; it is not day.

JULIET:

It is, it is: hie hence, be gone, away!  
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,  
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.  
Some say the lark makes sweet division;  
This doth not so, for she divideth us:  
Some say the lark and loathed toad change eyes,  
O, now I would they had changed voices too!  
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,  
Hunting thee hence with hunt's-up to the day,  
O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.

ROMEO:

More light and light; more dark and dark our woes!

Nurse:

Madam!

JULIET:  
Nurse?

Nurse:  
Your lady mother is coming to your chamber:  
The day is broke; be wary, look about.

JULIET:  
Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

ROMEO:  
Farewell, farewell! one kiss, and I'll descend.

JULIET:  
Art thou gone so? love, lord, ay, husband, friend!  
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,  
For in a minute there are many days:  
O, by this count I shall be much in years  
Ere I again behold my Romeo!

ROMEO:  
Farewell!  
I will omit no opportunity  
That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

JULIET:  
O think'st thou we shall ever meet again?

ROMEO:  
I doubt it not; and all these woes shall serve  
For sweet discourses in our time to come.

JULIET:  
O God, I have an ill-divining soul!  
Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,  
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb:  
Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.

ROMEO:  
And trust me, love, in my eye so do you:  
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu, adieu!

JULIET:  
O fortune, fortune! all men call thee fickle:  
If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him.  
That is renown'd for faith? Be fickle, fortune;  
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,  
But send him back.

LADY CAPULET:



JULIET:  
Who is't that calls? is it my lady mother?  
Is she not down so late, or up so early?  
What unaccustom'd cause procures her hither?

LADY CAPULET:  
Why, how now, Juliet!

JULIET:  
Madam, I am not well.

LADY CAPULET:  
Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?  
What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?  
An if thou couldst, thou couldst not make him live;  
Therefore, have done: some grief shows much of love;  
But much of grief shows still some want of wit.

JULIET:  
Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.

LADY CAPULET:  
So shall you feel the loss, but not the friend  
Which you weep for.

JULIET:  
Feeling so the loss,  
Cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

LADY CAPULET:  
Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death,  
As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him.

JULIET:  
What villain madam?

LADY CAPULET:  
That same villain, Romeo.

JULIET:

LADY CAPULET:  
That is, because the traitor murderer lives.

JULIET:  
Ay, madam, from the reach of these my hands:  
Would none but I might venge my cousin's death!

LADY CAPULET:

We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not:  
Then weep no more. I'll send to one in Mantua,  
Where that same banish'd runagate doth live,  
Shall give him such an unaccustom'd dram,  
That he shall soon keep Tybalt company:  
And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.

JULIET:

Indeed, I never shall be satisfied  
With Romeo, till I behold him--dead--  
Is my poor heart for a kinsman vex'd.  
Madam, if you could find out but a man  
To bear a poison, I would temper it;  
That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,  
Soon sleep in quiet. O, how my heart abhors  
To hear him named, and cannot come to him.  
To wreak the love I bore my cousin  
Upon his body that slaughter'd him!

LADY CAPULET:

Find thou the means, and I'll find such a man.  
But now I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

JULIET:

And joy comes well in such a needy time:  
What are they, I beseech your ladyship?

LADY CAPULET:

Well, well, thou hast a careful father, child;  
One who, to put thee from thy heaviness,  
Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy,  
That thou expect'st not nor I look'd not for.

JULIET:

Madam, in happy time, what day is that?

LADY CAPULET:

Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn,  
The gallant, young and noble gentleman,  
The County Paris, at Saint Peter's Church,  
Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

JULIET:

Now, by Saint Peter's Church and Peter too,  
He shall not make me there a joyful bride.  
I wonder at this haste; that I must wed  
Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo.  
I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam,  
I will not marry yet; and, when I do, I swear,  
It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,

Rather than Paris. These are news indeed!

LADY CAPULET:

Here comes your father; tell him so yourself,  
And see how he will take it at your hands.

CAPULET:

When the sun sets, the air doth drizzle dew;  
But for the sunset of my brother's son  
It rains downright.  
How now! a conduit, girl? what, still in tears?  
Evermore showering? In one little body  
Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind;  
For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,  
Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is,  
Sailing in this salt flood; the winds, thy sighs;  
Who, raging with thy tears, and they with them,  
Without a sudden calm, will overset  
Thy tempest-tossed body. How now, wife!  
Have you deliver'd to her our decree?

LADY CAPULET:

Ay, sir; but she will none, she gives you thanks.  
I would the fool were married to her grave!

CAPULET:

Soft! take me with you, take me with you, wife.  
How! will she none? doth she not give us thanks?  
Is she not proud? doth she not count her blest,  
Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought  
So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

JULIET:

Not proud, you have; but thankful, that you have:  
Proud can I never be of what I hate;  
But thankful even for hate, that is meant love.

CAPULET:

How now, how now, chop-logic! What is this?  
'Proud,' and 'I thank you,' and 'I thank you not;'  
And yet 'not proud,' mistress minion, you,  
Thank me no thankings, nor, proud me no prouds,  
But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,  
To go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church,  
Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.  
Out, you green-sickness carrion! out, you baggage!  
You tallow-face!

LADY CAPULET:

Fie, fie! what, are you mad?

JULIET:

Good father, I beseech you on my knees,  
Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

CAPULET:

Hang thee, young baggage! disobedient wretch!  
I tell thee what: get thee to church o' Thursday,  
Or never after look me in the face:  
Speak not, reply not, do not answer me;  
My fingers itch. Wife, we scarce thought us blest  
That God had lent us but this only child;  
But now I see this one is one too much,  
And that we have a curse in having her:  
Out on her, hilding!

Nurse:

God in heaven bless her!  
You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.

CAPULET:

And why, my lady wisdom? hold your tongue,  
Good prudence; smatter with your gossips, go.

Nurse:

I speak no treason.

CAPULET:

O, God ye god-den.

Nurse:

May not one speak?

CAPULET:

Peace, you mumbling fool!  
Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl;  
For here we need it not.

LADY CAPULET:

You are too hot.

CAPULET:

God's bread! it makes me mad:  
Day, night, hour, tide, time, work, play,  
Alone, in company, still my care hath been  
To have her match'd: and having now provided  
A gentleman of noble parentage,  
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly train'd,  
Stuff'd, as they say, with honourable parts,  
Proportion'd as one's thought would wish a man;

And then to have a wretched puling fool,  
A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,  
To answer 'I'll not wed; I cannot love,  
I am too young; I pray you, pardon me.'  
But, as you will not wed, I'll pardon you:  
Graze where you will you shall not house with me:  
Look to't, think on't, I do not use to jest.  
Thursday is near; lay hand on heart, advise:  
An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend;  
And you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in  
the streets,  
For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,  
Nor what is mine shall never do thee good:  
Trust to't, bethink you; I'll not be forsworn.

JULIET:

Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,  
That sees into the bottom of my grief?  
O, sweet my mother, cast me not away!  
Delay this marriage for a month, a week;  
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed  
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

LADY CAPULET:

Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word:  
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee.

JULIET:

O God!--O nurse, how shall this be prevented?  
My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven;  
How shall that faith return again to earth,  
Unless that husband send it me from heaven  
By leaving earth? comfort me, counsel me.  
Alack, alack, that heaven should practise stratagems  
Upon so soft a subject as myself!  
What say'st thou? hast thou not a word of joy?  
Some comfort, nurse.

Nurse:

Faith, here it is.  
Romeo is banish'd; and all the world to nothing,  
That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you;  
Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.  
Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,  
I think it best you married with the county.  
O, he's a lovely gentleman!  
Romeo's a dishclout to him: an eagle, madam,  
Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye  
As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,  
I think you are happy in this second match,

For it excels your first: or if it did not,  
Your first is dead; or 'twere as good he were,  
As living here and you no use of him.

JULIET:  
Speakest thou from thy heart?

Nurse:  
And from my soul too;  
Or else beshrew them both.

JULIET:  
Amen!

Nurse:  
What?

JULIET:  
Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous much.  
Go in: and tell my lady I am gone,  
Having displeased my father, to Laurence' cell,  
To make confession and to be absolved.

Nurse:  
Marry, I will; and this is wisely done.

JULIET:  
Ancient damnation! O most wicked fiend!  
Is it more sin to wish me thus forsworn,  
Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue  
Which she hath praised him with above compare  
So many thousand times? Go, counsellor;  
Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.  
I'll to the friar, to know his remedy:  
If all else fail, myself have power to die.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
On Thursday, sir? the time is very short.

PARIS:  
My father Capulet will have it so;  
And I am nothing slow to slack his haste.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
You say you do not know the lady's mind:  
Uneven is the course, I like it not.

PARIS:  
Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,  
And therefore have I little talk'd of love;

For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.  
Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous  
That she doth give her sorrow so much sway,  
And in his wisdom hastes our marriage,  
To stop the inundation of her tears;  
Which, too much minded by herself alone,  
May be put from her by society:  
Now do you know the reason of this haste.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

PARIS:  
Happily met, my lady and my wife!

JULIET:  
That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

PARIS:  
That may be must be, love, on Thursday next.

JULIET:  
What must be shall be.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
That's a certain text.

PARIS:  
Come you to make confession to this father?

JULIET:  
To answer that, I should confess to you.

PARIS:  
Do not deny to him that you love me.

JULIET:  
I will confess to you that I love him.

PARIS:  
So will ye, I am sure, that you love me.

JULIET:  
If I do so, it will be of more price,  
Being spoke behind your back, than to your face.

PARIS:  
Poor soul, thy face is much abused with tears.

JULIET:  
The tears have got small victory by that;

For it was bad enough before their spite.

PARIS:

Thou wrong'st it, more than tears, with that report.

JULIET:

That is no slander, sir, which is a truth;  
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

PARIS:

Thy face is mine, and thou hast slander'd it.

JULIET:

It may be so, for it is not mine own.  
Are you at leisure, holy father, now;  
Or shall I come to you at evening mass?

FRIAR LAURENCE:

My leisure serves me, pensive daughter, now.  
My lord, we must entreat the time alone.

PARIS:

God shield I should disturb devotion!  
Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse ye:  
Till then, adieu; and keep this holy kiss.

JULIET:

O shut the door! and when thou hast done so,  
Come weep with me; past hope, past cure, past help!

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Ah, Juliet, I already know thy grief;  
It strains me past the compass of my wits:  
I hear thou must, and nothing may prorroge it,  
On Thursday next be married to this county.

JULIET:

Tell me not, friar, that thou hear'st of this,  
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it:  
If, in thy wisdom, thou canst give no help,  
Do thou but call my resolution wise,  
And with this knife I'll help it presently.  
God join'd my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands;  
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo seal'd,  
Shall be the label to another deed,  
Or my true heart with treacherous revolt  
Turn to another, this shall slay them both:  
Therefore, out of thy long-experienced time,  
Give me some present counsel, or, behold,  
'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife



Shall play the umpire, arbitrating that  
Which the commission of thy years and art  
Could to no issue of true honour bring.  
Be not so long to speak; I long to die,  
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Hold, daughter: I do spy a kind of hope,  
Which craves as desperate an execution.  
As that is desperate which we would prevent.  
If, rather than to marry County Paris,  
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,  
Then is it likely thou wilt undertake  
A thing like death to chide away this shame,  
That copest with death himself to scape from it:  
And, if thou darest, I'll give thee remedy.

JULIET:

O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,  
From off the battlements of yonder tower;  
Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk  
Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears;  
Or shut me nightly in a charnel-house,  
O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,  
With reeky shanks and yellow chapless skulls;  
Or bid me go into a new-made grave  
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud;  
Things that, to hear them told, have made me tremble;  
And I will do it without fear or doubt,  
To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Hold, then; go home, be merry, give consent  
To marry Paris: Wednesday is to-morrow:  
To-morrow night look that thou lie alone;  
Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber:  
Take thou this vial, being then in bed,  
And this distilled liquor drink thou off;  
When presently through all thy veins shall run  
A cold and drowsy humour, for no pulse  
Shall keep his native progress, but surcease:  
No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou livest;  
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade  
To paly ashes, thy eyes' windows fall,  
Like death, when he shuts up the day of life;  
Each part, deprived of supple government,  
Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death:  
And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death  
Thou shalt continue two and forty hours,  
And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.

Now, when the bridegroom in the morning comes  
To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead:  
Then, as the manner of our country is,  
In thy best robes uncover'd on the bier  
Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault  
Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.  
In the mean time, against thou shalt awake,  
Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift,  
And hither shall he come: and he and I  
Will watch thy waking, and that very night  
Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.  
And this shall free thee from this present shame;  
If no inconstant toy, nor womanish fear,  
Abate thy valour in the acting it.

JULIET:

Give me, give me! O, tell not me of fear!

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Hold; get you gone, be strong and prosperous  
In this resolve: I'll send a friar with speed  
To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.

JULIET:

Love give me strength! and strength shall help afford.  
Farewell, dear father!

CAPULET:

So many guests invite as here are writ.  
Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.

Second Servant:

You shall have none ill, sir; for I'll try if they  
can lick their fingers.

CAPULET:

How canst thou try them so?

Second Servant:

Marry, sir, 'tis an ill cook that cannot lick his  
own fingers: therefore he that cannot lick his  
fingers goes not with me.

CAPULET:

Go, be gone.  
We shall be much unfurnished for this time.  
What, is my daughter gone to Friar Laurence?

Nurse:

Ay, forsooth.

CAPULET:

Well, he may chance to do some good on her:  
A peevish self-will'd harlotry it is.

Nurse:

See where she comes from shrift with merry look.

CAPULET:

How now, my headstrong! where have you been gadding?

JULIET:

Where I have learn'd me to repent the sin  
Of disobedient opposition  
To you and your behests, and am enjoin'd  
By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here,  
And beg your pardon: pardon, I beseech you!  
Henceforward I am ever ruled by you.

CAPULET:

Send for the county; go tell him of this:  
I'll have this knot knit up to-morrow morning.

JULIET:

I met the youthful lord at Laurence' cell;  
And gave him what becomed love I might,  
Not step o'er the bounds of modesty.

CAPULET:

Why, I am glad on't; this is well: stand up:  
This is as't should be. Let me see the county;  
Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.  
Now, afore God! this reverend holy friar,  
Our whole city is much bound to him.

JULIET:

Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,  
To help me sort such needful ornaments  
As you think fit to furnish me to-morrow?

LADY CAPULET:

No, not till Thursday; there is time enough.

CAPULET:

Go, nurse, go with her: we'll to church to-morrow.

LADY CAPULET:

We shall be short in our provision:  
'Tis now near night.

CAPULET:

Tush, I will stir about,  
And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife:  
Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her;  
I'll not to bed to-night; let me alone;  
I'll play the housewife for this once. What, ho!  
They are all forth. Well, I will walk myself  
To County Paris, to prepare him up  
Against to-morrow: my heart is wondrous light,  
Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd.

JULIET:

Ay, those attires are best: but, gentle nurse,  
I pray thee, leave me to myself to-night,  
For I have need of many orisons  
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,  
Which, well thou know'st, is cross, and full of sin.

LADY CAPULET:

What, are you busy, ho? need you my help?

JULIET:

No, madam; we have cull'd such necessities  
As are behoveful for our state to-morrow:  
So please you, let me now be left alone,  
And let the nurse this night sit up with you;  
For, I am sure, you have your hands full all,  
In this so sudden business.

LADY CAPULET:

Good night:

Get thee to bed, and rest; for thou hast need.

JULIET:

Farewell! God knows when we shall meet again.  
I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,  
That almost freezes up the heat of life:  
I'll call them back again to comfort me:  
Nurse! What should she do here?  
My dismal scene I needs must act alone.  
Come, vial.  
What if this mixture do not work at all?  
Shall I be married then to-morrow morning?  
No, no: this shall forbid it: lie thou there.  
What if it be a poison, which the friar  
Subtly hath minister'd to have me dead,  
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonour'd,  
Because he married me before to Romeo?  
I fear it is: and yet, methinks, it should not,  
For he hath still been tried a holy man.

How if, when I am laid into the tomb,  
I wake before the time that Romeo  
Come to redeem me? there's a fearful point!  
Shall I not, then, be stifled in the vault,  
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,  
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?  
Or, if I live, is it not very like,  
The horrible conceit of death and night,  
Together with the terror of the place,--  
As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,  
Where, for these many hundred years, the bones  
Of all my buried ancestors are packed:  
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,  
Lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say,  
At some hours in the night spirits resort;--  
Alack, alack, is it not like that I,  
So early waking, what with loathsome smells,  
And shrieks like mandrakes' torn out of the earth,  
That living mortals, hearing them, run mad:--  
O, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,  
Environed with all these hideous fears?  
And madly play with my forefather's joints?  
And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?  
And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,  
As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?  
O, look! methinks I see my cousin's ghost  
Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body  
Upon a rapier's point: stay, Tybalt, stay!  
Romeo, I come! this do I drink to thee.

LADY CAPULET:

Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices, nurse.

Nurse:

They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.

CAPULET:

Come, stir, stir, stir! the second cock hath crow'd,  
The curfew-bell hath rung, 'tis three o'clock:  
Look to the baked meats, good Angelica:  
Spare not for the cost.

Nurse:

Go, you cot-quean, go,  
Get you to bed; faith, You'll be sick to-morrow  
For this night's watching.

CAPULET:

No, not a whit: what! I have watch'd ere now  
All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

LADY CAPULET:

Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt in your time;  
But I will watch you from such watching now.

CAPULET:

A jealous hood, a jealous hood!  
Now, fellow,  
What's there?

First Servant:

Things for the cook, sir; but I know not what.

CAPULET:

Make haste, make haste.  
Sirrah, fetch drier logs:  
Call Peter, he will show thee where they are.

Second Servant:

I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,  
And never trouble Peter for the matter.

CAPULET:

Mass, and well said; a merry whoreson, ha!  
Thou shalt be logger-head. Good faith, 'tis day:  
The county will be here with music straight,  
For so he said he would: I hear him near.  
Nurse! Wife! What, ho! What, nurse, I say!  
Go waken Juliet, go and trim her up;  
I'll go and chat with Paris: hie, make haste,  
Make haste; the bridegroom he is come already:  
Make haste, I say.

Nurse:

Mistress! what, mistress! Juliet! fast, I warrant her, she:  
Why, lamb! why, lady! fie, you slug-a-bed!  
Why, love, I say! madam! sweet-heart! why, bride!  
What, not a word? you take your pennyworths now;  
Sleep for a week; for the next night, I warrant,  
The County Paris hath set up his rest,  
That you shall rest but little. God forgive me,  
Marry, and amen, how sound is she asleep!  
I must needs wake her. Madam, madam, madam!  
Ay, let the county take you in your bed;  
He'll fright you up, i' faith. Will it not be?  
What, dress'd! and in your clothes! and down again!  
I must needs wake you; Lady! lady! lady!  
Alas, alas! Help, help! my lady's dead!  
O, well-a-day, that ever I was born!  
Some aqua vitae, ho! My lord! my lady!

LADY CAPULET:  
What noise is here?

Nurse:  
O lamentable day!

LADY CAPULET:  
What is the matter?

Nurse:  
Look, look! O heavy day!

LADY CAPULET:  
O me, O me! My child, my only life,  
Revive, look up, or I will die with thee!  
Help, help! Call help.

CAPULET:  
For shame, bring Juliet forth; her lord is come.

Nurse:  
She's dead, deceased, she's dead; alack the day!

LADY CAPULET:  
Alack the day, she's dead, she's dead, she's dead!

CAPULET:  
Ha! let me see her: out, alas! she's cold:  
Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff;  
Life and these lips have long been separated:  
Death lies on her like an untimely frost  
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.

Nurse:  
O lamentable day!

LADY CAPULET:  
O woful time!

CAPULET:  
Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,  
Ties up my tongue, and will not let me speak.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

CAPULET:  
Ready to go, but never to return.  
O son! the night before thy wedding-day

Hath Death lain with thy wife. There she lies,  
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.  
Death is my son-in-law, Death is my heir;  
My daughter he hath wedded: I will die,  
And leave him all; life, living, all is Death's.

PARIS:

Have I thought long to see this morning's face,  
And doth it give me such a sight as this?

LADY CAPULET:

Accursed, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!  
Most miserable hour that e'er time saw  
In lasting labour of his pilgrimage!  
But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,  
But one thing to rejoice and solace in,  
And cruel death hath catch'd it from my sight!

Nurse:

O woe! O woful, woful, woful day!  
Most lamentable day, most woful day,  
That ever, ever, I did yet behold!  
O day! O day! O day! O hateful day!  
Never was seen so black a day as this:  
O woful day, O woful day!

PARIS:

Beguiled, divorced, wronged, spited, slain!  
Most detestable death, by thee beguil'd,  
By cruel cruel thee quite overthrown!  
O love! O life! not life, but love in death!

CAPULET:

Despised, distressed, hated, martyr'd, kill'd!  
Uncomfortable time, why camest thou now  
To murder, murder our solemnity?  
O child! O child! my soul, and not my child!  
Dead art thou! Alack! my child is dead;  
And with my child my joys are buried.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Peace, ho, for shame! confusion's cure lives not  
In these confusions. Heaven and yourself  
Had part in this fair maid; now heaven hath all,  
And all the better is it for the maid:  
Your part in her you could not keep from death,  
But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.  
The most you sought was her promotion;  
For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced:  
And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced



Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?  
O, in this love, you love your child so ill,  
That you run mad, seeing that she is well:  
She's not well married that lives married long;  
But she's best married that dies married young.  
Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary  
On this fair corse; and, as the custom is,  
In all her best array bear her to church:  
For though fond nature bids us an lament,  
Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

CAPULET:

All things that we ordained festival,  
Turn from their office to black funeral;  
Our instruments to melancholy bells,  
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast,  
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change,  
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,  
And all things change them to the contrary.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Sir, go you in; and, madam, go with him;  
And go, Sir Paris; every one prepare  
To follow this fair corse unto her grave:  
The heavens do lour upon you for some ill;  
Move them no more by crossing their high will.

First Musician:

Faith, we may put up our pipes, and be gone.

Nurse:

Honest goodfellows, ah, put up, put up;  
For, well you know, this is a pitiful case.

First Musician:

Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

PETER:

Musicians, O, musicians, 'Heart's ease, Heart's  
ease:' O, an you will have me live, play 'Heart's ease.'

First Musician:

Why 'Heart's ease?'

PETER:

O, musicians, because my heart itself plays 'My  
heart is full of woe:' O, play me some merry dump,  
to comfort me.

First Musician:

Not a dump we; 'tis no time to play now.

PETER:

You will not, then?

First Musician:

No.

PETER:

I will then give it you soundly.

First Musician:

What will you give us?

PETER:

No money, on my faith, but the gleek;  
I will give you the minstrel.

First Musician:

Then I will give you the serving-creature.

PETER:

Then will I lay the serving-creature's dagger on  
your pate. I will carry no crotchets: I'll re you,  
I'll fa you; do you note me?

First Musician:

An you re us and fa us, you note us.

Second Musician:

Pray you, put up your dagger, and put out your wit.

PETER:

Then have at you with my wit! I will dry-beat you  
with an iron wit, and put up my iron dagger. Answer  
me like men:

'When griping grief the heart doth wound,  
And doleful dumps the mind oppress,  
Then music with her silver sound'--  
why 'silver sound'? why 'music with her silver  
sound'? What say you, Simon Catling?

Musician:

Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

PETER:

Pretty! What say you, Hugh Rebeck?

Second Musician:

I say 'silver sound,' because musicians sound for silver.

PETER:

Pretty too! What say you, James Soundpost?

Third Musician:

Faith, I know not what to say.

PETER:

O, I cry you mercy; you are the singer: I will say  
for you. It is 'music with her silver sound,'  
because musicians have no gold for sounding:  
'Then music with her silver sound  
With speedy help doth lend redress.'

First Musician:

What a pestilent knave is this same!

Second Musician:

Hang him, Jack! Come, we'll in here; tarry for the  
mourners, and stay dinner.

ROMEO:

If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,  
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand:  
My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne;  
And all this day an unaccustom'd spirit  
Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.  
I dreamt my lady came and found me dead--  
Strange dream, that gives a dead man leave  
to think!--  
And breathed such life with kisses in my lips,  
That I revived, and was an emperor.  
Ah me! how sweet is love itself possess'd,  
When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!  
News from Verona!--How now, Balthasar!  
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?  
How doth my lady? Is my father well?  
How fares my Juliet? that I ask again;  
For nothing can be ill, if she be well.

BALTHASAR:

Then she is well, and nothing can be ill:  
Her body sleeps in Capel's monument,  
And her immortal part with angels lives.  
I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,  
And presently took post to tell it you:  
O, pardon me for bringing these ill news,  
Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

ROMEO:

Is it even so? then I defy you, stars!  
Thou know'st my lodging: get me ink and paper,  
And hire post-horses; I will hence to-night.

BALTHASAR:

I do beseech you, sir, have patience:  
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import  
Some misadventure.

ROMEO:

Tush, thou art deceived:  
Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do.  
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

BALTHASAR:

No, my good lord.

ROMEO:

No matter: get thee gone,  
And hire those horses; I'll be with thee straight.  
Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.  
Let's see for means: O mischief, thou art swift  
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!  
I do remember an apothecary,--  
And hereabouts he dwells,--which late I noted  
In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,  
Culling of simples; meagre were his looks,  
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones:  
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,  
An alligator stuff'd, and other skins  
Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves  
A beggarly account of empty boxes,  
Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,  
Remnants of packthread and old cakes of roses,  
Were thinly scatter'd, to make up a show.  
Noting this penury, to myself I said  
'An if a man did need a poison now,  
Whose sale is present death in Mantua,  
Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.'  
O, this same thought did but forerun my need;  
And this same needy man must sell it me.  
As I remember, this should be the house.  
Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.  
What, ho! apothecary!

Apothecary:

Who calls so loud?

ROMEO:

Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor:

Hold, there is forty ducats: let me have  
A dram of poison, such soon-speeding gear  
As will disperse itself through all the veins  
That the life-weary taker may fall dead  
And that the trunk may be discharged of breath  
As violently as hasty powder fired  
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

Apothecary:  
Such mortal drugs I have; but Mantua's law  
Is death to any he that utters them.

ROMEO:  
Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,  
And fear'st to die? famine is in thy cheeks,  
Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes,  
Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back;  
The world is not thy friend nor the world's law;  
The world affords no law to make thee rich;  
Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.

Apothecary:  
My poverty, but not my will, consents.

ROMEO:  
I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

Apothecary:  
Put this in any liquid thing you will,  
And drink it off; and, if you had the strength  
Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.

ROMEO:  
There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls,  
Doing more murders in this loathsome world,  
Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell.  
I sell thee poison; thou hast sold me none.  
Farewell: buy food, and get thyself in flesh.  
Come, cordial and not poison, go with me  
To Juliet's grave; for there must I use thee.

FRIAR JOHN:  
Holy Franciscan friar! brother, ho!

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
This same should be the voice of Friar John.  
Welcome from Mantua: what says Romeo?  
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

FRIAR JOHN:

Going to find a bare-foot brother out  
One of our order, to associate me,  
Here in this city visiting the sick,  
And finding him, the searchers of the town,  
Suspecting that we both were in a house  
Where the infectious pestilence did reign,  
Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth;  
So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?

FRIAR JOHN:

I could not send it,--here it is again,--  
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,  
So fearful were they of infection.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Unhappy fortune! by my brotherhood,  
The letter was not nice but full of charge  
Of dear import, and the neglecting it  
May do much danger. Friar John, go hence;  
Get me an iron crow, and bring it straight  
Unto my cell.

FRIAR JOHN:

Brother, I'll go and bring it thee.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Now must I to the monument alone;  
Within three hours will fair Juliet wake:  
She will beshrew me much that Romeo  
Hath had no notice of these accidents;  
But I will write again to Mantua,  
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come;  
Poor living corse, closed in a dead man's tomb!

PARIS:

Give me thy torch, boy: hence, and stand aloof:  
Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.  
Under yond yew-trees lay thee all along,  
Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground;  
So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread,  
Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves,  
But thou shalt hear it: whistle then to me,  
As signal that thou hear'st something approach.  
Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

PAGE:

PARIS:

Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew,--  
O woe! thy canopy is dust and stones;--  
Which with sweet water nightly I will dew,  
Or, wanting that, with tears distill'd by moans:  
The obsequies that I for thee will keep  
Nightly shall be to strew thy grave and weep.  
The boy gives warning something doth approach.  
What cursed foot wanders this way to-night,  
To cross my obsequies and true love's rite?  
What with a torch! muffle me, night, awhile.

ROMEO:

Give me that mattock and the wrenching iron.  
Hold, take this letter; early in the morning  
See thou deliver it to my lord and father.  
Give me the light: upon thy life, I charge thee,  
Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,  
And do not interrupt me in my course.  
Why I descend into this bed of death,  
Is partly to behold my lady's face;  
But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger  
A precious ring, a ring that I must use  
In dear employment: therefore hence, be gone:  
But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry  
In what I further shall intend to do,  
By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint  
And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs:  
The time and my intents are savage-wild,  
More fierce and more inexorable far  
Than empty tigers or the roaring sea.

BALTHASAR:

I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

ROMEO:

So shalt thou show me friendship. Take thou that:  
Live, and be prosperous: and farewell, good fellow.

BALTHASAR:

ROMEO:

Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,  
Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth,  
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,  
And, in despite, I'll cram thee with more food!

PARIS:

This is that banish'd haughty Montague,  
That murder'd my love's cousin, with which grief,

It is supposed, the fair creature died;  
And here is come to do some villanous shame  
To the dead bodies: I will apprehend him.  
Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague!  
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?  
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee:  
Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.

ROMEO:

I must indeed; and therefore came I hither.  
Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man;  
Fly hence, and leave me: think upon these gone;  
Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth,  
Put not another sin upon my head,  
By urging me to fury: O, be gone!  
By heaven, I love thee better than myself;  
For I come hither arm'd against myself:  
Stay not, be gone; live, and hereafter say,  
A madman's mercy bade thee run away.

PARIS:

I do defy thy conjurations,  
And apprehend thee for a felon here.

ROMEO:

Wilt thou provoke me? then have at thee, boy!

PAGE:

O Lord, they fight! I will go call the watch.

PARIS:

O, I am slain!  
If thou be merciful,  
Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet.

ROMEO:

In faith, I will. Let me peruse this face.  
Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris!  
What said my man, when my betossed soul  
Did not attend him as we rode? I think  
He told me Paris should have married Juliet:  
Said he not so? or did I dream it so?  
Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,  
To think it was so? O, give me thy hand,  
One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!  
I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave;  
A grave? O no! a lantern, slaughter'd youth,  
For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes  
This vault a feasting presence full of light.  
Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd.



How oft when men are at the point of death  
Have they been merry! which their keepers call  
A lightning before death: O, how may I  
Call this a lightning? O my love! my wife!  
Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,  
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:  
Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign yet  
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,  
And death's pale flag is not advanced there.  
Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?  
O, what more favour can I do to thee,  
Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain  
To sunder his that was thine enemy?  
Forgive me, cousin! Ah, dear Juliet,  
Why art thou yet so fair? shall I believe  
That unsubstantial death is amorous,  
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps  
Thee here in dark to be his paramour?  
For fear of that, I still will stay with thee;  
And never from this palace of dim night  
Depart again: here, here will I remain  
With worms that are thy chamber-maids; O, here  
Will I set up my everlasting rest,  
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars  
From this world-wearied flesh. Eyes, look your last!  
Arms, take your last embrace! and, lips, O you  
The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss  
A dateless bargain to engrossing death!  
Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide!  
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on  
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark!  
Here's to my love!  
O true apothecary!  
Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Saint Francis be my speed! how oft to-night  
Have my old feet stumbled at graves! Who's there?

BALTHASAR:

Here's one, a friend, and one that knows you well.

FRIAR LAURENCE:

Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,  
What torch is yond, that vainly lends his light  
To grubs and eyeless skulls? as I discern,  
It burneth in the Capel's monument.

BALTHASAR:

It doth so, holy sir; and there's my master,

One that you love.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
Who is it?

BALTHASAR:  
Romeo.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
How long hath he been there?

BALTHASAR:  
Full half an hour.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
Go with me to the vault.

BALTHASAR:  
I dare not, sir  
My master knows not but I am gone hence;  
And fearfully did menace me with death,  
If I did stay to look on his intents.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
Stay, then; I'll go alone. Fear comes upon me:  
O, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.

BALTHASAR:  
As I did sleep under this yew-tree here,  
I dreamt my master and another fought,  
And that my master slew him.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
Romeo!  
Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains  
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?  
What mean these masterless and gory swords  
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace?  
Romeo! O, pale! Who else? what, Paris too?  
And steep'd in blood? Ah, what an unkind hour  
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!  
The lady stirs.

JULIET:  
O comfortable friar! where is my lord?  
I do remember well where I should be,  
And there I am. Where is my Romeo?

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
I hear some noise. Lady, come from that nest

Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep:  
A greater power than we can contradict  
Hath thwarted our intents. Come, come away.  
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;  
And Paris too. Come, I'll dispose of thee  
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns:  
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming;  
Come, go, good Juliet,  
I dare no longer stay.

JULIET:  
Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.  
What's here? a cup, closed in my true love's hand?  
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end:  
O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop  
To help me after? I will kiss thy lips;  
Haply some poison yet doth hang on them,  
To make die with a restorative.  
Thy lips are warm.

First Watchman:

JULIET:  
Yea, noise? then I'll be brief. O happy dagger!  
This is thy sheath;  
there rust, and let me die.

PAGE:  
This is the place; there, where the torch doth burn.

First Watchman:  
The ground is bloody; search about the churchyard:  
Go, some of you, whoe'er you find attach.  
Pitiful sight! here lies the county slain,  
And Juliet bleeding, warm, and newly dead,  
Who here hath lain these two days buried.  
Go, tell the prince: run to the Capulets:  
Raise up the Montagues: some others search:  
We see the ground whereon these woes do lie;  
But the true ground of all these piteous woes  
We cannot without circumstance descry.

Second Watchman:  
Here's Romeo's man; we found him in the churchyard.

First Watchman:  
Hold him in safety, till the prince come hither.

Third Watchman:  
Here is a friar, that trembles, sighs and weeps:

We took this mattock and this spade from him,  
As he was coming from this churchyard side.

First Watchman:  
A great suspicion: stay the friar too.

PRINCE:  
What misadventure is so early up,  
That calls our person from our morning's rest?

CAPULET:  
What should it be, that they so shriek abroad?

LADY CAPULET:  
The people in the street cry Romeo,  
Some Juliet, and some Paris; and all run,  
With open outcry toward our monument.

PRINCE:  
What fear is this which startles in our ears?

First Watchman:  
Sovereign, here lies the County Paris slain;  
And Romeo dead; and Juliet, dead before,  
Warm and new kill'd.

PRINCE:  
Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.

First Watchman:  
Here is a friar, and slaughter'd Romeo's man;  
With instruments upon them, fit to open  
These dead men's tombs.

CAPULET:  
O heavens! O wife, look how our daughter bleeds!  
This dagger hath mista'en--for, lo, his house  
Is empty on the back of Montague,--  
And it mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom!

LADY CAPULET:  
O me! this sight of death is as a bell,  
That warns my old age to a sepulchre.

PRINCE:  
Come, Montague; for thou art early up,  
To see thy son and heir more early down.

MONTAGUE:  
Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night;

Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath:  
What further woe conspires against mine age?

PRINCE:  
Look, and thou shalt see.

MONTAGUE:  
O thou untaught! what manners is in this?  
To press before thy father to a grave?

PRINCE:  
Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,  
Till we can clear these ambiguities,  
And know their spring, their head, their  
true descent;  
And then will I be general of your woes,  
And lead you even to death: meantime forbear,  
And let mischance be slave to patience.  
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
I am the greatest, able to do least,  
Yet most suspected, as the time and place  
Doth make against me of this direful murder;  
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge  
Myself condemned and myself excused.

PRINCE:  
Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

FRIAR LAURENCE:  
I will be brief, for my short date of breath  
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.  
Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet;  
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife:  
I married them; and their stol'n marriage-day  
Was Tybalt's dooms-day, whose untimely death  
Banish'd the new-made bridegroom from the city,  
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pined.  
You, to remove that siege of grief from her,  
Betroth'd and would have married her perforce  
To County Paris: then comes she to me,  
And, with wild looks, bid me devise some mean  
To rid her from this second marriage,  
Or in my cell there would she kill herself.  
Then gave I her, so tutor'd by my art,  
A sleeping potion; which so took effect  
As I intended, for it wrought on her  
The form of death: meantime I writ to Romeo,  
That he should hither come as this dire night,

To help to take her from her borrow'd grave,  
Being the time the potion's force should cease.  
But he which bore my letter, Friar John,  
Was stay'd by accident, and yesternight  
Return'd my letter back. Then all alone  
At the prefixed hour of her waking,  
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault;  
Meaning to keep her closely at my cell,  
Till I conveniently could send to Romeo:  
But when I came, some minute ere the time  
Of her awaking, here untimely lay  
The noble Paris and true Romeo dead.  
She wakes; and I entreated her come forth,  
And bear this work of heaven with patience:  
But then a noise did scare me from the tomb;  
And she, too desperate, would not go with me,  
But, as it seems, did violence on herself.  
All this I know; and to the marriage  
Her nurse is privy: and, if aught in this  
Miscarried by my fault, let my old life  
Be sacrificed, some hour before his time,  
Unto the rigour of severest law.

PRINCE:

We still have known thee for a holy man.  
Where's Romeo's man? what can he say in this?

BALTHASAR:

I brought my master news of Juliet's death;  
And then in post he came from Mantua  
To this same place, to this same monument.  
This letter he early bid me give his father,  
And threatened me with death, going in the vault,  
I departed not and left him there.

PRINCE:

Give me the letter; I will look on it.  
Where is the county's page, that raised the watch?  
Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

PAGE:

He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave;  
And bid me stand aloof, and so I did:  
Anon comes one with light to ope the tomb;  
And by and by my master drew on him;  
And then I ran away to call the watch.

PRINCE:

This letter doth make good the friar's words,  
Their course of love, the tidings of her death:

And here he writes that he did buy a poison  
Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal  
Came to this vault to die, and lie with Juliet.  
Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!  
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,  
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love.  
And I for winking at your discords too  
Have lost a brace of kinsmen: all are punish'd.

CAPULET:

O brother Montague, give me thy hand:  
This is my daughter's jointure, for no more  
Can I demand.

MONTAGUE:

But I can give thee more:  
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;  
That while Verona by that name is known,  
There shall no figure at such rate be set  
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

CAPULET:

As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie;  
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

PRINCE:

A glooming peace this morning with it brings;  
The sun, for sorrow, will not show his head:  
Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things;  
Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished:  
For never was a story of more woe  
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

WARWICK:

I wonder how the king escaped our hands.

YORK:

While we pursued the horsemen of the north,  
He slily stole away and left his men:  
Whereat the great Lord of Northumberland,  
Whose warlike ears could never brook retreat,  
Cheer'd up the drooping army; and himself,  
Lord Clifford and Lord Stafford, all abreast,  
Charged our main battle's front, and breaking in  
Were by the swords of common soldiers slain.

EDWARD:

Lord Stafford's father, Duke of Buckingham,  
Is either slain or wounded dangerously;  
I cleft his beaver with a downright blow:

That this is true, father, behold his blood.

MONTAGUE:

And, brother, here's the Earl of Wiltshire's blood,  
Whom I encounter'd as the battles join'd.

RICHARD:

Speak thou for me and tell them what I did.

YORK:

Richard hath best deserved of all my sons.  
But is your grace dead, my Lord of Somerset?

NORFOLK:

Such hope have all the line of John of Gaunt!

RICHARD:

Thus do I hope to shake King Henry's head.

WARWICK:

And so do I. Victorious Prince of York,  
Before I see thee seated in that throne  
Which now the house of Lancaster usurps,  
I vow by heaven these eyes shall never close.  
This is the palace of the fearful king,  
And this the regal seat: possess it, York;  
For this is thine and not King Henry's heirs'

YORK:

Assist me, then, sweet Warwick, and I will;  
For hither we have broken in by force.

NORFOLK:

We'll all assist you; he that flies shall die.

YORK:

Thanks, gentle Norfolk: stay by me, my lords;  
And, soldiers, stay and lodge by me this night.

WARWICK:

And when the king comes, offer no violence,  
Unless he seek to thrust you out perforce.

YORK:

The queen this day here holds her parliament,  
But little thinks we shall be of her council:  
By words or blows here let us win our right.

RICHARD:

Arm'd as we are, let's stay within this house.



WARWICK:

The bloody parliament shall this be call'd,  
Unless Plantagenet, Duke of York, be king,  
And bashful Henry deposed, whose cowardice  
Hath made us by-words to our enemies.

YORK:

Then leave me not, my lords; be resolute;  
I mean to take possession of my right.

WARWICK:

Neither the king, nor he that loves him best,  
The proudest he that holds up Lancaster,  
Dares stir a wing, if Warwick shake his bells.  
I'll plant Plantagenet, root him up who dares:  
Resolve thee, Richard; claim the English crown.

KING HENRY VI:

My lords, look where the sturdy rebel sits,  
Even in the chair of state: belike he means,  
Back'd by the power of Warwick, that false peer,  
To aspire unto the crown and reign as king.  
Earl of Northumberland, he slew thy father.  
And thine, Lord Clifford; and you both have vow'd revenge  
On him, his sons, his favourites and his friends.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

If I be not, heavens be revenged on me!

CLIFFORD:

The hope thereof makes Clifford mourn in steel.

WESTMORELAND:

What, shall we suffer this? let's pluck him down:  
My heart for anger burns; I cannot brook it.

KING HENRY VI:

Be patient, gentle Earl of Westmoreland.

CLIFFORD:

Patience is for poltroons, such as he:  
He durst not sit there, had your father lived.  
My gracious lord, here in the parliament  
Let us assail the family of York.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Well hast thou spoken, cousin: be it so.

KING HENRY VI:

Ah, know you not the city favours them,  
And they have troops of soldiers at their beck?

EXETER:  
But when the duke is slain, they'll quickly fly.

KING HENRY VI:  
Far be the thought of this from Henry's heart,  
To make a shambles of the parliament-house!  
Cousin of Exeter, frowns, words and threats  
Shall be the war that Henry means to use.  
Thou factious Duke of York, descend my throne,  
and kneel for grace and mercy at my feet;  
I am thy sovereign.

YORK:  
I am thine.

EXETER:  
For shame, come down: he made thee Duke of York.

YORK:  
'Twas my inheritance, as the earldom was.

EXETER:  
Thy father was a traitor to the crown.

WARWICK:  
Exeter, thou art a traitor to the crown  
In following this usurping Henry.

CLIFFORD:  
Whom should he follow but his natural king?

WARWICK:  
True, Clifford; and that's Richard Duke of York.

KING HENRY VI:  
And shall I stand, and thou sit in my throne?

YORK:  
It must and shall be so: content thyself.

WARWICK:  
Be Duke of Lancaster; let him be king.

WESTMORELAND:  
He is both king and Duke of Lancaster;  
And that the Lord of Westmoreland shall maintain.

WARWICK:

And Warwick shall disprove it. You forget  
That we are those which chased you from the field  
And slew your fathers, and with colours spread  
March'd through the city to the palace gates.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Yes, Warwick, I remember it to my grief;  
And, by his soul, thou and thy house shall rue it.

WESTMORELAND:

Plantagenet, of thee and these thy sons,  
Thy kinsman and thy friends, I'll have more lives  
Than drops of blood were in my father's veins.

CLIFFORD:

Urge it no more; lest that, instead of words,  
I send thee, Warwick, such a messenger  
As shall revenge his death before I stir.

WARWICK:

Poor Clifford! how I scorn his worthless threats!

YORK:

Will you we show our title to the crown?  
If not, our swords shall plead it in the field.

KING HENRY VI:

What title hast thou, traitor, to the crown?  
Thy father was, as thou art, Duke of York;  
Thy grandfather, Roger Mortimer, Earl of March:  
I am the son of Henry the Fifth,  
Who made the Dauphin and the French to stoop  
And seized upon their towns and provinces.

WARWICK:

Talk not of France, sith thou hast lost it all.

KING HENRY VI:

The lord protector lost it, and not I:  
When I was crown'd I was but nine months old.

RICHARD:

You are old enough now, and yet, methinks, you lose.  
Father, tear the crown from the usurper's head.

EDWARD:

Sweet father, do so; set it on your head.

MONTAGUE:

Good brother, as thou lovest and honourest arms,  
Let's fight it out and not stand cavilling thus.

RICHARD:

Sound drums and trumpets, and the king will fly.

YORK:

Sons, peace!

KING HENRY VI:

Peace, thou! and give King Henry leave to speak.

WARWICK:

Plantagenet shall speak first: hear him, lords;  
And be you silent and attentive too,  
For he that interrupts him shall not live.

KING HENRY VI:

Think'st thou that I will leave my kingly throne,  
Wherein my grandsire and my father sat?  
No: first shall war unpeople this my realm;  
Ay, and their colours, often borne in France,  
And now in England to our heart's great sorrow,  
Shall be my winding-sheet. Why faint you, lords?  
My title's good, and better far than his.

WARWICK:

Prove it, Henry, and thou shalt be king.

KING HENRY VI:

Henry the Fourth by conquest got the crown.

YORK:

'Twas by rebellion against his king.

KING HENRY VI:

YORK:

What then?

KING HENRY VI:

An if he may, then am I lawful king;  
For Richard, in the view of many lords,  
Resign'd the crown to Henry the Fourth,  
Whose heir my father was, and I am his.

YORK:

He rose against him, being his sovereign,  
And made him to resign his crown perforce.

WARWICK:

Suppose, my lords, he did it unconstrain'd,  
Think you 'twere prejudicial to his crown?

EXETER:

No; for he could not so resign his crown  
But that the next heir should succeed and reign.

KING HENRY VI:

Art thou against us, Duke of Exeter?

EXETER:

His is the right, and therefore pardon me.

YORK:

Why whisper you, my lords, and answer not?

EXETER:

My conscience tells me he is lawful king.

KING HENRY VI:

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Plantagenet, for all the claim thou lay'st,  
Think not that Henry shall be so deposed.

WARWICK:

Deposed he shall be, in despite of all.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Thou art deceived: 'tis not thy southern power,  
Of Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, nor of Kent,  
Which makes thee thus presumptuous and proud,  
Can set the duke up in despite of me.

CLIFFORD:

King Henry, be thy title right or wrong,  
Lord Clifford vows to fight in thy defence:  
May that ground gape and swallow me alive,  
Where I shall kneel to him that slew my father!

KING HENRY VI:

O Clifford, how thy words revive my heart!

YORK:

Henry of Lancaster, resign thy crown.  
What mutter you, or what conspire you, lords?

WARWICK:

Do right unto this princely Duke of York,

Or I will fill the house with armed men,  
And over the chair of state, where now he sits,  
Write up his title with usurping blood.

KING HENRY VI:  
My Lord of Warwick, hear me but one word:  
Let me for this my life-time reign as king.

YORK:  
Confirm the crown to me and to mine heirs,  
And thou shalt reign in quiet while thou livest.

KING HENRY VI:  
I am content: Richard Plantagenet,  
Enjoy the kingdom after my decease.

CLIFFORD:  
What wrong is this unto the prince your son!

WARWICK:  
What good is this to England and himself!

WESTMORELAND:  
Base, fearful and despairing Henry!

CLIFFORD:  
How hast thou injured both thyself and us!

WESTMORELAND:  
I cannot stay to hear these articles.

NORTHUMBERLAND:  
Nor I.

CLIFFORD:  
Come, cousin, let us tell the queen these news.

WESTMORELAND:  
Farewell, faint-hearted and degenerate king,  
In whose cold blood no spark of honour bides.

NORTHUMBERLAND:  
Be thou a prey unto the house of York,  
And die in bands for this unmanly deed!

CLIFFORD:  
In dreadful war mayst thou be overcome,  
Or live in peace abandon'd and despised!

WARWICK:

Turn this way, Henry, and regard them not.

EXETER:

They seek revenge and therefore will not yield.

KING HENRY VI:

Ah, Exeter!

WARWICK:

Why should you sigh, my lord?

KING HENRY VI:

Not for myself, Lord Warwick, but my son,  
Whom I unnaturally shall disinherit.  
But be it as it may: I here entail  
The crown to thee and to thine heirs for ever;  
Conditionally, that here thou take an oath  
To cease this civil war, and, whilst I live,  
To honour me as thy king and sovereign,  
And neither by treason nor hostility  
To seek to put me down and reign thyself.

YORK:

This oath I willingly take and will perform.

WARWICK:

Long live King Henry! Plantagenet embrace him.

KING HENRY VI:

And long live thou and these thy forward sons!

YORK:

Now York and Lancaster are reconciled.

EXETER:

Accursed be he that seeks to make them foes!

YORK:

Farewell, my gracious lord; I'll to my castle.

WARWICK:

And I'll keep London with my soldiers.

NORFOLK:

And I to Norfolk with my followers.

MONTAGUE:

And I unto the sea from whence I came.

KING HENRY VI:

And I, with grief and sorrow, to the court.

EXETER:

Here comes the queen, whose looks bewray her anger:  
I'll steal away.

KING HENRY VI:

Exeter, so will I.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Nay, go not from me; I will follow thee.

KING HENRY VI:

Be patient, gentle queen, and I will stay.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Who can be patient in such extremes?  
Ah, wretched man! would I had died a maid  
And never seen thee, never borne thee son,  
Seeing thou hast proved so unnatural a father  
Hath he deserved to lose his birthright thus?  
Hadst thou but loved him half so well as I,  
Or felt that pain which I did for him once,  
Or nourish'd him as I did with my blood,  
Thou wouldst have left thy dearest heart-blood there,  
Rather than have that savage duke thine heir  
And disinherited thine only son.

PRINCE EDWARD:

Father, you cannot disinherit me:  
If you be king, why should not I succeed?

KING HENRY VI:

Pardon me, Margaret; pardon me, sweet son:  
The Earl of Warwick and the duke enforced me.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Enforced thee! art thou king, and wilt be forced?  
I shame to hear thee speak. Ah, timorous wretch!  
Thou hast undone thyself, thy son and me;  
And given unto the house of York such head  
As thou shalt reign but by their sufferance.  
To entail him and his heirs unto the crown,  
What is it, but to make thy sepulchre  
And creep into it far before thy time?  
Warwick is chancellor and the lord of Calais;  
Stern Falconbridge commands the narrow seas;  
The duke is made protector of the realm;  
And yet shalt thou be safe? such safety finds  
The trembling lamb environed with wolves.



Had I been there, which am a silly woman,  
The soldiers should have toss'd me on their pikes  
Before I would have granted to that act.  
But thou preferr'st thy life before thine honour:  
And seeing thou dost, I here divorce myself  
Both from thy table, Henry, and thy bed,  
Until that act of parliament be repeal'd  
Whereby my son is disinherited.  
The northern lords that have forsworn thy colours  
Will follow mine, if once they see them spread;  
And spread they shall be, to thy foul disgrace  
And utter ruin of the house of York.  
Thus do I leave thee. Come, son, let's away;  
Our army is ready; come, we'll after them.

KING HENRY VI:  
Stay, gentle Margaret, and hear me speak.

QUEEN MARGARET:  
Thou hast spoke too much already: get thee gone.

KING HENRY VI:  
Gentle son Edward, thou wilt stay with me?

QUEEN MARGARET:  
Ay, to be murder'd by his enemies.

PRINCE EDWARD:  
When I return with victory from the field  
I'll see your grace: till then I'll follow her.

QUEEN MARGARET:  
Come, son, away; we may not linger thus.

KING HENRY VI:  
Poor queen! how love to me and to her son  
Hath made her break out into terms of rage!  
Revenged may she be on that hateful duke,  
Whose haughty spirit, winged with desire,  
Will cost my crown, and like an empty eagle  
Tire on the flesh of me and of my son!  
The loss of those three lords torments my heart:  
I'll write unto them and entreat them fair.  
Come, cousin you shall be the messenger.

EXETER:  
And I, I hope, shall reconcile them all.  
3 KING HENRY VI

RICHARD:

Brother, though I be youngest, give me leave.

EDWARD:

No, I can better play the orator.

MONTAGUE:

But I have reasons strong and forcible.

YORK:

Why, how now, sons and brother! at a strife?  
What is your quarrel? how began it first?

EDWARD:

No quarrel, but a slight contention.

YORK:

About what?

RICHARD:

About that which concerns your grace and us;  
The crown of England, father, which is yours.

YORK:

Mine boy? not till King Henry be dead.

RICHARD:

Your right depends not on his life or death.

EDWARD:

Now you are heir, therefore enjoy it now:  
By giving the house of Lancaster leave to breathe,  
It will outrun you, father, in the end.

YORK:

I took an oath that he should quietly reign.

EDWARD:

But for a kingdom any oath may be broken:  
I would break a thousand oaths to reign one year.

RICHARD:

No; God forbid your grace should be forsworn.

YORK:

I shall be, if I claim by open war.

RICHARD:

I'll prove the contrary, if you'll hear me speak.

YORK:

Thou canst not, son; it is impossible.

RICHARD:

An oath is of no moment, being not took  
Before a true and lawful magistrate,  
That hath authority over him that swears:  
Henry had none, but did usurp the place;  
Then, seeing 'twas he that made you to depose,  
Your oath, my lord, is vain and frivolous.  
Therefore, to arms! And, father, do but think  
How sweet a thing it is to wear a crown;  
Within whose circuit is Elysium  
And all that poets feign of bliss and joy.  
Why do we finger thus? I cannot rest  
Until the white rose that I wear be dyed  
Even in the lukewarm blood of Henry's heart.

YORK:

Richard, enough; I will be king, or die.  
Brother, thou shalt to London presently,  
And whet on Warwick to this enterprise.  
Thou, Richard, shalt to the Duke of Norfolk,  
And tell him privily of our intent.  
You Edward, shall unto my Lord Cobham,  
With whom the Kentishmen will willingly rise:  
In them I trust; for they are soldiers,  
Witty, courteous, liberal, full of spirit.  
While you are thus employ'd, what resteth more,  
But that I seek occasion how to rise,  
And yet the king not privy to my drift,  
Nor any of the house of Lancaster?  
But, stay: what news? Why comest thou in such post?

Messenger:

The queen with all the northern earls and lords  
Intend here to besiege you in your castle:  
She is hard by with twenty thousand men;  
And therefore fortify your hold, my lord.

YORK:

Ay, with my sword. What! think'st thou that we fear them?  
Edward and Richard, you shall stay with me;  
My brother Montague shall post to London:  
Let noble Warwick, Cobham, and the rest,  
Whom we have left protectors of the king,  
With powerful policy strengthen themselves,  
And trust not simple Henry nor his oaths.

MONTAGUE:

Brother, I go; I'll win them, fear it not:

And thus most humbly I do take my leave.  
Sir John and Sir Hugh Mortimer, mine uncles,  
You are come to Sandal in a happy hour;  
The army of the queen mean to besiege us.

JOHN MORTIMER:  
She shall not need; we'll meet her in the field.

YORK:  
What, with five thousand men?

RICHARD:  
Ay, with five hundred, father, for a need:  
A woman's general; what should we fear?

EDWARD:  
I hear their drums: let's set our men in order,  
And issue forth and bid them battle straight.

YORK:  
Five men to twenty! though the odds be great,  
I doubt not, uncle, of our victory.  
Many a battle have I won in France,  
When as the enemy hath been ten to one:  
Why should I not now have the like success?  
3 KING HENRY VI

RUTLAND:  
Ah, whither shall I fly to 'scape their hands?  
Ah, tutor, look where bloody Clifford comes!

CLIFFORD:  
Chaplain, away! thy priesthood saves thy life.  
As for the brat of this accursed duke,  
Whose father slew my father, he shall die.

Tutor:  
And I, my lord, will bear him company.

CLIFFORD:  
Soldiers, away with him!

Tutor:  
Ah, Clifford, murder not this innocent child,  
Lest thou be hated both of God and man!

CLIFFORD:  
How now! is he dead already? or is it fear  
That makes him close his eyes? I'll open them.

RUTLAND:

So looks the pent-up lion o'er the wretch  
That trembles under his devouring paws;  
And so he walks, insulting o'er his prey,  
And so he comes, to rend his limbs asunder.  
Ah, gentle Clifford, kill me with thy sword,  
And not with such a cruel threatening look.  
Sweet Clifford, hear me speak before I die.  
I am too mean a subject for thy wrath:  
Be thou revenged on men, and let me live.

CLIFFORD:

In vain thou speak'st, poor boy; my father's blood  
Hath stopp'd the passage where thy words should enter.

RUTLAND:

Then let my father's blood open it again:  
He is a man, and, Clifford, cope with him.

CLIFFORD:

Had thy brethren here, their lives and thine  
Were not revenge sufficient for me;  
No, if I digg'd up thy forefathers' graves  
And hung their rotten coffins up in chains,  
It could not slake mine ire, nor ease my heart.  
The sight of any of the house of York  
Is as a fury to torment my soul;  
And till I root out their accursed line  
And leave not one alive, I live in hell.  
Therefore--

RUTLAND:

O, let me pray before I take my death!  
To thee I pray; sweet Clifford, pity me!

CLIFFORD:

Such pity as my rapier's point affords.

RUTLAND:

I never did thee harm: why wilt thou slay me?

CLIFFORD:

Thy father hath.

RUTLAND:

But 'twas ere I was born.  
Thou hast one son; for his sake pity me,  
Lest in revenge thereof, sith God is just,  
He be as miserably slain as I.  
Ah, let me live in prison all my days;

And when I give occasion of offence,  
Then let me die, for now thou hast no cause.

CLIFFORD:

No cause!

Thy father slew my father; therefore, die.

RUTLAND:

Di faciant laudis summa sit ista tuae!

CLIFFORD:

Plantagenet! I come, Plantagenet!

And this thy son's blood cleaving to my blade  
Shall rust upon my weapon, till thy blood,  
Congeal'd with this, do make me wipe off both.  
3 KING HENRY VI

YORK:

The army of the queen hath got the field:  
My uncles both are slain in rescuing me;  
And all my followers to the eager foe  
Turn back and fly, like ships before the wind  
Or lambs pursued by hunger-starved wolves.  
My sons, God knows what hath bechanced them:  
But this I know, they have demean'd themselves  
Like men born to renown by life or death.  
Three times did Richard make a lane to me.  
And thrice cried 'Courage, father! fight it out!'  
And full as oft came Edward to my side,  
With purple falchion, painted to the hilt  
In blood of those that had encounter'd him:  
And when the hardiest warriors did retire,  
Richard cried 'Charge! and give no foot of ground!'  
And cried 'A crown, or else a glorious tomb!  
A sceptre, or an earthly sepulchre!'  
With this, we charged again: but, out, alas!  
We bodged again; as I have seen a swan  
With bootless labour swim against the tide  
And spend her strength with over-matching waves.  
Ah, hark! the fatal followers do pursue;  
And I am faint and cannot fly their fury:  
And were I strong, I would not shun their fury:  
The sands are number'd that make up my life;  
Here must I stay, and here my life must end.  
Come, bloody Clifford, rough Northumberland,  
I dare your quenchless fury to more rage:  
I am your butt, and I abide your shot.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Yield to our mercy, proud Plantagenet.

CLIFFORD:

Ay, to such mercy as his ruthless arm,  
With downright payment, show'd unto my father.  
Now Phaethon hath tumbled from his car,  
And made an evening at the noontide prick.

YORK:

My ashes, as the phoenix, may bring forth  
A bird that will revenge upon you all:  
And in that hope I throw mine eyes to heaven,  
Scorning whate'er you can afflict me with.  
Why come you not? what! multitudes, and fear?

CLIFFORD:

So cowards fight when they can fly no further;  
So doves do peck the falcon's piercing talons;  
So desperate thieves, all hopeless of their lives,  
Breathe out invectives 'gainst the officers.

YORK:

O Clifford, but bethink thee once again,  
And in thy thought o'er-run my former time;  
And, if though canst for blushing, view this face,  
And bite thy tongue, that slanders him with cowardice  
Whose frown hath made thee faint and fly ere this!

CLIFFORD:

I will not bandy with thee word for word,  
But buckle with thee blows, twice two for one.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Hold, valiant Clifford! for a thousand causes  
I would prolong awhile the traitor's life.  
Wrath makes him deaf: speak thou, Northumberland.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Hold, Clifford! do not honour him so much  
To prick thy finger, though to wound his heart:  
What valour were it, when a cur doth grin,  
For one to thrust his hand between his teeth,  
When he might spurn him with his foot away?  
It is war's prize to take all vantages;  
And ten to one is no impeach of valour.

CLIFFORD:

Ay, ay, so strives the woodcock with the gin.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

So doth the cony struggle in the net.

YORK:

So triumph thieves upon their conquer'd booty;  
So true men yield, with robbers so o'ermatch'd.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

What would your grace have done unto him now?

QUEEN MARGARET:

Brave warriors, Clifford and Northumberland,  
Come, make him stand upon this molehill here,  
That raught at mountains with outstretched arms,  
Yet parted but the shadow with his hand.  
What! was it you that would be England's king?  
Was't you that revell'd in our parliament,  
And made a preachment of your high descent?  
Where are your mess of sons to back you now?  
The wanton Edward, and the lusty George?  
And where's that valiant crook-back prodigy,  
Dicky your boy, that with his grumbling voice  
Was wont to cheer his dad in mutinies?  
Or, with the rest, where is your darling Rutland?  
Look, York: I stain'd this napkin with the blood  
That valiant Clifford, with his rapier's point,  
Made issue from the bosom of the boy;  
And if thine eyes can water for his death,  
I give thee this to dry thy cheeks withal.  
Alas poor York! but that I hate thee deadly,  
I should lament thy miserable state.  
I prithee, grieve, to make me merry, York.  
What, hath thy fiery heart so parch'd thine entrails  
That not a tear can fall for Rutland's death?  
Why art thou patient, man? thou shouldst be mad;  
And I, to make thee mad, do mock thee thus.  
Stamp, rave, and fret, that I may sing and dance.  
Thou wouldst be fee'd, I see, to make me sport:  
York cannot speak, unless he wear a crown.  
A crown for York! and, lords, bow low to him:  
Hold you his hands, whilst I do set it on.  
Ay, marry, sir, now looks he like a king!  
Ay, this is he that took King Henry's chair,  
And this is he was his adopted heir.  
But how is it that great Plantagenet  
Is crown'd so soon, and broke his solemn oath?  
As I bethink me, you should not be king  
Till our King Henry had shook hands with death.  
And will you pale your head in Henry's glory,  
And rob his temples of the diadem,  
Now in his life, against your holy oath?  
O, 'tis a fault too too unpardonable!



Off with the crown, and with the crown his head;  
And, whilst we breathe, take time to do him dead.

CLIFFORD:

That is my office, for my father's sake.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Nay, stay; let's hear the orisons he makes.

YORK:

She-wolf of France, but worse than wolves of France,  
Whose tongue more poisons than the adder's tooth!  
How ill-beseeming is it in thy sex  
To triumph, like an Amazonian trull,  
Upon their woes whom fortune captivates!  
But that thy face is, vizard-like, unchanging,  
Made impudent with use of evil deeds,  
I would assay, proud queen, to make thee blush.  
To tell thee whence thou camest, of whom derived,  
Were shame enough to shame thee, wert thou not shameless.  
Thy father bears the type of King of Naples,  
Of both the Sicils and Jerusalem,  
Yet not so wealthy as an English yeoman.  
Hath that poor monarch taught thee to insult?  
It needs not, nor it boots thee not, proud queen,  
Unless the adage must be verified,  
That beggars mounted run their horse to death.  
'Tis beauty that doth oft make women proud;  
But, God he knows, thy share thereof is small:  
'Tis virtue that doth make them most admired;  
The contrary doth make thee wonder'd at:  
'Tis government that makes them seem divine;  
The want thereof makes thee abominable:  
Thou art as opposite to every good  
As the Antipodes are unto us,  
Or as the south to the septentrion.  
O tiger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide!  
How couldst thou drain the life-blood of the child,  
To bid the father wipe his eyes withal,  
And yet be seen to bear a woman's face?  
Women are soft, mild, pitiful and flexible;  
Thou stern, obdurate, flinty, rough, remorseless.  
Bids't thou me rage? why, now thou hast thy wish:  
Wouldst have me weep? why, now thou hast thy will:  
For raging wind blows up incessant showers,  
And when the rage allays, the rain begins.  
These tears are my sweet Rutland's obsequies:  
And every drop cries vengeance for his death,  
'Gainst thee, fell Clifford, and thee, false  
Frenchwoman.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Beshrew me, but his passion moves me so  
That hardly can I cheque my eyes from tears.

YORK:

That face of his the hungry cannibals  
Would not have touch'd, would not have stain'd with blood:  
But you are more inhuman, more inexorable,  
O, ten times more, than tigers of Hyrcania.  
See, ruthless queen, a hapless father's tears:  
This cloth thou dip'dst in blood of my sweet boy,  
And I with tears do wash the blood away.  
Keep thou the napkin, and go boast of this:  
And if thou tell'st the heavy story right,  
Upon my soul, the hearers will shed tears;  
Yea even my foes will shed fast-falling tears,  
And say 'Alas, it was a piteous deed!'  
There, take the crown, and, with the crown, my curse;  
And in thy need such comfort come to thee  
As now I reap at thy too cruel hand!  
Hard-hearted Clifford, take me from the world:  
My soul to heaven, my blood upon your heads!

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Had he been slaughter-man to all my kin,  
I should not for my life but weep with him.  
To see how inly sorrow gripes his soul.

QUEEN MARGARET:

What, weeping-ripe, my Lord Northumberland?  
Think but upon the wrong he did us all,  
And that will quickly dry thy melting tears.

CLIFFORD:

Here's for my oath, here's for my father's death.

QUEEN MARGARET:

And here's to right our gentle-hearted king.

YORK:

Open Thy gate of mercy, gracious God!  
My soul flies through these wounds to seek out Thee.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Off with his head, and set it on York gates;  
So York may overlook the town of York.  
3 KING HENRY VI

EDWARD:

I wonder how our princely father 'scaped,  
Or whether he be 'scaped away or no  
From Clifford's and Northumberland's pursuit:  
Had he been ta'en, we should have heard the news;  
Had he been slain, we should have heard the news;  
Or had he 'scaped, methinks we should have heard  
The happy tidings of his good escape.  
How fares my brother? why is he so sad?

RICHARD:

I cannot joy, until I be resolved  
Where our right valiant father is become.  
I saw him in the battle range about;  
And watch'd him how he singled Clifford forth.  
Methought he bore him in the thickest troop  
As doth a lion in a herd of neat;  
Or as a bear, encompass'd round with dogs,  
Who having pinch'd a few and made them cry,  
The rest stand all aloof, and bark at him.  
So fared our father with his enemies;  
So fled his enemies my warlike father:  
Methinks, 'tis prize enough to be his son.  
See how the morning opes her golden gates,  
And takes her farewell of the glorious sun!  
How well resembles it the prime of youth,  
Trimm'd like a younker prancing to his love!

EDWARD:

Dazzle mine eyes, or do I see three suns?

RICHARD:

Three glorious suns, each one a perfect sun;  
Not separated with the racking clouds,  
But sever'd in a pale clear-shining sky.  
See, see! they join, embrace, and seem to kiss,  
As if they vow'd some league inviolable:  
Now are they but one lamp, one light, one sun.  
In this the heaven figures some event.

EDWARD:

'Tis wondrous strange, the like yet never heard of.  
I think it cites us, brother, to the field,  
That we, the sons of brave Plantagenet,  
Each one already blazing by our meeds,  
Should notwithstanding join our lights together  
And over-shine the earth as this the world.  
Whate'er it bodes, henceforward will I bear  
Upon my target three fair-shining suns.

RICHARD:

Nay, bear three daughters: by your leave I speak it,  
You love the breeder better than the male.  
But what art thou, whose heavy looks foretell  
Some dreadful story hanging on thy tongue?

Messenger:

Ah, one that was a woful looker-on  
When as the noble Duke of York was slain,  
Your princely father and my loving lord!

EDWARD:

O, speak no more, for I have heard too much.

RICHARD:

Say how he died, for I will hear it all.

Messenger:

Environed he was with many foes,  
And stood against them, as the hope of Troy  
Against the Greeks that would have enter'd Troy.  
But Hercules himself must yield to odds;  
And many strokes, though with a little axe,  
Hew down and fell the hardest-timber'd oak.  
By many hands your father was subdued;  
But only slaughter'd by the ireful arm  
Of unrelenting Clifford and the queen,  
Who crown'd the gracious duke in high despite,  
Laugh'd in his face; and when with grief he wept,  
The ruthless queen gave him to dry his cheeks  
A napkin steeped in the harmless blood  
Of sweet young Rutland, by rough Clifford slain:  
And after many scorns, many foul taunts,  
They took his head, and on the gates of York  
They set the same; and there it doth remain,  
The saddest spectacle that e'er I view'd.

EDWARD:

Sweet Duke of York, our prop to lean upon,  
Now thou art gone, we have no staff, no stay.  
O Clifford, boisterous Clifford! thou hast slain  
The flower of Europe for his chivalry;  
And treacherously hast thou vanquish'd him,  
For hand to hand he would have vanquish'd thee.  
Now my soul's palace is become a prison:  
Ah, would she break from hence, that this my body  
Might in the ground be closed up in rest!  
For never henceforth shall I joy again,  
Never, O never shall I see more joy!

RICHARD:

I cannot weep; for all my body's moisture  
Scarce serves to quench my furnace-burning heart:  
Nor can my tongue unload my heart's great burthen;  
For selfsame wind that I should speak withal  
Is kindling coals that fires all my breast,  
And burns me up with flames that tears would quench.  
To weep is to make less the depth of grief:  
Tears then for babes; blows and revenge for me  
Richard, I bear thy name; I'll venge thy death,  
Or die renowned by attempting it.

EDWARD:

His name that valiant duke hath left with thee;  
His dukedom and his chair with me is left.

RICHARD:

Nay, if thou be that princely eagle's bird,  
Show thy descent by gazing 'gainst the sun:  
For chair and dukedom, throne and kingdom say;  
Either that is thine, or else thou wert not his.

WARWICK:

How now, fair lords! What fare? what news abroad?

RICHARD:

Great Lord of Warwick, if we should recount  
Our baleful news, and at each word's deliverance  
Stab poniards in our flesh till all were told,  
The words would add more anguish than the wounds.  
O valiant lord, the Duke of York is slain!

EDWARD:

O Warwick, Warwick! that Plantagenet,  
Which held three dearly as his soul's redemption,  
Is by the stern Lord Clifford done to death.

WARWICK:

Ten days ago I drown'd these news in tears;  
And now, to add more measure to your woes,  
I come to tell you things sith then befall'n.  
After the bloody fray at Wakefield fought,  
Where your brave father breathed his latest gasp,  
Tidings, as swiftly as the posts could run,  
Were brought me of your loss and his depart.  
I, then in London keeper of the king,  
Muster'd my soldiers, gather'd flocks of friends,  
And very well appointed, as I thought,  
March'd toward Saint Alban's to intercept the queen,  
Bearing the king in my behalf along;  
For by my scouts I was advertised

That she was coming with a full intent  
To dash our late decree in parliament  
Touching King Henry's oath and your succession.  
Short tale to make, we at Saint Alban's met  
Our battles join'd, and both sides fiercely fought:  
But whether 'twas the coldness of the king,  
Who look'd full gently on his warlike queen,  
That robb'd my soldiers of their heated spleen;  
Or whether 'twas report of her success;  
Or more than common fear of Clifford's rigour,  
Who thunders to his captives blood and death,  
I cannot judge: but to conclude with truth,  
Their weapons like to lightning came and went;  
Our soldiers', like the night-owl's lazy flight,  
Or like an idle thresher with a flail,  
Fell gently down, as if they struck their friends.  
I cheer'd them up with justice of our cause,  
With promise of high pay and great rewards:  
But all in vain; they had no heart to fight,  
And we in them no hope to win the day;  
So that we fled; the king unto the queen;  
Lord George your brother, Norfolk and myself,  
In haste, post-haste, are come to join with you:  
For in the marches here we heard you were,  
Making another head to fight again.

EDWARD:

Where is the Duke of Norfolk, gentle Warwick?  
And when came George from Burgundy to England?

WARWICK:

Some six miles off the duke is with the soldiers;  
And for your brother, he was lately sent  
From your kind aunt, Duchess of Burgundy,  
With aid of soldiers to this needful war.

RICHARD:

'Twas odds, belike, when valiant Warwick fled:  
Oft have I heard his praises in pursuit,  
But ne'er till now his scandal of retire.

WARWICK:

Nor now my scandal, Richard, dost thou hear;  
For thou shalt know this strong right hand of mine  
Can pluck the diadem from faint Henry's head,  
And wring the awful sceptre from his fist,  
Were he as famous and as bold in war  
As he is famed for mildness, peace, and prayer.

RICHARD:

I know it well, Lord Warwick; blame me not:  
'Tis love I bear thy glories makes me speak.  
But in this troublous time what's to be done?  
Shall we go throw away our coats of steel,  
And wrap our bodies in black mourning gowns,  
Numbering our Ave-Maries with our beads?  
Or shall we on the helmets of our foes  
Tell our devotion with revengeful arms?  
If for the last, say ay, and to it, lords.

WARWICK:

Why, therefore Warwick came to seek you out;  
And therefore comes my brother Montague.  
Attend me, lords. The proud insulting queen,  
With Clifford and the haught Northumberland,  
And of their feather many more proud birds,  
Have wrought the easy-melting king like wax.  
He swore consent to your succession,  
His oath enrolled in the parliament;  
And now to London all the crew are gone,  
To frustrate both his oath and what beside  
May make against the house of Lancaster.  
Their power, I think, is thirty thousand strong:  
Now, if the help of Norfolk and myself,  
With all the friends that thou, brave Earl of March,  
Amongst the loving Welshmen canst procure,  
Will but amount to five and twenty thousand,  
Why, Via! to London will we march amain,  
And once again bestride our foaming steeds,  
And once again cry 'Charge upon our foes!'  
But never once again turn back and fly.

RICHARD:

Ay, now methinks I hear great Warwick speak:  
Ne'er may he live to see a sunshine day,  
That cries 'Retire,' if Warwick bid him stay.

EDWARD:

Lord Warwick, on thy shoulder will I lean;  
And when thou fail'st--as God forbid the hour!--  
Must Edward fall, which peril heaven forbend!

WARWICK:

No longer Earl of March, but Duke of York:  
The next degree is England's royal throne;  
For King of England shalt thou be proclaim'd  
In every borough as we pass along;  
And he that throws not up his cap for joy  
Shall for the fault make forfeit of his head.  
King Edward, valiant Richard, Montague,

Stay we no longer, dreaming of renown,  
But sound the trumpets, and about our task.

RICHARD:

Then, Clifford, were thy heart as hard as steel,  
As thou hast shown it flinty by thy deeds,  
I come to pierce it, or to give thee mine.

EDWARD:

Then strike up drums: God and Saint George for us!

WARWICK:

How now! what news?

Messenger:

The Duke of Norfolk sends you word by me,  
The queen is coming with a puissant host;  
And craves your company for speedy counsel.

WARWICK:

Why then it sorts, brave warriors, let's away.  
3 KING HENRY VI

QUEEN MARGARET:

Welcome, my lord, to this brave town of York.  
Yonder's the head of that arch-enemy  
That sought to be encompass'd with your crown:  
Doth not the object cheer your heart, my lord?

KING HENRY VI:

Ay, as the rocks cheer them that fear their wreck:  
To see this sight, it irks my very soul.  
Withhold revenge, dear God! 'tis not my fault,  
Nor wittingly have I infringed my vow.

CLIFFORD:

My gracious liege, this too much lenity  
And harmful pity must be laid aside.  
To whom do lions cast their gentle looks?  
Not to the beast that would usurp their den.  
Whose hand is that the forest bear doth lick?  
Not his that spoils her young before her face.  
Who 'scapes the lurking serpent's mortal sting?  
Not he that sets his foot upon her back.  
The smallest worm will turn being trodden on,  
And doves will peck in safeguard of their brood.  
Ambitious York doth level at thy crown,  
Thou smiling while he knit his angry brows:  
He, but a duke, would have his son a king,  
And raise his issue, like a loving sire;



Thou, being a king, blest with a goodly son,  
Didst yield consent to disinherit him,  
Which argued thee a most unloving father.  
Unreasonable creatures feed their young;  
And though man's face be fearful to their eyes,  
Yet, in protection of their tender ones,  
Who hath not seen them, even with those wings  
Which sometime they have used with fearful flight,  
Make war with him that climb'd unto their nest,  
Offer their own lives in their young's defence?  
For shame, my liege, make them your precedent!  
Were it not pity that this goodly boy  
Should lose his birthright by his father's fault,  
And long hereafter say unto his child,  
'What my great-grandfather and his grandsire got  
My careless father fondly gave away'?  
Ah, what a shame were this! Look on the boy;  
And let his manly face, which promiseth  
Successful fortune, steel thy melting heart  
To hold thine own and leave thine own with him.

KING HENRY VI:

Full well hath Clifford play'd the orator,  
Inferring arguments of mighty force.  
But, Clifford, tell me, didst thou never hear  
That things ill-got had ever bad success?  
And happy always was it for that son  
Whose father for his hoarding went to hell?  
I'll leave my son my virtuous deeds behind;  
And would my father had left me no more!  
For all the rest is held at such a rate  
As brings a thousand-fold more care to keep  
Than in possession and jot of pleasure.  
Ah, cousin York! would thy best friends did know  
How it doth grieve me that thy head is here!

QUEEN MARGARET:

My lord, cheer up your spirits: our foes are nigh,  
And this soft courage makes your followers faint.  
You promised knighthood to our forward son:  
Unsheathe your sword, and dub him presently.  
Edward, kneel down.

KING HENRY VI:

Edward Plantagenet, arise a knight;  
And learn this lesson, draw thy sword in right.

PRINCE:

My gracious father, by your kingly leave,  
I'll draw it as apparent to the crown,

And in that quarrel use it to the death.

CLIFFORD:

Why, that is spoken like a toward prince.

Messenger:

Royal commanders, be in readiness:  
For with a band of thirty thousand men  
Comes Warwick, backing of the Duke of York;  
And in the towns, as they do march along,  
Proclaims him king, and many fly to him:  
Darraign your battle, for they are at hand.

CLIFFORD:

I would your highness would depart the field:  
The queen hath best success when you are absent.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Ay, good my lord, and leave us to our fortune.

KING HENRY VI:

Why, that's my fortune too; therefore I'll stay.

NORTHUMBERLAND:

Be it with resolution then to fight.

PRINCE EDWARD:

My royal father, cheer these noble lords  
And hearten those that fight in your defence:  
Unsheathe your sword, good father; cry 'Saint George!'

EDWARD:

Now, perjured Henry! wilt thou kneel for grace,  
And set thy diadem upon my head;  
Or bide the mortal fortune of the field?

QUEEN MARGARET:

Go, rate thy minions, proud insulting boy!  
Becomes it thee to be thus bold in terms  
Before thy sovereign and thy lawful king?

EDWARD:

I am his king, and he should bow his knee;  
I was adopted heir by his consent:  
Since when, his oath is broke; for, as I hear,  
You, that are king, though he do wear the crown,  
Have caused him, by new act of parliament,  
To blot out me, and put his own son in.

CLIFFORD:

And reason too:  
Who should succeed the father but the son?

RICHARD:  
Are you there, butcher? O, I cannot speak!

CLIFFORD:  
Ay, crook-back, here I stand to answer thee,  
Or any he the proudest of thy sort.

RICHARD:  
'Twas you that kill'd young Rutland, was it not?

CLIFFORD:  
Ay, and old York, and yet not satisfied.

RICHARD:  
For God's sake, lords, give signal to the fight.

WARWICK:  
What say'st thou, Henry, wilt thou yield the crown?

QUEEN MARGARET:  
Why, how now, long-tongued Warwick! dare you speak?  
When you and I met at Saint Alban's last,  
Your legs did better service than your hands.

WARWICK:  
Then 'twas my turn to fly, and now 'tis thine.

CLIFFORD:  
You said so much before, and yet you fled.

WARWICK:  
'Twas not your valour, Clifford, drove me thence.

NORTHUMBERLAND:  
No, nor your manhood that durst make you stay.

RICHARD:  
Northumberland, I hold thee reverently.  
Break off the parley; for scarce I can refrain  
The execution of my big-swoln heart  
Upon that Clifford, that cruel child-killer.

CLIFFORD:  
I slew thy father, call'st thou him a child?

RICHARD:  
Ay, like a dastard and a treacherous coward,

As thou didst kill our tender brother Rutland;  
But ere sunset I'll make thee curse the deed.

KING HENRY VI:  
Have done with words, my lords, and hear me speak.

QUEEN MARGARET:  
Defy them then, or else hold close thy lips.

KING HENRY VI:  
I prithee, give no limits to my tongue:  
I am a king, and privileged to speak.

CLIFFORD:  
My liege, the wound that bred this meeting here  
Cannot be cured by words; therefore be still.

RICHARD:  
Then, executioner, unsheathe thy sword:  
By him that made us all, I am resolved  
that Clifford's manhood lies upon his tongue.

EDWARD:  
Say, Henry, shall I have my right, or no?  
A thousand men have broke their fasts to-day,  
That ne'er shall dine unless thou yield the crown.

WARWICK:  
If thou deny, their blood upon thy head;  
For York in justice puts his armour on.

PRINCE EDWARD:  
If that be right which Warwick says is right,  
There is no wrong, but every thing is right.

RICHARD:  
Whoever got thee, there thy mother stands;  
For, well I wot, thou hast thy mother's tongue.

QUEEN MARGARET:  
But thou art neither like thy sire nor dam;  
But like a foul mis-shapen stigmatic,  
Mark'd by the destinies to be avoided,  
As venom toads, or lizards' dreadful stings.

RICHARD:  
Iron of Naples hid with English guilt,  
Whose father bears the title of a king,--  
As if a channel should be call'd the sea,--  
Shamest thou not, knowing whence thou art extraught,

To let thy tongue detect thy base-born heart?

EDWARD:

A wisp of straw were worth a thousand crowns,  
To make this shameless callet know herself.  
Helen of Greece was fairer far than thou,  
Although thy husband may be Menelaus;  
And ne'er was Agamemnon's brother wrong'd  
By that false woman, as this king by thee.  
His father revell'd in the heart of France,  
And tamed the king, and made the dauphin stoop;  
And had he match'd according to his state,  
He might have kept that glory to this day;  
But when he took a beggar to his bed,  
And graced thy poor sire with his bridal-day,  
Even then that sunshine brew'd a shower for him,  
That wash'd his father's fortunes forth of France,  
And heap'd sedition on his crown at home.  
For what hath broach'd this tumult but thy pride?  
Hadst thou been meek, our title still had slept;  
And we, in pity of the gentle king,  
Had slipp'd our claim until another age.

GEORGE:

But when we saw our sunshine made thy spring,  
And that thy summer bred us no increase,  
We set the axe to thy usurping root;  
And though the edge hath something hit ourselves,  
Yet, know thou, since we have begun to strike,  
We'll never leave till we have hewn thee down,  
Or bathed thy growing with our heated bloods.

EDWARD:

And, in this resolution, I defy thee;  
Not willing any longer conference,  
Since thou deniest the gentle king to speak.  
Sound trumpets! let our bloody colours wave!  
And either victory, or else a grave.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Stay, Edward.

EDWARD:

No, wrangling woman, we'll no longer stay:  
These words will cost ten thousand lives this day.  
3 KING HENRY VI

WARWICK:

Forspent with toil, as runners with a race,  
I lay me down a little while to breathe;

For strokes received, and many blows repaid,  
Have robb'd my strong-knit sinews of their strength,  
And spite of spite needs must I rest awhile.

EDWARD:  
Smile, gentle heaven! or strike, ungentle death!  
For this world frowns, and Edward's sun is clouded.

WARWICK:  
How now, my lord! what hap? what hope of good?

GEORGE:  
Our hap is loss, our hope but sad despair;  
Our ranks are broke, and ruin follows us:  
What counsel give you? whither shall we fly?

EDWARD:  
Bootless is flight, they follow us with wings;  
And weak we are and cannot shun pursuit.

RICHARD:  
Ah, Warwick, why hast thou withdrawn thyself?  
Thy brother's blood the thirsty earth hath drunk,  
Broach'd with the steely point of Clifford's lance;  
And in the very pangs of death he cried,  
Like to a dismal clangour heard from far,  
'Warwick, revenge! brother, revenge my death!'  
So, underneath the belly of their steeds,  
That stain'd their fetlocks in his smoking blood,  
The noble gentleman gave up the ghost.

WARWICK:  
Then let the earth be drunken with our blood:  
I'll kill my horse, because I will not fly.  
Why stand we like soft-hearted women here,  
Wailing our losses, whiles the foe doth rage;  
And look upon, as if the tragedy  
Were play'd in jest by counterfeiting actors?  
Here on my knee I vow to God above,  
I'll never pause again, never stand still,  
Till either death hath closed these eyes of mine  
Or fortune given me measure of revenge.

EDWARD:  
O Warwick, I do bend my knee with thine;  
And in this vow do chain my soul to thine!  
And, ere my knee rise from the earth's cold face,  
I throw my hands, mine eyes, my heart to thee,  
Thou setter up and plucker down of kings,  
Beseeching thee, if with they will it stands

That to my foes this body must be prey,  
Yet that thy brazen gates of heaven may ope,  
And give sweet passage to my sinful soul!  
Now, lords, take leave until we meet again,  
Where'er it be, in heaven or in earth.

RICHARD:

Brother, give me thy hand; and, gentle Warwick,  
Let me embrace thee in my weary arms:  
I, that did never weep, now melt with woe  
That winter should cut off our spring-time so.

WARWICK:

Away, away! Once more, sweet lords farewell.

GEORGE:

Yet let us all together to our troops,  
And give them leave to fly that will not stay;  
And call them pillars that will stand to us;  
And, if we thrive, promise them such rewards  
As victors wear at the Olympian games:  
This may plant courage in their quailing breasts;  
For yet is hope of life and victory.  
Forslow no longer, make we hence amain.  
3 KING HENRY VI

RICHARD:

Now, Clifford, I have singled thee alone:  
Suppose this arm is for the Duke of York,  
And this for Rutland; both bound to revenge,  
Wert thou environ'd with a brazen wall.

CLIFFORD:

Now, Richard, I am with thee here alone:  
This is the hand that stabb'd thy father York;  
And this the hand that slew thy brother Rutland;  
And here's the heart that triumphs in their death  
And cheers these hands that slew thy sire and brother  
To execute the like upon thyself;  
And so, have at thee!

RICHARD:

Nay Warwick, single out some other chase;  
For I myself will hunt this wolf to death.  
3 KING HENRY VI

KING HENRY VI:

This battle fares like to the morning's war,  
When dying clouds contend with growing light,  
What time the shepherd, blowing of his nails,

Can neither call it perfect day nor night.  
Now sways it this way, like a mighty sea  
Forced by the tide to combat with the wind;  
Now sways it that way, like the selfsame sea  
Forced to retire by fury of the wind:  
Sometime the flood prevails, and then the wind;  
Now one the better, then another best;  
Both tugging to be victors, breast to breast,  
Yet neither conqueror nor conquered:  
So is the equal of this fell war.  
Here on this molehill will I sit me down.  
To whom God will, there be the victory!  
For Margaret my queen, and Clifford too,  
Have chid me from the battle; swearing both  
They prosper best of all when I am thence.  
Would I were dead! if God's good will were so;  
For what is in this world but grief and woe?  
O God! methinks it were a happy life,  
To be no better than a homely swain;  
To sit upon a hill, as I do now,  
To carve out dials quaintly, point by point,  
Thereby to see the minutes how they run,  
How many make the hour full complete;  
How many hours bring about the day;  
How many days will finish up the year;  
How many years a mortal man may live.  
When this is known, then to divide the times:  
So many hours must I tend my flock;  
So many hours must I take my rest;  
So many hours must I contemplate;  
So many hours must I sport myself;  
So many days my ewes have been with young;  
So many weeks ere the poor fools will ean:  
So many years ere I shall shear the fleece:  
So minutes, hours, days, months, and years,  
Pass'd over to the end they were created,  
Would bring white hairs unto a quiet grave.  
Ah, what a life were this! how sweet! how lovely!  
Gives not the hawthorn-bush a sweeter shade  
To shepherds looking on their silly sheep,  
Than doth a rich embroider'd canopy  
To kings that fear their subjects' treachery?  
O, yes, it doth; a thousand-fold it doth.  
And to conclude, the shepherd's homely curds,  
His cold thin drink out of his leather bottle.  
His wonted sleep under a fresh tree's shade,  
All which secure and sweetly he enjoys,  
Is far beyond a prince's delicates,  
His viands sparkling in a golden cup,  
His body couched in a curious bed,



When care, mistrust, and treason waits on him.

Son:

Ill blows the wind that profits nobody.  
This man, whom hand to hand I slew in fight,  
May be possessed with some store of crowns;  
And I, that haply take them from him now,  
May yet ere night yield both my life and them  
To some man else, as this dead man doth me.  
Who's this? O God! it is my father's face,  
Whom in this conflict I unwares have kill'd.  
O heavy times, begetting such events!  
From London by the king was I press'd forth;  
My father, being the Earl of Warwick's man,  
Came on the part of York, press'd by his master;  
And I, who at his hands received my life, him  
Have by my hands of life bereaved him.  
Pardon me, God, I knew not what I did!  
And pardon, father, for I knew not thee!  
My tears shall wipe away these bloody marks;  
And no more words till they have flow'd their fill.

KING HENRY VI:

O piteous spectacle! O bloody times!  
Whiles lions war and battle for their dens,  
Poor harmless lambs abide their enmity.  
Weep, wretched man, I'll aid thee tear for tear;  
And let our hearts and eyes, like civil war,  
Be blind with tears, and break o'ercharged with grief.

Father:

Thou that so stoutly hast resisted me,  
Give me thy gold, if thou hast any gold:  
For I have bought it with an hundred blows.  
But let me see: is this our foeman's face?  
Ah, no, no, no, it is mine only son!  
Ah, boy, if any life be left in thee,  
Throw up thine eye! see, see what showers arise,  
Blown with the windy tempest of my heart,  
Upon thy words, that kill mine eye and heart!  
O, pity, God, this miserable age!  
What stratagems, how fell, how butcherly,  
Erroneous, mutinous and unnatural,  
This deadly quarrel daily doth beget!  
O boy, thy father gave thee life too soon,  
And hath bereft thee of thy life too late!

KING HENRY VI:

Woe above woe! grief more than common grief!  
O that my death would stay these ruthful deeds!

O pity, pity, gentle heaven, pity!  
The red rose and the white are on his face,  
The fatal colours of our striving houses:  
The one his purple blood right well resembles;  
The other his pale cheeks, methinks, presenteth:  
Wither one rose, and let the other flourish;  
If you contend, a thousand lives must wither.

Son:  
How will my mother for a father's death  
Take on with me and ne'er be satisfied!

Father:  
How will my wife for slaughter of my son  
Shed seas of tears and ne'er be satisfied!

KING HENRY VI:  
How will the country for these woful chances  
Misthink the king and not be satisfied!

Son:  
Was ever son so rued a father's death?

Father:  
Was ever father so bemoan'd his son?

KING HENRY VI:  
Was ever king so grieved for subjects' woe?  
Much is your sorrow; mine ten times so much.

Son:  
I'll bear thee hence, where I may weep my fill.

Father:  
These arms of mine shall be thy winding-sheet;  
My heart, sweet boy, shall be thy sepulchre,  
For from my heart thine image ne'er shall go;  
My sighing breast shall be thy funeral bell;  
And so obsequious will thy father be,  
Even for the loss of thee, having no more,  
As Priam was for all his valiant sons.  
I'll bear thee hence; and let them fight that will,  
For I have murdered where I should not kill.

KING HENRY VI:  
Sad-hearted men, much overgone with care,  
Here sits a king more woful than you are.

PRINCE EDWARD:  
Fly, father, fly! for all your friends are fled,

And Warwick rages like a chafed bull:  
Away! for death doth hold us in pursuit.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Mount you, my lord; towards Berwick post amain:  
Edward and Richard, like a brace of greyhounds  
Having the fearful flying hare in sight,  
With fiery eyes sparkling for very wrath,  
And bloody steel grasp'd in their ireful hands,  
Are at our backs; and therefore hence amain.

EXETER:

Away! for vengeance comes along with them:  
Nay, stay not to expostulate, make speed;  
Or else come after: I'll away before.

KING HENRY VI:

Nay, take me with thee, good sweet Exeter:  
Not that I fear to stay, but love to go  
Whither the queen intends. Forward; away!  
3 KING HENRY VI

CLIFFORD:

Here burns my candle out; ay, here it dies,  
Which, whiles it lasted, gave King Henry light.  
O Lancaster, I fear thy overthrow  
More than my body's parting with my soul!  
My love and fear glued many friends to thee;  
And, now I fall, thy tough commixture melts.  
Impairing Henry, strengthening misproud York,  
The common people swarm like summer flies;  
And whither fly the gnats but to the sun?  
And who shines now but Henry's enemies?  
O Phoebus, hadst thou never given consent  
That Phaethon should cheque thy fiery steeds,  
Thy burning car never had scorch'd the earth!  
And, Henry, hadst thou sway'd as kings should do,  
Or as thy father and his father did,  
Giving no ground unto the house of York,  
They never then had sprung like summer flies;  
I and ten thousand in this luckless realm  
Had left no mourning widows for our death;  
And thou this day hadst kept thy chair in peace.  
For what doth cherish weeds but gentle air?  
And what makes robbers bold but too much lenity?  
Bootless are complaints, and cureless are my wounds;  
No way to fly, nor strength to hold out flight:  
The foe is merciless, and will not pity;  
For at their hands I have deserved no pity.  
The air hath got into my deadly wounds,

And much effuse of blood doth make me faint.  
Come, York and Richard, Warwick and the rest;  
I stabb'd your fathers' bosoms, split my breast.

EDWARD:

Now breathe we, lords: good fortune bids us pause,  
And smooth the frowns of war with peaceful looks.  
Some troops pursue the bloody-minded queen,  
That led calm Henry, though he were a king,  
As doth a sail, fill'd with a fretting gust,  
Command an argosy to stem the waves.  
But think you, lords, that Clifford fled with them?

WARWICK:

No, 'tis impossible he should escape,  
For, though before his face I speak the words  
Your brother Richard mark'd him for the grave:  
And wheresoe'er he is, he's surely dead.

EDWARD:

Whose soul is that which takes her heavy leave?

RICHARD:

A deadly groan, like life and death's departing.

EDWARD:

See who it is: and, now the battle's ended,  
If friend or foe, let him be gently used.

RICHARD:

Revoke that doom of mercy, for 'tis Clifford;  
Who not contented that he lopp'd the branch  
In hewing Rutland when his leaves put forth,  
But set his murdering knife unto the root  
From whence that tender spray did sweetly spring,  
I mean our princely father, Duke of York.

WARWICK:

From off the gates of York fetch down the head,  
Your father's head, which Clifford placed there;  
Instead whereof let this supply the room:  
Measure for measure must be answered.

EDWARD:

Bring forth that fatal screech-owl to our house,  
That nothing sung but death to us and ours:  
Now death shall stop his dismal threatening sound,  
And his ill-boding tongue no more shall speak.

WARWICK:

I think his understanding is bereft.  
Speak, Clifford, dost thou know who speaks to thee?  
Dark cloudy death o'ershades his beams of life,  
And he nor sees nor hears us what we say.

RICHARD:  
O, would he did! and so perhaps he doth:  
'Tis but his policy to counterfeit,  
Because he would avoid such bitter taunts  
Which in the time of death he gave our father.

GEORGE:  
If so thou think'st, vex him with eager words.

RICHARD:  
Clifford, ask mercy and obtain no grace.

EDWARD:  
Clifford, repent in bootless penitence.

WARWICK:  
Clifford, devise excuses for thy faults.

GEORGE:  
While we devise fell tortures for thy faults.

RICHARD:  
Thou didst love York, and I am son to York.

EDWARD:  
Thou pitied'st Rutland; I will pity thee.

GEORGE:  
Where's Captain Margaret, to fence you now?

WARWICK:  
They mock thee, Clifford: swear as thou wast wont.

RICHARD:  
What, not an oath? nay, then the world goes hard  
When Clifford cannot spare his friends an oath.  
I know by that he's dead; and, by my soul,  
If this right hand would buy two hour's life,  
That I in all despite might rail at him,  
This hand should chop it off, and with the  
issuing blood  
Stifle the villain whose unstanched thirst  
York and young Rutland could not satisfy.

WARWICK:

Ay, but he's dead: off with the traitor's head,  
And rear it in the place your father's stands.  
And now to London with triumphant march,  
There to be crowned England's royal king:  
From whence shall Warwick cut the sea to France,  
And ask the Lady Bona for thy queen:  
So shalt thou sinew both these lands together;  
And, having France thy friend, thou shalt not dread  
The scatter'd foe that hopes to rise again;  
For though they cannot greatly sting to hurt,  
Yet look to have them buzz to offend thine ears.  
First will I see the coronation;  
And then to Brittany I'll cross the sea,  
To effect this marriage, so it please my lord.

EDWARD:

Even as thou wilt, sweet Warwick, let it be;  
For in thy shoulder do I build my seat,  
And never will I undertake the thing  
Wherein thy counsel and consent is wanting.  
Richard, I will create thee Duke of Gloucester,  
And George, of Clarence: Warwick, as ourself,  
Shall do and undo as him pleaseth best.

RICHARD:

Let me be Duke of Clarence, George of Gloucester;  
For Gloucester's dukedom is too ominous.

WARWICK:

Tut, that's a foolish observation:  
Richard, be Duke of Gloucester. Now to London,  
To see these honours in possession.  
3 KING HENRY VI

First Keeper:

Under this thick-grown brake we'll shroud ourselves;  
For through this laund anon the deer will come;  
And in this covert will we make our stand,  
Culling the principal of all the deer.

Second Keeper:

I'll stay above the hill, so both may shoot.

First Keeper:

That cannot be; the noise of thy cross-bow  
Will scare the herd, and so my shoot is lost.  
Here stand we both, and aim we at the best:  
And, for the time shall not seem tedious,  
I'll tell thee what befell me on a day  
In this self-place where now we mean to stand.

Second Keeper:

Here comes a man; let's stay till he be past.

KING HENRY VI:

From Scotland am I stol'n, even of pure love,  
To greet mine own land with my wishful sight.  
No, Harry, Harry, 'tis no land of thine;  
Thy place is fill'd, thy sceptre wrung from thee,  
Thy balm wash'd off wherewith thou wast anointed:  
No bending knee will call thee Caesar now,  
No humble suitors press to speak for right,  
No, not a man comes for redress of thee;  
For how can I help them, and not myself?

First Keeper:

Ay, here's a deer whose skin's a keeper's fee:  
This is the quondam king; let's seize upon him.

KING HENRY VI:

Let me embrace thee, sour adversity,  
For wise men say it is the wisest course.

Second Keeper:

Why linger we? let us lay hands upon him.

First Keeper:

Forbear awhile; we'll hear a little more.

KING HENRY VI:

My queen and son are gone to France for aid;  
And, as I hear, the great commanding Warwick  
Is thither gone, to crave the French king's sister  
To wife for Edward: if this news be true,  
Poor queen and son, your labour is but lost;  
For Warwick is a subtle orator,  
And Lewis a prince soon won with moving words.  
By this account then Margaret may win him;  
For she's a woman to be pitied much:  
Her sighs will make a battery in his breast;  
Her tears will pierce into a marble heart;  
The tiger will be mild whiles she doth mourn;  
And Nero will be tainted with remorse,  
To hear and see her plaints, her brinish tears.  
Ay, but she's come to beg, Warwick to give;  
She, on his left side, craving aid for Henry,  
He, on his right, asking a wife for Edward.  
She weeps, and says her Henry is deposed;  
He smiles, and says his Edward is install'd;  
That she, poor wretch, for grief can speak no more;

Whiles Warwick tells his title, smooths the wrong,  
Inferreth arguments of mighty strength,  
And in conclusion wins the king from her,  
With promise of his sister, and what else,  
To strengthen and support King Edward's place.  
O Margaret, thus 'twill be; and thou, poor soul,  
Art then forsaken, as thou went'st forlorn!

Second Keeper:

Say, what art thou that talk'st of kings and queens?

KING HENRY VI:

More than I seem, and less than I was born to:  
A man at least, for less I should not be;  
And men may talk of kings, and why not I?

Second Keeper:

Ay, but thou talk'st as if thou wert a king.

KING HENRY VI:

Why, so I am, in mind; and that's enough.

Second Keeper:

But, if thou be a king, where is thy crown?

KING HENRY VI:

My crown is in my heart, not on my head;  
Not decked with diamonds and Indian stones,  
Nor to be seen: my crown is called content:  
A crown it is that seldom kings enjoy.

Second Keeper:

Well, if you be a king crown'd with content,  
Your crown content and you must be contented  
To go along with us; for as we think,  
You are the king King Edward hath deposed;  
And we his subjects sworn in all allegiance  
Will apprehend you as his enemy.

KING HENRY VI:

But did you never swear, and break an oath?

Second Keeper:

No, never such an oath; nor will not now.

KING HENRY VI:

Where did you dwell when I was King of England?

Second Keeper:

Here in this country, where we now remain.



KING HENRY VI:

I was anointed king at nine months old;  
My father and my grandfather were kings,  
And you were sworn true subjects unto me:  
And tell me, then, have you not broke your oaths?

First Keeper:

No;

For we were subjects but while you were king.

KING HENRY VI:

Why, am I dead? do I not breathe a man?  
Ah, simple men, you know not what you swear!  
Look, as I blow this feather from my face,  
And as the air blows it to me again,  
Obeying with my wind when I do blow,  
And yielding to another when it blows,  
Commanded always by the greater gust;  
Such is the lightness of you common men.  
But do not break your oaths; for of that sin  
My mild entreaty shall not make you guilty.  
Go where you will, the king shall be commanded;  
And be you kings, command, and I'll obey.

First Keeper:

We are true subjects to the king, King Edward.

KING HENRY VI:

So would you be again to Henry,  
If he were seated as King Edward is.

First Keeper:

We charge you, in God's name, and the king's,  
To go with us unto the officers.

KING HENRY VI:

In God's name, lead; your king's name be obey'd:  
And what God will, that let your king perform;  
And what he will, I humbly yield unto.

3 KING HENRY VI

KING EDWARD IV:

Brother of Gloucester, at Saint Alban's field  
This lady's husband, Sir Richard Grey, was slain,  
His lands then seized on by the conqueror:  
Her suit is now to repossess those lands;  
Which we in justice cannot well deny,  
Because in quarrel of the house of York  
The worthy gentleman did lose his life.

GLOUCESTER:

Your highness shall do well to grant her suit;  
It were dishonour to deny it her.

KING EDWARD IV:

It were no less; but yet I'll make a pause.

GLOUCESTER:

CLARENCE:

GLOUCESTER:

KING EDWARD IV:

Widow, we will consider of your suit;  
And come some other time to know our mind.

LADY GREY:

Right gracious lord, I cannot brook delay:  
May it please your highness to resolve me now;  
And what your pleasure is, shall satisfy me.

GLOUCESTER:

CLARENCE:

GLOUCESTER:

KING EDWARD IV:

How many children hast thou, widow? tell me.

CLARENCE:

GLOUCESTER:

LADY GREY:

Three, my most gracious lord.

GLOUCESTER:

KING EDWARD IV:

'Twere pity they should lose their father's lands.

LADY GREY:

Be pitiful, dread lord, and grant it then.

KING EDWARD IV:

Lords, give us leave: I'll try this widow's wit.

GLoucester:

KING EDWARD IV:

Now tell me, madam, do you love your children?

LADY GREY:

Ay, full as dearly as I love myself.

KING EDWARD IV:

And would you not do much to do them good?

LADY GREY:

To do them good, I would sustain some harm.

KING EDWARD IV:

Then get your husband's lands, to do them good.

LADY GREY:

Therefore I came unto your majesty.

KING EDWARD IV:

I'll tell you how these lands are to be got.

LADY GREY:

So shall you bind me to your highness' service.

KING EDWARD IV:

What service wilt thou do me, if I give them?

LADY GREY:

What you command, that rests in me to do.

KING EDWARD IV:

But you will take exceptions to my boon.

LADY GREY:

No, gracious lord, except I cannot do it.

KING EDWARD IV:

Ay, but thou canst do what I mean to ask.

LADY GREY:

Why, then I will do what your grace commands.

GLoucester:

CLARENCE:

LADY GREY:

Why stops my lord, shall I not hear my task?

KING EDWARD IV:

An easy task; 'tis but to love a king.

LADY GREY:

That's soon perform'd, because I am a subject.

KING EDWARD IV:

Why, then, thy husband's lands I freely give thee.

LADY GREY:

I take my leave with many thousand thanks.

GLOUCESTER:

KING EDWARD IV:

But stay thee, 'tis the fruits of love I mean.

LADY GREY:

The fruits of love I mean, my loving liege.

KING EDWARD IV:

Ay, but, I fear me, in another sense.

What love, think'st thou, I sue so much to get?

LADY GREY:

My love till death, my humble thanks, my prayers;

That love which virtue begs and virtue grants.

KING EDWARD IV:

No, by my troth, I did not mean such love.

LADY GREY:

Why, then you mean not as I thought you did.

KING EDWARD IV:

But now you partly may perceive my mind.

LADY GREY:

My mind will never grant what I perceive

Your highness aims at, if I aim aright.

KING EDWARD IV:

To tell thee plain, I aim to lie with thee.

LADY GREY:

To tell you plain, I had rather lie in prison.

KING EDWARD IV:

Why, then thou shalt not have thy husband's lands.

LADY GREY:

Why, then mine honesty shall be my dower;  
For by that loss I will not purchase them.

KING EDWARD IV:

Therein thou wrong'st thy children mightily.

LADY GREY:

Herein your highness wrongs both them and me.  
But, mighty lord, this merry inclination  
Accords not with the sadness of my suit:  
Please you dismiss me either with 'ay' or 'no.'

KING EDWARD IV:

Ay, if thou wilt say 'ay' to my request;  
No if thou dost say 'no' to my demand.

LADY GREY:

Then, no, my lord. My suit is at an end.

GLOUCESTER:

CLARENCE:

KING EDWARD IV:

LADY GREY:

'Tis better said than done, my gracious lord:  
I am a subject fit to jest withal,  
But far unfit to be a sovereign.

KING EDWARD IV:

Sweet widow, by my state I swear to thee  
I speak no more than what my soul intends;  
And that is, to enjoy thee for my love.

LADY GREY:

And that is more than I will yield unto:  
I know I am too mean to be your queen,  
And yet too good to be your concubine.

KING EDWARD IV:

You cavil, widow: I did mean, my queen.

LADY GREY:

'Twill grieve your grace my sons should call you father.

KING EDWARD IV:

No more than when my daughters call thee mother.

Thou art a widow, and thou hast some children;  
And, by God's mother, I, being but a bachelor,  
Have other some: why, 'tis a happy thing  
To be the father unto many sons.  
Answer no more, for thou shalt be my queen.

GLOUCESTER:

CLARENCE:

KING EDWARD IV:  
Brothers, you muse what chat we two have had.

GLOUCESTER:  
The widow likes it not, for she looks very sad.

KING EDWARD IV:  
You'll think it strange if I should marry her.

CLARENCE:  
To whom, my lord?

KING EDWARD IV:  
Why, Clarence, to myself.

GLOUCESTER:  
That would be ten days' wonder at the least.

CLARENCE:  
That's a day longer than a wonder lasts.

GLOUCESTER:  
By so much is the wonder in extremes.

KING EDWARD IV:  
Well, jest on, brothers: I can tell you both  
Her suit is granted for her husband's lands.

Nobleman:  
My gracious lord, Henry your foe is taken,  
And brought your prisoner to your palace gate.

KING EDWARD IV:  
See that he be convey'd unto the Tower:  
And go we, brothers, to the man that took him,  
To question of his apprehension.  
Widow, go you along. Lords, use her honourably.

GLOUCESTER:  
Ay, Edward will use women honourably.

Would he were wasted, marrow, bones and all,  
That from his loins no hopeful branch may spring,  
To cross me from the golden time I look for!  
And yet, between my soul's desire and me--  
The lustful Edward's title buried--  
Is Clarence, Henry, and his son young Edward,  
And all the unlook'd for issue of their bodies,  
To take their rooms, ere I can place myself:  
A cold premeditation for my purpose!  
Why, then, I do but dream on sovereignty;  
Like one that stands upon a promontory,  
And spies a far-off shore where he would tread,  
Wishing his foot were equal with his eye,  
And chides the sea that sunders him from thence,  
Saying, he'll lade it dry to have his way:  
So do I wish the crown, being so far off;  
And so I chide the means that keeps me from it;  
And so I say, I'll cut the causes off,  
Flattering me with impossibilities.  
My eye's too quick, my heart o'erweens too much,  
Unless my hand and strength could equal them.  
Well, say there is no kingdom then for Richard;  
What other pleasure can the world afford?  
I'll make my heaven in a lady's lap,  
And deck my body in gay ornaments,  
And witch sweet ladies with my words and looks.  
O miserable thought! and more unlikely  
Than to accomplish twenty golden crowns!  
Why, love forswore me in my mother's womb:  
And, for I should not deal in her soft laws,  
She did corrupt frail nature with some bribe,  
To shrink mine arm up like a wither'd shrub;  
To make an envious mountain on my back,  
Where sits deformity to mock my body;  
To shape my legs of an unequal size;  
To disproportion me in every part,  
Like to a chaos, or an unlick'd bear-whelp  
That carries no impression like the dam.  
And am I then a man to be beloved?  
O monstrous fault, to harbour such a thought!  
Then, since this earth affords no joy to me,  
But to command, to cheque, to o'erbear such  
As are of better person than myself,  
I'll make my heaven to dream upon the crown,  
And, whiles I live, to account this world but hell,  
Until my mis-shaped trunk that bears this head  
Be round impaled with a glorious crown.  
And yet I know not how to get the crown,  
For many lives stand between me and home:  
And I,--like one lost in a thorny wood,

That rends the thorns and is rent with the thorns,  
Seeking a way and straying from the way;  
Not knowing how to find the open air,  
But toiling desperately to find it out,--  
Torment myself to catch the English crown:  
And from that torment I will free myself,  
Or hew my way out with a bloody axe.  
Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile,  
And cry 'Content' to that which grieves my heart,  
And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,  
And frame my face to all occasions.  
I'll drown more sailors than the mermaid shall;  
I'll slay more gazers than the basilisk;  
I'll play the orator as well as Nestor,  
Deceive more slyly than Ulysses could,  
And, like a Sinon, take another Troy.  
I can add colours to the chameleon,  
Change shapes with Proteus for advantages,  
And set the murderous Machiavel to school.  
Can I do this, and cannot get a crown?  
Tut, were it farther off, I'll pluck it down.  
3 KING HENRY VI

KING LEWIS XI:

Fair Queen of England, worthy Margaret,  
Sit down with us: it ill befits thy state  
And birth, that thou shouldst stand while Lewis doth sit.

QUEEN MARGARET:

No, mighty King of France: now Margaret  
Must strike her sail and learn awhile to serve  
Where kings command. I was, I must confess,  
Great Albion's queen in former golden days:  
But now mischance hath trod my title down,  
And with dishonour laid me on the ground;  
Where I must take like seat unto my fortune,  
And to my humble seat conform myself.

KING LEWIS XI:

Why, say, fair queen, whence springs this deep despair?

QUEEN MARGARET:

From such a cause as fills mine eyes with tears  
And stops my tongue, while heart is drown'd in cares.

KING LEWIS XI:

Whate'er it be, be thou still like thyself,  
And sit thee by our side:  
Yield not thy neck  
To fortune's yoke, but let thy dauntless mind



Still ride in triumph over all mischance.  
Be plain, Queen Margaret, and tell thy grief;  
It shall be eased, if France can yield relief.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Those gracious words revive my drooping thoughts  
And give my tongue-tied sorrows leave to speak.  
Now, therefore, be it known to noble Lewis,  
That Henry, sole possessor of my love,  
Is of a king become a banish'd man,  
And forced to live in Scotland a forlorn;  
While proud ambitious Edward Duke of York  
Usurps the regal title and the seat  
Of England's true-anointed lawful king.  
This is the cause that I, poor Margaret,  
With this my son, Prince Edward, Henry's heir,  
Am come to crave thy just and lawful aid;  
And if thou fail us, all our hope is done:  
Scotland hath will to help, but cannot help;  
Our people and our peers are both misled,  
Our treasures seized, our soldiers put to flight,  
And, as thou seest, ourselves in heavy plight.

KING LEWIS XI:

Renowned queen, with patience calm the storm,  
While we bethink a means to break it off.

QUEEN MARGARET:

The more we stay, the stronger grows our foe.

KING LEWIS XI:

The more I stay, the more I'll succor thee.

QUEEN MARGARET:

O, but impatience waiteth on true sorrow.  
And see where comes the breeder of my sorrow!

KING LEWIS XI:

What's he approacheth boldly to our presence?

QUEEN MARGARET:

Our Earl of Warwick, Edward's greatest friend.

KING LEWIS XI:

Welcome, brave Warwick! What brings thee to France?

QUEEN MARGARET:

Ay, now begins a second storm to rise;  
For this is he that moves both wind and tide.

WARWICK:

From worthy Edward, King of Albion,  
My lord and sovereign, and thy vowed friend,  
I come, in kindness and unfeigned love,  
First, to do greetings to thy royal person;  
And then to crave a league of amity;  
And lastly, to confirm that amity  
With a nuptial knot, if thou vouchsafe to grant  
That virtuous Lady Bona, thy fair sister,  
To England's king in lawful marriage.

QUEEN MARGARET:

WARWICK:

QUEEN MARGARET:

King Lewis and Lady Bona, hear me speak,  
Before you answer Warwick. His demand  
Springs not from Edward's well-meant honest love,  
But from deceit bred by necessity;  
For how can tyrants safely govern home,  
Unless abroad they purchase great alliance?  
To prove him tyrant this reason may suffice,  
That Henry liveth still: but were he dead,  
Yet here Prince Edward stands, King Henry's son.  
Look, therefore, Lewis, that by this league and marriage  
Thou draw not on thy danger and dishonour;  
For though usurpers sway the rule awhile,  
Yet heavens are just, and time suppresseth wrongs.

WARWICK:

Injurious Margaret!

PRINCE EDWARD:

And why not queen?

WARWICK:

Because thy father Henry did usurp;  
And thou no more are prince than she is queen.

OXFORD:

Then Warwick disannuls great John of Gaunt,  
Which did subdue the greatest part of Spain;  
And, after John of Gaunt, Henry the Fourth,  
Whose wisdom was a mirror to the wisest;  
And, after that wise prince, Henry the Fifth,  
Who by his prowess conquered all France:  
From these our Henry lineally descends.

WARWICK:

Oxford, how haps it, in this smooth discourse,  
You told not how Henry the Sixth hath lost  
All that which Henry Fifth had gotten?  
Methinks these peers of France should smile at that.  
But for the rest, you tell a pedigree  
Of threescore and two years; a silly time  
To make prescription for a kingdom's worth.

OXFORD:

Why, Warwick, canst thou speak against thy liege,  
Whom thou obeyed'st thirty and six years,  
And not bewray thy treason with a blush?

WARWICK:

Can Oxford, that did ever fence the right,  
Now buckler falsehood with a pedigree?  
For shame! leave Henry, and call Edward king.

OXFORD:

Call him my king by whose injurious doom  
My elder brother, the Lord Aubrey Vere,  
Was done to death? and more than so, my father,  
Even in the downfall of his mellow'd years,  
When nature brought him to the door of death?  
No, Warwick, no; while life upholds this arm,  
This arm upholds the house of Lancaster.

WARWICK:

And I the house of York.

KING LEWIS XI:

Queen Margaret, Prince Edward, and Oxford,  
Vouchsafe, at our request, to stand aside,  
While I use further conference with Warwick.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Heavens grant that Warwick's words bewitch him not!

KING LEWIS XI:

Now Warwick, tell me, even upon thy conscience,  
Is Edward your true king? for I were loath  
To link with him that were not lawful chosen.

WARWICK:

Thereon I pawn my credit and mine honour.

KING LEWIS XI:

But is he gracious in the people's eye?

WARWICK:

The more that Henry was unfortunate.

KING LEWIS XI:

Then further, all dissembling set aside,  
Tell me for truth the measure of his love  
Unto our sister Bona.

WARWICK:

Such it seems  
As may beseem a monarch like himself.  
Myself have often heard him say and swear  
That this his love was an eternal plant,  
Whereof the root was fix'd in virtue's ground,  
The leaves and fruit maintain'd with beauty's sun,  
Exempt from envy, but not from disdain,  
Unless the Lady Bona quit his pain.

KING LEWIS XI:

Now, sister, let us hear your firm resolve.

BONA:

Your grant, or your denial, shall be mine:  
Yet I confess that often ere this day,  
When I have heard your king's desert recounted,  
Mine ear hath tempted judgment to desire.

KING LEWIS XI:

Then, Warwick, thus: our sister shall be Edward's;  
And now forthwith shall articles be drawn  
Touching the jointure that your king must make,  
Which with her dowry shall be counterpoised.  
Draw near, Queen Margaret, and be a witness  
That Bona shall be wife to the English king.

PRINCE EDWARD:

To Edward, but not to the English king.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Deceitful Warwick! it was thy device  
By this alliance to make void my suit:  
Before thy coming Lewis was Henry's friend.

KING LEWIS XI:

And still is friend to him and Margaret:  
But if your title to the crown be weak,  
As may appear by Edward's good success,  
Then 'tis but reason that I be released  
From giving aid which late I promised.  
Yet shall you have all kindness at my hand  
That your estate requires and mine can yield.

WARWICK:

Henry now lives in Scotland at his ease,  
Where having nothing, nothing can he lose.  
And as for you yourself, our quondam queen,  
You have a father able to maintain you;  
And better 'twere you troubled him than France.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Peace, impudent and shameless Warwick, peace,  
Proud setter up and puller down of kings!  
I will not hence, till, with my talk and tears,  
Both full of truth, I make King Lewis behold  
Thy sly conveyance and thy lord's false love;  
For both of you are birds of selfsame feather.

KING LEWIS XI:

Warwick, this is some post to us or thee.

Post:

OXFORD:

I like it well that our fair queen and mistress  
Smiles at her news, while Warwick frowns at his.

PRINCE EDWARD:

Nay, mark how Lewis stamps, as he were nettled:  
I hope all's for the best.

KING LEWIS XI:

Warwick, what are thy news? and yours, fair queen?

QUEEN MARGARET:

Mine, such as fill my heart with unhop'd joys.

WARWICK:

Mine, full of sorrow and heart's discontent.

KING LEWIS XI:

What! has your king married the Lady Grey!  
And now, to soothe your forgery and his,  
Sends me a paper to persuade me patience?  
Is this the alliance that he seeks with France?  
Dare he presume to scorn us in this manner?

QUEEN MARGARET:

I told your majesty as much before:  
This proveth Edward's love and Warwick's honesty.

WARWICK:

King Lewis, I here protest, in sight of heaven,  
And by the hope I have of heavenly bliss,  
That I am clear from this misdeed of Edward's,  
No more my king, for he dishonours me,  
But most himself, if he could see his shame.  
Did I forget that by the house of York  
My father came untimely to his death?  
Did I let pass the abuse done to my niece?  
Did I impale him with the regal crown?  
Did I put Henry from his native right?  
And am I guerdon'd at the last with shame?  
Shame on himself! for my desert is honour:  
And to repair my honour lost for him,  
I here renounce him and return to Henry.  
My noble queen, let former grudges pass,  
And henceforth I am thy true servitor:  
I will revenge his wrong to Lady Bona,  
And replant Henry in his former state.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Warwick, these words have turn'd my hate to love;  
And I forgive and quite forget old faults,  
And joy that thou becomest King Henry's friend.

WARWICK:

So much his friend, ay, his unfeigned friend,  
That, if King Lewis vouchsafe to furnish us  
With some few bands of chosen soldiers,  
I'll undertake to land them on our coast  
And force the tyrant from his seat by war.  
'Tis not his new-made bride shall succor him:  
And as for Clarence, as my letters tell me,  
He's very likely now to fall from him,  
For matching more for wanton lust than honour,  
Or than for strength and safety of our country.

BONA:

Dear brother, how shall Bona be revenged  
But by thy help to this distressed queen?

QUEEN MARGARET:

Renowned prince, how shall poor Henry live,  
Unless thou rescue him from foul despair?

BONA:

My quarrel and this English queen's are one.

WARWICK:

And mine, fair lady Bona, joins with yours.

KING LEWIS XI:

And mine with hers, and thine, and Margaret's.  
Therefore at last I firmly am resolved  
You shall have aid.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Let me give humble thanks for all at once.

KING LEWIS XI:

Then, England's messenger, return in post,  
And tell false Edward, thy supposed king,  
That Lewis of France is sending over masquers  
To revel it with him and his new bride:  
Thou seest what's past, go fear thy king withal.

BONA:

Tell him, in hope he'll prove a widower shortly,  
I'll wear the willow garland for his sake.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Tell him, my mourning weeds are laid aside,  
And I am ready to put armour on.

WARWICK:

Tell him from me that he hath done me wrong,  
And therefore I'll uncrown him ere't be long.  
There's thy reward: be gone.

KING LEWIS XI:

But, Warwick,  
Thou and Oxford, with five thousand men,  
Shall cross the seas, and bid false Edward battle;  
And, as occasion serves, this noble queen  
And prince shall follow with a fresh supply.  
Yet, ere thou go, but answer me one doubt,  
What pledge have we of thy firm loyalty?

WARWICK:

This shall assure my constant loyalty,  
That if our queen and this young prince agree,  
I'll join mine eldest daughter and my joy  
To him forthwith in holy wedlock bands.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Yes, I agree, and thank you for your motion.  
Son Edward, she is fair and virtuous,  
Therefore delay not, give thy hand to Warwick;  
And, with thy hand, thy faith irrevocable,  
That only Warwick's daughter shall be thine.

PRINCE EDWARD:

Yes, I accept her, for she well deserves it;  
And here, to pledge my vow, I give my hand.

KING LEWIS XI:

Why stay we now? These soldiers shall be levied,  
And thou, Lord Bourbon, our high admiral,  
Shalt waft them over with our royal fleet.  
I long till Edward fall by war's mischance,  
For mocking marriage with a dame of France.

WARWICK:

I came from Edward as ambassador,  
But I return his sworn and mortal foe:  
Matter of marriage was the charge he gave me,  
But dreadful war shall answer his demand.  
Had he none else to make a stale but me?  
Then none but I shall turn his jest to sorrow.  
I was the chief that raised him to the crown,  
And I'll be chief to bring him down again:  
Not that I pity Henry's misery,  
But seek revenge on Edward's mockery.

3 KING HENRY VI

GLOUCESTER:

Now tell me, brother Clarence, what think you  
Of this new marriage with the Lady Grey?  
Hath not our brother made a worthy choice?

CLARENCE:

Alas, you know, 'tis far from hence to France;  
How could he stay till Warwick made return?

SOMERSET:

My lords, forbear this talk; here comes the king.

GLOUCESTER:

And his well-chosen bride.

CLARENCE:

I mind to tell him plainly what I think.

KING EDWARD IV:

Now, brother of Clarence, how like you our choice,  
That you stand pensive, as half malcontent?

CLARENCE:

As well as Lewis of France, or the Earl of Warwick,  
Which are so weak of courage and in judgment  
That they'll take no offence at our abuse.



KING EDWARD IV:

Suppose they take offence without a cause,  
They are but Lewis and Warwick: I am Edward,  
Your king and Warwick's, and must have my will.

GLOUCESTER:

And shall have your will, because our king:  
Yet hasty marriage seldom proveth well.

KING EDWARD IV:

Yea, brother Richard, are you offended too?

GLOUCESTER:

Not I:

No, God forbid that I should wish them sever'd  
Whom God hath join'd together; ay, and 'twere pity  
To sunder them that yoke so well together.

KING EDWARD IV:

Setting your scorns and your mislike aside,  
Tell me some reason why the Lady Grey  
Should not become my wife and England's queen.  
And you too, Somerset and Montague,  
Speak freely what you think.

CLARENCE:

Then this is mine opinion: that King Lewis  
Becomes your enemy, for mocking him  
About the marriage of the Lady Bona.

GLOUCESTER:

And Warwick, doing what you gave in charge,  
Is now dishonoured by this new marriage.

KING EDWARD IV:

What if both Lewis and Warwick be appeased  
By such invention as I can devise?

MONTAGUE:

Yet, to have join'd with France in such alliance  
Would more have strengthen'd this our commonwealth  
'Gainst foreign storms than any home-bred marriage.

HASTINGS:

Why, knows not Montague that of itself  
England is safe, if true within itself?

MONTAGUE:

But the safer when 'tis back'd with France.

HASTINGS:

'Tis better using France than trusting France:  
Let us be back'd with God and with the seas  
Which He hath given for fence impregnable,  
And with their helps only defend ourselves;  
In them and in ourselves our safety lies.

CLARENCE:

For this one speech Lord Hastings well deserves  
To have the heir of the Lord Hungerford.

KING EDWARD IV:

Ay, what of that? it was my will and grant;  
And for this once my will shall stand for law.

GLOUCESTER:

And yet methinks your grace hath not done well,  
To give the heir and daughter of Lord Scales  
Unto the brother of your loving bride;  
She better would have fitted me or Clarence:  
But in your bride you bury brotherhood.

CLARENCE:

Or else you would not have bestow'd the heir  
Of the Lord Bonville on your new wife's son,  
And leave your brothers to go speed elsewhere.

KING EDWARD IV:

Alas, poor Clarence! is it for a wife  
That thou art malcontent? I will provide thee.

CLARENCE:

In choosing for yourself, you show'd your judgment,  
Which being shallow, you give me leave  
To play the broker in mine own behalf;  
And to that end I shortly mind to leave you.

KING EDWARD IV:

Leave me, or tarry, Edward will be king,  
And not be tied unto his brother's will.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

My lords, before it pleased his majesty  
To raise my state to title of a queen,  
Do me but right, and you must all confess  
That I was not ignoble of descent;  
And meaner than myself have had like fortune.  
But as this title honours me and mine,  
So your dislike, to whom I would be pleasing,

Doth cloud my joys with danger and with sorrow.

KING EDWARD IV:

My love, forbear to fawn upon their frowns:  
What danger or what sorrow can befall thee,  
So long as Edward is thy constant friend,  
And their true sovereign, whom they must obey?  
Nay, whom they shall obey, and love thee too,  
Unless they seek for hatred at my hands;  
Which if they do, yet will I keep thee safe,  
And they shall feel the vengeance of my wrath.

GLOUCESTER:

KING EDWARD IV:

Now, messenger, what letters or what news  
From France?

Post:

My sovereign liege, no letters; and few words,  
But such as I, without your special pardon,  
Dare not relate.

KING EDWARD IV:

Go to, we pardon thee: therefore, in brief,  
Tell me their words as near as thou canst guess them.  
What answer makes King Lewis unto our letters?

Post:

At my depart, these were his very words:  
'Go tell false Edward, thy supposed king,  
That Lewis of France is sending over masquers  
To revel it with him and his new bride.'

KING EDWARD IV:

Is Lewis so brave? belike he thinks me Henry.  
But what said Lady Bona to my marriage?

Post:

These were her words, utter'd with mad disdain:  
'Tell him, in hope he'll prove a widower shortly,  
I'll wear the willow garland for his sake.'

KING EDWARD IV:

I blame not her, she could say little less;  
She had the wrong. But what said Henry's queen?  
For I have heard that she was there in place.

Post:

'Tell him,' quoth she, 'my mourning weeds are done,

And I am ready to put armour on.'

KING EDWARD IV:

Belike she minds to play the Amazon.  
But what said Warwick to these injuries?

Post:

He, more incensed against your majesty  
Than all the rest, discharged me with these words:  
'Tell him from me that he hath done me wrong,  
And therefore I'll uncrown him ere't be long.'

KING EDWARD IV:

Ha! durst the traitor breathe out so proud words?  
Well I will arm me, being thus forewarn'd:  
They shall have wars and pay for their presumption.  
But say, is Warwick friends with Margaret?

Post:

Ay, gracious sovereign; they are so link'd in  
friendship  
That young Prince Edward marries Warwick's daughter.

CLARENCE:

Belike the elder; Clarence will have the younger.  
Now, brother king, farewell, and sit you fast,  
For I will hence to Warwick's other daughter;  
That, though I want a kingdom, yet in marriage  
I may not prove inferior to yourself.  
You that love me and Warwick, follow me.

GLOUCESTER:

KING EDWARD IV:

Clarence and Somerset both gone to Warwick!  
Yet am I arm'd against the worst can happen;  
And haste is needful in this desperate case.  
Pembroke and Stafford, you in our behalf  
Go levy men, and make prepare for war;  
They are already, or quickly will be landed:  
Myself in person will straight follow you.  
But, ere I go, Hastings and Montague,  
Resolve my doubt. You twain, of all the rest,  
Are near to Warwick by blood and by alliance:  
Tell me if you love Warwick more than me?  
If it be so, then both depart to him;  
I rather wish you foes than hollow friends:  
But if you mind to hold your true obedience,  
Give me assurance with some friendly vow,  
That I may never have you in suspect.

MONTAGUE:

So God help Montague as he proves true!

HASTINGS:

And Hastings as he favours Edward's cause!

KING EDWARD IV:

Now, brother Richard, will you stand by us?

GLOUCESTER:

Ay, in despite of all that shall withstand you.

KING EDWARD IV:

Why, so! then am I sure of victory.

Now therefore let us hence; and lose no hour,

Till we meet Warwick with his foreign power.

3 KING HENRY VI

WARWICK:

Trust me, my lord, all hitherto goes well;

The common people by numbers swarm to us.

But see where Somerset and Clarence come!

Speak suddenly, my lords, are we all friends?

CLARENCE:

Fear not that, my lord.

WARWICK:

Then, gentle Clarence, welcome unto Warwick;

And welcome, Somerset: I hold it cowardice

To rest mistrustful where a noble heart

Hath pawn'd an open hand in sign of love;

Else might I think that Clarence, Edward's brother,

Were but a feigned friend to our proceedings:

But welcome, sweet Clarence; my daughter shall be thine.

And now what rests but, in night's coverture,

Thy brother being carelessly encamp'd,

His soldiers lurking in the towns about,

And but attended by a simple guard,

We may surprise and take him at our pleasure?

Our scouts have found the adventure very easy:

That as Ulysses and stout Diomed

With sleight and manhood stole to Rhesus' tents,

And brought from thence the Thracian fatal steeds,

So we, well cover'd with the night's black mantle,

At unawares may beat down Edward's guard

And seize himself; I say not, slaughter him,

For I intend but only to surprise him.

You that will follow me to this attempt,

Applaud the name of Henry with your leader.  
Why, then, let's on our way in silent sort:  
For Warwick and his friends, God and Saint George!  
3 KING HENRY VI

First Watchman:  
Come on, my masters, each man take his stand:  
The king by this is set him down to sleep.

Second Watchman:  
What, will he not to bed?

First Watchman:  
Why, no; for he hath made a solemn vow  
Never to lie and take his natural rest  
Till Warwick or himself be quite suppress'd.

Second Watchman:  
To-morrow then belike shall be the day,  
If Warwick be so near as men report.

Third Watchman:  
But say, I pray, what nobleman is that  
That with the king here resteth in his tent?

First Watchman:  
'Tis the Lord Hastings, the king's chiefest friend.

Third Watchman:  
O, is it so? But why commands the king  
That his chief followers lodge in towns about him,  
While he himself keeps in the cold field?

Second Watchman:  
'Tis the more honour, because more dangerous.

Third Watchman:  
Ay, but give me worship and quietness;  
I like it better than a dangerous honour.  
If Warwick knew in what estate he stands,  
'Tis to be doubted he would waken him.

First Watchman:  
Unless our halberds did shut up his passage.

Second Watchman:  
Ay, wherefore else guard we his royal tent,  
But to defend his person from night-foes?

WARWICK:

This is his tent; and see where stand his guard.  
Courage, my masters! honour now or never!  
But follow me, and Edward shall be ours.

First Watchman:  
Who goes there?

Second Watchman:  
Stay, or thou diest!

SOMERSET:  
What are they that fly there?

WARWICK:  
Richard and Hastings: let them go; here is The duke.

KING EDWARD IV:  
The duke! Why, Warwick, when we parted,  
Thou call'dst me king.

WARWICK:  
Ay, but the case is alter'd:  
When you disgraced me in my embassy,  
Then I degraded you from being king,  
And come now to create you Duke of York.  
Alas! how should you govern any kingdom,  
That know not how to use ambassadors,  
Nor how to be contented with one wife,  
Nor how to use your brothers brotherly,  
Nor how to study for the people's welfare,  
Nor how to shroud yourself from enemies?

KING EDWARD IV:  
Yea, brother of Clarence, are thou here too?  
Nay, then I see that Edward needs must down.  
Yet, Warwick, in despite of all mischance,  
Of thee thyself and all thy complices,  
Edward will always bear himself as king:  
Though fortune's malice overthrow my state,  
My mind exceeds the compass of her wheel.

WARWICK:  
Then, for his mind, be Edward England's king:  
But Henry now shall wear the English crown,  
And be true king indeed, thou but the shadow.  
My Lord of Somerset, at my request,  
See that forthwith Duke Edward be convey'd  
Unto my brother, Archbishop of York.  
When I have fought with Pembroke and his fellows,  
I'll follow you, and tell what answer

Lewis and the Lady Bona send to him.  
Now, for a while farewell, good Duke of York.

KING EDWARD IV:  
What fates impose, that men must needs abide;  
It boots not to resist both wind and tide.

OXFORD:  
What now remains, my lords, for us to do  
But march to London with our soldiers?

WARWICK:  
Ay, that's the first thing that we have to do;  
To free King Henry from imprisonment  
And see him seated in the regal throne.  
3 KING HENRY VI

RIVERS:  
Madam, what makes you in this sudden change?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
Why brother Rivers, are you yet to learn  
What late misfortune is befall'n King Edward?

RIVERS:  
What! loss of some pitch'd battle against Warwick?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
No, but the loss of his own royal person.

RIVERS:  
Then is my sovereign slain?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
Ay, almost slain, for he is taken prisoner,  
Either betray'd by falsehood of his guard  
Or by his foe surprised at unawares:  
And, as I further have to understand,  
Is new committed to the Bishop of York,  
Fell Warwick's brother and by that our foe.

RIVERS:  
These news I must confess are full of grief;  
Yet, gracious madam, bear it as you may:  
Warwick may lose, that now hath won the day.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:  
Till then fair hope must hinder life's decay.  
And I the rather wean me from despair  
For love of Edward's offspring in my womb:



This is it that makes me bridle passion  
And bear with mildness my misfortune's cross;  
Ay, ay, for this I draw in many a tear  
And stop the rising of blood-sucking sighs,  
Lest with my sighs or tears I blast or drown  
King Edward's fruit, true heir to the English crown.

RIVERS:

But, madam, where is Warwick then become?

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

I am inform'd that he comes towards London,  
To set the crown once more on Henry's head:  
Guess thou the rest; King Edward's friends must down,  
But, to prevent the tyrant's violence,--  
For trust not him that hath once broken faith,--  
I'll hence forthwith unto the sanctuary,  
To save at least the heir of Edward's right:  
There shall I rest secure from force and fraud.  
Come, therefore, let us fly while we may fly:  
If Warwick take us we are sure to die.

3 KING HENRY VI

GLOUCESTER:

Now, my Lord Hastings and Sir William Stanley,  
Leave off to wonder why I drew you hither,  
Into this chiefest thicket of the park.  
Thus stands the case: you know our king, my brother,  
Is prisoner to the bishop here, at whose hands  
He hath good usage and great liberty,  
And, often but attended with weak guard,  
Comes hunting this way to disport himself.  
I have advertised him by secret means  
That if about this hour he make his way  
Under the colour of his usual game,  
He shall here find his friends with horse and men  
To set him free from his captivity.

Huntsman:

This way, my lord; for this way lies the game.

KING EDWARD IV:

Nay, this way, man: see where the huntsmen stand.  
Now, brother of Gloucester, Lord Hastings, and the rest,  
Stand you thus close, to steal the bishop's deer?

GLOUCESTER:

Brother, the time and case requireth haste:  
Your horse stands ready at the park-corner.

KING EDWARD IV:  
But whither shall we then?

HASTINGS:  
To Lynn, my lord,  
And ship from thence to Flanders.

GLOUCESTER:  
Well guess'd, believe me; for that was my meaning.

KING EDWARD IV:  
Stanley, I will requite thy forwardness.

GLOUCESTER:  
But wherefore stay we? 'tis no time to talk.

KING EDWARD IV:  
Huntsman, what say'st thou? wilt thou go along?

Huntsman:  
Better do so than tarry and be hang'd.

GLOUCESTER:  
Come then, away; let's ha' no more ado.

KING EDWARD IV:  
Bishop, farewell: shield thee from Warwick's frown;  
And pray that I may repossess the crown.  
3 KING HENRY VI

KING HENRY VI:  
Master lieutenant, now that God and friends  
Have shaken Edward from the regal seat,  
And turn'd my captive state to liberty,  
My fear to hope, my sorrows unto joys,  
At our enlargement what are thy due fees?

Lieutenant:  
Subjects may challenge nothing of their sovereigns;  
But if an humble prayer may prevail,  
I then crave pardon of your majesty.

KING HENRY VI:  
For what, lieutenant? for well using me?  
Nay, be thou sure I'll well requite thy kindness,  
For that it made my imprisonment a pleasure;  
Ay, such a pleasure as incaged birds  
Conceive when after many moody thoughts  
At last by notes of household harmony  
They quite forget their loss of liberty.

But, Warwick, after God, thou set'st me free,  
And chiefly therefore I thank God and thee;  
He was the author, thou the instrument.  
Therefore, that I may conquer fortune's spite  
By living low, where fortune cannot hurt me,  
And that the people of this blessed land  
May not be punish'd with my thwarting stars,  
Warwick, although my head still wear the crown,  
I here resign my government to thee,  
For thou art fortunate in all thy deeds.

WARWICK:

Your grace hath still been famed for virtuous;  
And now may seem as wise as virtuous,  
By spying and avoiding fortune's malice,  
For few men rightly temper with the stars:  
Yet in this one thing let me blame your grace,  
For choosing me when Clarence is in place.

CLARENCE:

No, Warwick, thou art worthy of the sway,  
To whom the heavens in thy nativity  
Adjudged an olive branch and laurel crown,  
As likely to be blest in peace and war;  
And therefore I yield thee my free consent.

WARWICK:

And I choose Clarence only for protector.

KING HENRY VI:

Warwick and Clarence give me both your hands:  
Now join your hands, and with your hands your hearts,  
That no dissension hinder government:  
I make you both protectors of this land,  
While I myself will lead a private life  
And in devotion spend my latter days,  
To sin's rebuke and my Creator's praise.

WARWICK:

What answers Clarence to his sovereign's will?

CLARENCE:

That he consents, if Warwick yield consent;  
For on thy fortune I repose myself.

WARWICK:

Why, then, though loath, yet must I be content:  
We'll yoke together, like a double shadow  
To Henry's body, and supply his place;  
I mean, in bearing weight of government,

While he enjoys the honour and his ease.  
And, Clarence, now then it is more than needful  
Forthwith that Edward be pronounced a traitor,  
And all his lands and goods be confiscate.

CLARENCE:

What else? and that succession be determined.

WARWICK:

Ay, therein Clarence shall not want his part.

KING HENRY VI:

But, with the first of all your chief affairs,  
Let me entreat, for I command no more,  
That Margaret your queen and my son Edward  
Be sent for, to return from France with speed;  
For, till I see them here, by doubtful fear  
My joy of liberty is half eclipsed.

CLARENCE:

It shall be done, my sovereign, with all speed.

KING HENRY VI:

My Lord of Somerset, what youth is that,  
Of whom you seem to have so tender care?

SOMERSET:

My liege, it is young Henry, earl of Richmond.

KING HENRY VI:

Come hither, England's hope.  
If secret powers  
Suggest but truth to my divining thoughts,  
This pretty lad will prove our country's bliss.  
His looks are full of peaceful majesty,  
His head by nature framed to wear a crown,  
His hand to wield a sceptre, and himself  
Likely in time to bless a regal throne.  
Make much of him, my lords, for this is he  
Must help you more than you are hurt by me.

WARWICK:

What news, my friend?

Post:

That Edward is escaped from your brother,  
And fled, as he hears since, to Burgundy.

WARWICK:

Unsavoury news! but how made he escape?

Post:

He was convey'd by Richard Duke of Gloucester  
And the Lord Hastings, who attended him  
In secret ambush on the forest side  
And from the bishop's huntsmen rescued him;  
For hunting was his daily exercise.

WARWICK:

My brother was too careless of his charge.  
But let us hence, my sovereign, to provide  
A salve for any sore that may betide.

SOMERSET:

My lord, I like not of this flight of Edward's;  
For doubtless Burgundy will yield him help,  
And we shall have more wars before 't be long.  
As Henry's late presaging prophecy  
Did glad my heart with hope of this young Richmond,  
So doth my heart misgive me, in these conflicts  
What may befall him, to his harm and ours:  
Therefore, Lord Oxford, to prevent the worst,  
Forthwith we'll send him hence to Brittany,  
Till storms be past of civil enmity.

OXFORD:

Ay, for if Edward repossess the crown,  
'Tis like that Richmond with the rest shall down.

SOMERSET:

It shall be so; he shall to Brittany.  
Come, therefore, let's about it speedily.  
3 KING HENRY VI

KING EDWARD IV:

Now, brother Richard, Lord Hastings, and the rest,  
Yet thus far fortune maketh us amends,  
And says that once more I shall interchange  
My waned state for Henry's regal crown.  
Well have we pass'd and now repass'd the seas  
And brought desired help from Burgundy:  
What then remains, we being thus arrived  
From Ravenspurgh haven before the gates of York,  
But that we enter, as into our dukedom?

GLOUCESTER:

The gates made fast! Brother, I like not this;  
For many men that stumble at the threshold  
Are well foretold that danger lurks within.

KING EDWARD IV:

Tush, man, abodements must not now affright us:  
By fair or foul means we must enter in,  
For hither will our friends repair to us.

HASTINGS:

My liege, I'll knock once more to summon them.

Mayor:

My lords, we were forewarned of your coming,  
And shut the gates for safety of ourselves;  
For now we owe allegiance unto Henry.

KING EDWARD IV:

But, master mayor, if Henry be your king,  
Yet Edward at the least is Duke of York.

Mayor:

True, my good lord; I know you for no less.

KING EDWARD IV:

Why, and I challenge nothing but my dukedom,  
As being well content with that alone.

GLOUCESTER:

HASTINGS:

Why, master mayor, why stand you in a doubt?  
Open the gates; we are King Henry's friends.

Mayor:

Ay, say you so? the gates shall then be open'd.

GLOUCESTER:

A wise stout captain, and soon persuaded!

HASTINGS:

The good old man would fain that all were well,  
So 'twere not 'long of him; but being enter'd,  
I doubt not, I, but we shall soon persuade  
Both him and all his brothers unto reason.

KING EDWARD IV:

So, master mayor: these gates must not be shut  
But in the night or in the time of war.  
What! fear not, man, but yield me up the keys;  
For Edward will defend the town and thee,  
And all those friends that deign to follow me.

GLOUCESTER:

Brother, this is Sir John Montgomery,  
Our trusty friend, unless I be deceived.

KING EDWARD IV:

Welcome, Sir John! But why come you in arms?

MONTAGUE:

To help King Edward in his time of storm,  
As every loyal subject ought to do.

KING EDWARD IV:

Thanks, good Montgomery; but we now forget  
Our title to the crown and only claim  
Our dukedom till God please to send the rest.

MONTAGUE:

Then fare you well, for I will hence again:  
I came to serve a king and not a duke.  
Drummer, strike up, and let us march away.

KING EDWARD IV:

Nay, stay, Sir John, awhile, and we'll debate  
By what safe means the crown may be recover'd.

MONTAGUE:

What talk you of debating? in few words,  
If you'll not here proclaim yourself our king,  
I'll leave you to your fortune and be gone  
To keep them back that come to succor you:  
Why shall we fight, if you pretend no title?

GLOUCESTER:

Why, brother, wherefore stand you on nice points?

KING EDWARD IV:

When we grow stronger, then we'll make our claim:  
Till then, 'tis wisdom to conceal our meaning.

HASTINGS:

Away with scrupulous wit! now arms must rule.

GLOUCESTER:

And fearless minds climb soonest unto crowns.  
Brother, we will proclaim you out of hand:  
The bruit thereof will bring you many friends.

KING EDWARD IV:

Then be it as you will; for 'tis my right,  
And Henry but usurps the diadem.

MONTAGUE:

Ay, now my sovereign speaketh like himself;  
And now will I be Edward's champion.

HASTINGS:

Sound trumpet; Edward shall be here proclaim'd:  
Come, fellow-soldier, make thou proclamation.

Soldier:

Edward the Fourth, by the grace of God, king of  
England and France, and lord of Ireland, &c.

MONTAGUE:

And whosoe'er gainsays King Edward's right,  
By this I challenge him to single fight.

All:

Long live Edward the Fourth!

KING EDWARD IV:

Thanks, brave Montgomery; and thanks unto you all:  
If fortune serve me, I'll requite this kindness.  
Now, for this night, let's harbour here in York;  
And when the morning sun shall raise his car  
Above the border of this horizon,  
We'll forward towards Warwick and his mates;  
For well I wot that Henry is no soldier.  
Ah, froward Clarence! how evil it beseems thee  
To flatter Henry and forsake thy brother!  
Yet, as we may, we'll meet both thee and Warwick.  
Come on, brave soldiers: doubt not of the day,  
And, that once gotten, doubt not of large pay.  
3 KING HENRY VI

WARWICK:

What counsel, lords? Edward from Belgia,  
With hasty Germans and blunt Hollanders,  
Hath pass'd in safety through the narrow seas,  
And with his troops doth march amain to London;  
And many giddy people flock to him.

KING HENRY VI:

Let's levy men, and beat him back again.

CLARENCE:

A little fire is quickly trodden out;  
Which, being suffer'd, rivers cannot quench.

WARWICK:

In Warwickshire I have true-hearted friends,



Not mutinous in peace, yet bold in war;  
Those will I muster up: and thou, son Clarence,  
Shalt stir up in Suffolk, Norfolk, and in Kent,  
The knights and gentlemen to come with thee:  
Thou, brother Montague, in Buckingham,  
Northampton and in Leicestershire, shalt find  
Men well inclined to hear what thou command'st:  
And thou, brave Oxford, wondrous well beloved,  
In Oxfordshire shalt muster up thy friends.  
My sovereign, with the loving citizens,  
Like to his island girt in with the ocean,  
Or modest Dian circled with her nymphs,  
Shall rest in London till we come to him.  
Fair lords, take leave and stand not to reply.  
Farewell, my sovereign.

KING HENRY VI:  
Farewell, my Hector, and my Troy's true hope.

CLARENCE:  
In sign of truth, I kiss your highness' hand.

KING HENRY VI:  
Well-minded Clarence, be thou fortunate!

MONTAGUE:  
Comfort, my lord; and so I take my leave.

OXFORD:  
And thus I seal my truth, and bid adieu.

KING HENRY VI:  
Sweet Oxford, and my loving Montague,  
And all at once, once more a happy farewell.

WARWICK:  
Farewell, sweet lords: let's meet at Coventry.

KING HENRY VI:  
Here at the palace I will rest awhile.  
Cousin of Exeter, what thinks your lordship?  
Methinks the power that Edward hath in field  
Should not be able to encounter mine.

EXETER:  
The doubt is that he will seduce the rest.

KING HENRY VI:  
That's not my fear; my meed hath got me fame:  
I have not stopp'd mine ears to their demands,

Nor posted off their suits with slow delays;  
My pity hath been balm to heal their wounds,  
My mildness hath allay'd their swelling griefs,  
My mercy dried their water-flowing tears;  
I have not been desirous of their wealth,  
Nor much oppress'd them with great subsidies.  
Nor forward of revenge, though they much err'd:  
Then why should they love Edward more than me?  
No, Exeter, these graces challenge grace:  
And when the lion fawns upon the lamb,  
The lamb will never cease to follow him.

EXETER:

Hark, hark, my lord! what shouts are these?

KING EDWARD IV:

Seize on the shame-faced Henry, bear him hence;  
And once again proclaim us King of England.  
You are the fount that makes small brooks to flow:  
Now stops thy spring; my sea shall suck them dry,  
And swell so much the higher by their ebb.  
Hence with him to the Tower; let him not speak.  
And, lords, towards Coventry bend we our course  
Where peremptory Warwick now remains:  
The sun shines hot; and, if we use delay,  
Cold biting winter mars our hoped-for hay.

GLOUCESTER:

Away betimes, before his forces join,  
And take the great-grown traitor unawares:  
Brave warriors, march amain towards Coventry.  
3 KING HENRY VI

WARWICK:

Where is the post that came from valiant Oxford?  
How far hence is thy lord, mine honest fellow?

First Messenger:

By this at Dunsmore, marching hitherward.

WARWICK:

How far off is our brother Montague?  
Where is the post that came from Montague?

Second Messenger:

By this at Daintry, with a puissant troop.

WARWICK:

Say, Somerville, what says my loving son?  
And, by thy guess, how nigh is Clarence now?

SOMERSET:

At Southam I did leave him with his forces,  
And do expect him here some two hours hence.

WARWICK:

Then Clarence is at hand, I hear his drum.

SOMERSET:

It is not his, my lord; here Southam lies:  
The drum your honour hears marcheth from Warwick.

WARWICK:

Who should that be? belike, unlook'd-for friends.

SOMERSET:

They are at hand, and you shall quickly know.

KING EDWARD IV:

Go, trumpet, to the walls, and sound a parle.

GLOUCESTER:

See how the surly Warwick mans the wall!

WARWICK:

O unbid spite! is sportful Edward come?  
Where slept our scouts, or how are they seduced,  
That we could hear no news of his repair?

KING EDWARD IV:

Now, Warwick, wilt thou ope the city gates,  
Speak gentle words and humbly bend thy knee,  
Call Edward king and at his hands beg mercy?  
And he shall pardon thee these outrages.

WARWICK:

Nay, rather, wilt thou draw thy forces hence,  
Confess who set thee up and pluck'd thee own,  
Call Warwick patron and be penitent?  
And thou shalt still remain the Duke of York.

GLOUCESTER:

I thought, at least, he would have said the king;  
Or did he make the jest against his will?

WARWICK:

Is not a dukedom, sir, a goodly gift?

GLOUCESTER:

Ay, by my faith, for a poor earl to give:

I'll do thee service for so good a gift.

WARWICK:

'Twas I that gave the kingdom to thy brother.

KING EDWARD IV:

Why then 'tis mine, if but by Warwick's gift.

WARWICK:

Thou art no Atlas for so great a weight:  
And weakling, Warwick takes his gift again;  
And Henry is my king, Warwick his subject.

KING EDWARD IV:

But Warwick's king is Edward's prisoner:  
And, gallant Warwick, do but answer this:  
What is the body when the head is off?

GLOUCESTER:

Alas, that Warwick had no more forecast,  
But, whiles he thought to steal the single ten,  
The king was slyly finger'd from the deck!  
You left poor Henry at the Bishop's palace,  
And, ten to one, you'll meet him in the Tower.

EDWARD:

'Tis even so; yet you are Warwick still.

GLOUCESTER:

Come, Warwick, take the time; kneel down, kneel down:  
Nay, when? strike now, or else the iron cools.

WARWICK:

I had rather chop this hand off at a blow,  
And with the other fling it at thy face,  
Than bear so low a sail, to strike to thee.

KING EDWARD IV:

Sail how thou canst, have wind and tide thy friend,  
This hand, fast wound about thy coal-black hair  
Shall, whiles thy head is warm and new cut off,  
Write in the dust this sentence with thy blood,  
'Wind-changing Warwick now can change no more.'

WARWICK:

O cheerful colours! see where Oxford comes!

OXFORD:

Oxford, Oxford, for Lancaster!

GLOUCESTER:

The gates are open, let us enter too.

KING EDWARD IV:

So other foes may set upon our backs.  
Stand we in good array; for they no doubt  
Will issue out again and bid us battle:  
If not, the city being but of small defence,  
We'll quickly rouse the traitors in the same.

WARWICK:

O, welcome, Oxford! for we want thy help.

MONTAGUE:

Montague, Montague, for Lancaster!

GLOUCESTER:

Thou and thy brother both shall buy this treason  
Even with the dearest blood your bodies bear.

KING EDWARD IV:

The harder match'd, the greater victory:  
My mind presageth happy gain and conquest.

SOMERSET:

Somerset, Somerset, for Lancaster!

GLOUCESTER:

Two of thy name, both Dukes of Somerset,  
Have sold their lives unto the house of York;  
And thou shalt be the third if this sword hold.

WARWICK:

And lo, where George of Clarence sweeps along,  
Of force enough to bid his brother battle;  
With whom an upright zeal to right prevails  
More than the nature of a brother's love!  
Come, Clarence, come; thou wilt, if Warwick call.

CLARENCE:

Father of Warwick, know you what this means?  
Look here, I throw my infamy at thee  
I will not ruate my father's house,  
Who gave his blood to lime the stones together,  
And set up Lancaster. Why, trow'st thou, Warwick,  
That Clarence is so harsh, so blunt, unnatural,  
To bend the fatal instruments of war  
Against his brother and his lawful king?  
Perhaps thou wilt object my holy oath:  
To keep that oath were more impiety

Than Jephthah's, when he sacrificed his daughter.  
I am so sorry for my trespass made  
That, to deserve well at my brother's hands,  
I here proclaim myself thy mortal foe,  
With resolution, wheresoe'er I meet thee--  
As I will meet thee, if thou stir abroad--  
To plague thee for thy foul misleading me.  
And so, proud-hearted Warwick, I defy thee,  
And to my brother turn my blushing cheeks.  
Pardon me, Edward, I will make amends:  
And, Richard, do not frown upon my faults,  
For I will henceforth be no more unconstant.

KING EDWARD IV:

Now welcome more, and ten times more beloved,  
Than if thou never hadst deserved our hate.

GLOUCESTER:

Welcome, good Clarence; this is brotherlike.

WARWICK:

O passing traitor, perjured and unjust!

KING EDWARD IV:

What, Warwick, wilt thou leave the town and fight?  
Or shall we beat the stones about thine ears?

WARWICK:

Alas, I am not coop'd here for defence!  
I will away towards Barnet presently,  
And bid thee battle, Edward, if thou darest.

KING EDWARD IV:

Yes, Warwick, Edward dares, and leads the way.  
Lords, to the field; Saint George and victory!  
3 KING HENRY VI

KING EDWARD IV:

So, lie thou there: die thou, and die our fear;  
For Warwick was a bug that fear'd us all.  
Now, Montague, sit fast; I seek for thee,  
That Warwick's bones may keep thine company.

WARWICK:

Ah, who is nigh? come to me, friend or foe,  
And tell me who is victor, York or Warwick?  
Why ask I that? my mangled body shows,  
My blood, my want of strength, my sick heart shows.  
That I must yield my body to the earth  
And, by my fall, the conquest to my foe.

Thus yields the cedar to the axe's edge,  
Whose arms gave shelter to the princely eagle,  
Under whose shade the ramping lion slept,  
Whose top-branch overpeer'd Jove's spreading tree  
And kept low shrubs from winter's powerful wind.  
These eyes, that now are dimm'd with death's black veil,  
Have been as piercing as the mid-day sun,  
To search the secret treasons of the world:  
The wrinkles in my brows, now filled with blood,  
Were liken'd oft to kingly sepulchres;  
For who lived king, but I could dig his grave?  
And who durst mine when Warwick bent his brow?  
Lo, now my glory smear'd in dust and blood!  
My parks, my walks, my manors that I had.  
Even now forsake me, and of all my lands  
Is nothing left me but my body's length.  
Why, what is pomp, rule, reign, but earth and dust?  
And, live we how we can, yet die we must.

SOMERSET:

Ah, Warwick, Warwick! wert thou as we are.  
We might recover all our loss again;  
The queen from France hath brought a puissant power:  
Even now we heard the news: ah, could'st thou fly!

WARWICK:

Why, then I would not fly. Ah, Montague,  
If thou be there, sweet brother, take my hand.  
And with thy lips keep in my soul awhile!  
Thou lovest me not; for, brother, if thou didst,  
Thy tears would wash this cold congealed blood  
That glues my lips and will not let me speak.  
Come quickly, Montague, or I am dead.

SOMERSET:

Ah, Warwick! Montague hath breathed his last;  
And to the latest gasp cried out for Warwick,  
And said 'Commend me to my valiant brother.'  
And more he would have said, and more he spoke,  
Which sounded like a clamour in a vault,  
That mought not be distinguished; but at last  
I well might hear, delivered with a groan,  
'O, farewell, Warwick!'

WARWICK:

Sweet rest his soul! Fly, lords, and save yourselves;  
For Warwick bids you all farewell to meet in heaven.

OXFORD:

Away, away, to meet the queen's great power!

### 3 KING HENRY VI

KING EDWARD IV:

Thus far our fortune keeps an upward course,  
And we are graced with wreaths of victory.  
But, in the midst of this bright-shining day,  
I spy a black, suspicious, threatening cloud,  
That will encounter with our glorious sun,  
Ere he attain his easeful western bed:  
I mean, my lords, those powers that the queen  
Hath raised in Gallia have arrived our coast  
And, as we hear, march on to fight with us.

CLARENCE:

A little gale will soon disperse that cloud  
And blow it to the source from whence it came:  
The very beams will dry those vapours up,  
For every cloud engenders not a storm.

GLOUCESTER:

The queen is valued thirty thousand strong,  
And Somerset, with Oxford fled to her:  
If she have time to breathe be well assured  
Her faction will be full as strong as ours.

KING EDWARD IV:

We are advertised by our loving friends  
That they do hold their course toward Tewksbury:  
We, having now the best at Barnet field,  
Will thither straight, for willingness rids way;  
And, as we march, our strength will be augmented  
In every county as we go along.  
Strike up the drum; cry 'Courage!' and away.  
3 KING HENRY VI

QUEEN MARGARET:

Great lords, wise men ne'er sit and wail their loss,  
But cheerly seek how to redress their harms.  
What though the mast be now blown overboard,  
The cable broke, the holding-anchor lost,  
And half our sailors swallow'd in the flood?  
Yet lives our pilot still. Is't meet that he  
Should leave the helm and like a fearful lad  
With tearful eyes add water to the sea  
And give more strength to that which hath too much,  
Whiles, in his moan, the ship splits on the rock,  
Which industry and courage might have saved?  
Ah, what a shame! ah, what a fault were this!  
Say Warwick was our anchor; what of that?  
And Montague our topmost; what of him?



Our slaughter'd friends the tackles; what of these?  
Why, is not Oxford here another anchor?  
And Somerset another goodly mast?  
The friends of France our shrouds and tacklings?  
And, though unskilful, why not Ned and I  
For once allow'd the skilful pilot's charge?  
We will not from the helm to sit and weep,  
But keep our course, though the rough wind say no,  
From shelves and rocks that threaten us with wreck.  
As good to chide the waves as speak them fair.  
And what is Edward but ruthless sea?  
What Clarence but a quicksand of deceit?  
And Richard but a ragged fatal rock?  
All these the enemies to our poor bark.  
Say you can swim; alas, 'tis but a while!  
Tread on the sand; why, there you quickly sink:  
Bestride the rock; the tide will wash you off,  
Or else you famish; that's a threefold death.  
This speak I, lords, to let you understand,  
If case some one of you would fly from us,  
That there's no hoped-for mercy with the brothers  
More than with ruthless waves, with sands and rocks.  
Why, courage then! what cannot be avoided  
'Twere childish weakness to lament or fear.

PRINCE EDWARD:

Methinks a woman of this valiant spirit  
Should, if a coward heard her speak these words,  
Infuse his breast with magnanimity  
And make him, naked, foil a man at arms.  
I speak not this as doubting any here  
For did I but suspect a fearful man  
He should have leave to go away betimes,  
Lest in our need he might infect another  
And make him of like spirit to himself.  
If any such be here--as God forbid!--  
Let him depart before we need his help.

OXFORD:

Women and children of so high a courage,  
And warriors faint! why, 'twere perpetual shame.  
O brave young prince! thy famous grandfather  
Doth live again in thee: long mayst thou live  
To bear his image and renew his glories!

SOMERSET:

And he that will not fight for such a hope.  
Go home to bed, and like the owl by day,  
If he arise, be mock'd and wonder'd at.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Thanks, gentle Somerset; sweet Oxford, thanks.

PRINCE EDWARD:

And take his thanks that yet hath nothing else.

Messenger:

Prepare you, lords, for Edward is at hand.

Ready to fight; therefore be resolute.

OXFORD:

I thought no less: it is his policy

To haste thus fast, to find us unprovided.

SOMERSET:

But he's deceived; we are in readiness.

QUEEN MARGARET:

This cheers my heart, to see your forwardness.

OXFORD:

Here pitch our battle; hence we will not budge.

KING EDWARD IV:

Brave followers, yonder stands the thorny wood,  
Which, by the heavens' assistance and your strength,  
Must by the roots be hewn up yet ere night.

I need not add more fuel to your fire,  
For well I wot ye blaze to burn them out  
Give signal to the fight, and to it, lords!

QUEEN MARGARET:

Lords, knights, and gentlemen, what I should say  
My tears gainsay; for every word I speak,  
Ye see, I drink the water of mine eyes.  
Therefore, no more but this: Henry, your sovereign,  
Is prisoner to the foe; his state usurp'd,  
His realm a slaughter-house, his subjects slain,  
His statutes cancell'd and his treasure spent;  
And yonder is the wolf that makes this spoil.  
You fight in justice: then, in God's name, lords,  
Be valiant and give signal to the fight.

3 KING HENRY VI

KING EDWARD IV:

Now here a period of tumultuous broils.

Away with Oxford to Hames Castle straight:

For Somerset, off with his guilty head.

Go, bear them hence; I will not hear them speak.

OXFORD:

For my part, I'll not trouble thee with words.

SOMERSET:

Nor I, but stoop with patience to my fortune.

QUEEN MARGARET:

So part we sadly in this troublous world,  
To meet with joy in sweet Jerusalem.

KING EDWARD IV:

Is proclamation made, that who finds Edward  
Shall have a high reward, and he his life?

GLOUCESTER:

It is: and lo, where youthful Edward comes!

KING EDWARD IV:

Bring forth the gallant, let us hear him speak.  
What! can so young a thorn begin to prick?  
Edward, what satisfaction canst thou make  
For bearing arms, for stirring up my subjects,  
And all the trouble thou hast turn'd me to?

PRINCE EDWARD:

Speak like a subject, proud ambitious York!  
Suppose that I am now my father's mouth;  
Resign thy chair, and where I stand kneel thou,  
Whilst I propose the selfsame words to thee,  
Which traitor, thou wouldst have me answer to.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Ah, that thy father had been so resolved!

GLOUCESTER:

That you might still have worn the petticoat,  
And ne'er have stol'n the breech from Lancaster.

PRINCE EDWARD:

Let AEsop fable in a winter's night;  
His currish riddles sort not with this place.

GLOUCESTER:

By heaven, brat, I'll plague ye for that word.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Ay, thou wast born to be a plague to men.

GLOUCESTER:

For God's sake, take away this captive scold.

PRINCE EDWARD:

Nay, take away this scolding crookback rather.

KING EDWARD IV:

Peace, wilful boy, or I will charm your tongue.

CLARENCE:

Untutor'd lad, thou art too malapert.

PRINCE EDWARD:

I know my duty; you are all undutiful:  
Lascivious Edward, and thou perjured George,  
And thou mis-shapen Dick, I tell ye all  
I am your better, traitors as ye are:  
And thou usurp'st my father's right and mine.

KING EDWARD IV:

Take that, thou likeness of this railer here.

GLOUCESTER:

Sprawl'st thou? take that, to end thy agony.

CLARENCE:

And there's for twitting me with perjury.

QUEEN MARGARET:

O, kill me too!

GLOUCESTER:

Marry, and shall.

KING EDWARD IV:

Hold, Richard, hold; for we have done too much.

GLOUCESTER:

Why should she live, to fill the world with words?

KING EDWARD IV:

What, doth she swoon? use means for her recovery.

GLOUCESTER:

Clarence, excuse me to the king my brother;  
I'll hence to London on a serious matter:  
Ere ye come there, be sure to hear some news.

CLARENCE:

What? what?

GLOUCESTER:

The Tower, the Tower.

QUEEN MARGARET:

O Ned, sweet Ned! speak to thy mother, boy!  
Canst thou not speak? O traitors! murderers!  
They that stabb'd Caesar shed no blood at all,  
Did not offend, nor were not worthy blame,  
If this foul deed were by to equal it:  
He was a man; this, in respect, a child:  
And men ne'er spend their fury on a child.  
What's worse than murderer, that I may name it?  
No, no, my heart will burst, and if I speak:  
And I will speak, that so my heart may burst.  
Butchers and villains! bloody cannibals!  
How sweet a plant have you untimely cropp'd!  
You have no children, butchers! if you had,  
The thought of them would have stirr'd up remorse:  
But if you ever chance to have a child,  
Look in his youth to have him so cut off  
As, deathmen, you have rid this sweet young prince!

KING EDWARD IV:

Away with her; go, bear her hence perforce.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Nay, never bear me hence, dispatch me here,  
Here sheathe thy sword, I'll pardon thee my death:  
What, wilt thou not? then, Clarence, do it thou.

CLARENCE:

By heaven, I will not do thee so much ease.

QUEEN MARGARET:

Good Clarence, do; sweet Clarence, do thou do it.

CLARENCE:

Didst thou not hear me swear I would not do it?

QUEEN MARGARET:

Ay, but thou usest to forswear thyself:  
'Twas sin before, but now 'tis charity.  
What, wilt thou not? Where is that devil's butcher,  
Hard-favour'd Richard? Richard, where art thou?  
Thou art not here: murder is thy alms-deed;  
Petitioners for blood thou ne'er put'st back.

KING EDWARD IV:

Away, I say; I charge ye, bear her hence.

QUEEN MARGARET:

So come to you and yours, as to this Prince!

KING EDWARD IV:  
Where's Richard gone?

CLARENCE:  
To London, all in post; and, as I guess,  
To make a bloody supper in the Tower.

KING EDWARD IV:  
He's sudden, if a thing comes in his head.  
Now march we hence: discharge the common sort  
With pay and thanks, and let's away to London  
And see our gentle queen how well she fares:  
By this, I hope, she hath a son for me.  
3 KING HENRY VI

GLOUCESTER:  
Good day, my lord. What, at your book so hard?

KING HENRY VI:  
Ay, my good lord:--my lord, I should say rather;  
'Tis sin to flatter; 'good' was little better:  
'Good Gloucester' and 'good devil' were alike,  
And both preposterous; therefore, not 'good lord.'

GLOUCESTER:  
Sirrah, leave us to ourselves: we must confer.

KING HENRY VI:  
So flies the reckless shepherd from the wolf;  
So first the harmless sheep doth yield his fleece  
And next his throat unto the butcher's knife.  
What scene of death hath Roscius now to act?

GLOUCESTER:  
Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind;  
The thief doth fear each bush an officer.

KING HENRY VI:  
The bird that hath been limed in a bush,  
With trembling wings misdoubteth every bush;  
And I, the hapless male to one sweet bird,  
Have now the fatal object in my eye  
Where my poor young was limed, was caught and kill'd.

GLOUCESTER:  
Why, what a peevish fool was that of Crete,  
That taught his son the office of a fowl!  
An yet, for all his wings, the fool was drown'd.

KING HENRY VI:

I, Daedalus; my poor boy, Icarus;  
Thy father, Minos, that denied our course;  
The sun that sear'd the wings of my sweet boy  
Thy brother Edward, and thyself the sea  
Whose envious gulf did swallow up his life.  
Ah, kill me with thy weapon, not with words!  
My breast can better brook thy dagger's point  
Than can my ears that tragic history.  
But wherefore dost thou come? is't for my life?

GLOUCESTER:

Think'st thou I am an executioner?

KING HENRY VI:

A persecutor, I am sure, thou art:  
If murdering innocents be executing,  
Why, then thou art an executioner.

GLOUCESTER:

Thy son I kill'd for his presumption.

KING HENRY VI:

Hadst thou been kill'd when first thou didst presume,  
Thou hadst not lived to kill a son of mine.  
And thus I prophesy, that many a thousand,  
Which now mistrust no parcel of my fear,  
And many an old man's sigh and many a widow's,  
And many an orphan's water-standing eye--  
Men for their sons, wives for their husbands,  
And orphans for their parents timeless death--  
Shall rue the hour that ever thou wast born.  
The owl shriek'd at thy birth,--an evil sign;  
The night-crow cried, aboding luckless time;  
Dogs howl'd, and hideous tempest shook down trees;  
The raven rook'd her on the chimney's top,  
And chattering pies in dismal discords sung.  
Thy mother felt more than a mother's pain,  
And, yet brought forth less than a mother's hope,  
To wit, an indigested and deformed lump,  
Not like the fruit of such a goodly tree.  
Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou wast born,  
To signify thou camest to bite the world:  
And, if the rest be true which I have heard,  
Thou camest--

GLOUCESTER:

I'll hear no more: die, prophet in thy speech:  
For this amongst the rest, was I ordain'd.

KING HENRY VI:

Ay, and for much more slaughter after this.  
God forgive my sins, and pardon thee!

GLOUCESTER:

What, will the aspiring blood of Lancaster  
Sink in the ground? I thought it would have mounted.  
See how my sword weeps for the poor king's death!  
O, may such purple tears be alway shed  
From those that wish the downfall of our house!  
If any spark of life be yet remaining,  
Down, down to hell; and say I sent thee thither:  
I, that have neither pity, love, nor fear.  
Indeed, 'tis true that Henry told me of;  
For I have often heard my mother say  
I came into the world with my legs forward:  
Had I not reason, think ye, to make haste,  
And seek their ruin that usurp'd our right?  
The midwife wonder'd and the women cried  
'O, Jesus bless us, he is born with teeth!'  
And so I was; which plainly signified  
That I should snarl and bite and play the dog.  
Then, since the heavens have shaped my body so,  
Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it.  
I have no brother, I am like no brother;  
And this word 'love,' which graybeards call divine,  
Be resident in men like one another  
And not in me: I am myself alone.  
Clarence, beware; thou keep'st me from the light:  
But I will sort a pitchy day for thee;  
For I will buz abroad such prophecies  
That Edward shall be fearful of his life,  
And then, to purge his fear, I'll be thy death.  
King Henry and the prince his son are gone:  
Clarence, thy turn is next, and then the rest,  
Counting myself but bad till I be best.  
I'll throw thy body in another room  
And triumph, Henry, in thy day of doom.  
3 KING HENRY VI

KING EDWARD IV:

Once more we sit in England's royal throne,  
Re-purchased with the blood of enemies.  
What valiant foemen, like to autumn's corn,  
Have we mow'd down, in tops of all their pride!  
Three Dukes of Somerset, threefold renown'd  
For hardy and undoubted champions;  
Two Cliffords, as the father and the son,  
And two Northumberlands; two braver men



Ne'er spurr'd their coursers at the trumpet's sound;  
With them, the two brave bears, Warwick and Montague,  
That in their chains fetter'd the kingly lion  
And made the forest tremble when they roar'd.  
Thus have we swept suspicion from our seat  
And made our footstool of security.  
Come hither, Bess, and let me kiss my boy.  
Young Ned, for thee, thine uncles and myself  
Have in our armours watch'd the winter's night,  
Went all afoot in summer's scalding heat,  
That thou mightst repossess the crown in peace;  
And of our labours thou shalt reap the gain.

GLoucester:

KING EDWARD IV:

Clarence and Gloucester, love my lovely queen;  
And kiss your princely nephew, brothers both.

CLARENCE:

The duty that I owe unto your majesty  
I seal upon the lips of this sweet babe.

QUEEN ELIZABETH:

Thanks, noble Clarence; worthy brother, thanks.

GLoucester:

And, that I love the tree from whence thou sprang'st,  
Witness the loving kiss I give the fruit.

KING EDWARD IV:

Now am I seated as my soul delights,  
Having my country's peace and brothers' loves.

CLARENCE:

What will your grace have done with Margaret?  
Reignier, her father, to the king of France  
Hath pawn'd the Sicils and Jerusalem,  
And hither have they sent it for her ransom.

KING EDWARD IV:

Away with her, and waft her hence to France.  
And now what rests but that we spend the time  
With stately triumphs, mirthful comic shows,  
Such as befits the pleasure of the court?  
Sound drums and trumpets! farewell sour annoy!  
For here, I hope, begins our lasting joy.

ARCHIDAMUS:

If you shall chance, Camillo, to visit Bohemia, on

the like occasion whereon my services are now on foot, you shall see, as I have said, great difference betwixt our Bohemia and your Sicilia.

CAMILLO:

I think, this coming summer, the King of Sicilia means to pay Bohemia the visitation which he justly owes him.

ARCHIDAMUS:

Wherein our entertainment shall shame us we will be justified in our loves; for indeed--

CAMILLO:

Beseech you,--

ARCHIDAMUS:

Verily, I speak it in the freedom of my knowledge: we cannot with such magnificence--in so rare--I know not what to say. We will give you sleepy drinks, that your senses, unintelligent of our insufficiency, may, though they cannot praise us, as little accuse us.

CAMILLO:

You pay a great deal too dear for what's given freely.

ARCHIDAMUS:

Believe me, I speak as my understanding instructs me and as mine honesty puts it to utterance.

CAMILLO:

Sicilia cannot show himself over-kind to Bohemia. They were trained together in their childhoods; and there rooted betwixt them then such an affection, which cannot choose but branch now. Since their more mature dignities and royal necessities made separation of their society, their encounters, though not personal, have been royally attorneyed with interchange of gifts, letters, loving embassies; that they have seemed to be together, though absent, shook hands, as over a vast, and embraced, as it were, from the ends of opposed winds. The heavens continue their loves!

ARCHIDAMUS:

I think there is not in the world either malice or matter to alter it. You have an unspeakable comfort of your young prince Mamillius: it is a gentleman of the greatest promise that ever came into my note.

CAMILLO:

I very well agree with you in the hopes of him: it is a gallant child; one that indeed physics the subject, makes old hearts fresh: they that went on crutches ere he was born desire yet their life to see him a man.

ARCHIDAMUS:

Would they else be content to die?

CAMILLO:

Yes; if there were no other excuse why they should desire to live.

ARCHIDAMUS:

If the king had no son, they would desire to live on crutches till he had one.

POLIXENES:

Nine changes of the watery star hath been  
The shepherd's note since we have left our throne  
Without a burthen: time as long again  
Would be find up, my brother, with our thanks;  
And yet we should, for perpetuity,  
Go hence in debt: and therefore, like a cipher,  
Yet standing in rich place, I multiply  
With one 'We thank you' many thousands moe  
That go before it.

LEONTES:

Stay your thanks a while;  
And pay them when you part.

POLIXENES:

Sir, that's to-morrow.  
I am question'd by my fears, of what may chance  
Or breed upon our absence; that may blow  
No sneaping winds at home, to make us say  
'This is put forth too truly:' besides, I have stay'd  
To tire your royalty.

LEONTES:

We are tougher, brother,  
Than you can put us to't.

POLIXENES:

No longer stay.

LEONTES:

One seven-night longer.

POLIXENES:

Very sooth, to-morrow.

LEONTES:

We'll part the time between's then; and in that  
I'll no gainsaying.

POLIXENES:

Press me not, beseech you, so.  
There is no tongue that moves, none, none i' the world,  
So soon as yours could win me: so it should now,  
Were there necessity in your request, although  
'Twere needful I denied it. My affairs  
Do even drag me homeward: which to hinder  
Were in your love a whip to me; my stay  
To you a charge and trouble: to save both,  
Farewell, our brother.

LEONTES:

Tongue-tied, our queen?  
speak you.

HERMIONE:

I had thought, sir, to have held my peace until  
You have drawn oaths from him not to stay. You, sir,  
Charge him too coldly. Tell him, you are sure  
All in Bohemia's well; this satisfaction  
The by-gone day proclaim'd: say this to him,  
He's beat from his best ward.

LEONTES:

Well said, Hermione.

HERMIONE:

To tell, he longs to see his son, were strong:  
But let him say so then, and let him go;  
But let him swear so, and he shall not stay,  
We'll thwack him hence with distaffs.  
Yet of your royal presence I'll adventure  
The borrow of a week. When at Bohemia  
You take my lord, I'll give him my commission  
To let him there a month behind the gest  
Prefix'd for's parting: yet, good deed, Leontes,  
I love thee not a jar o' the clock behind  
What lady-she her lord. You'll stay?

POLIXENES:

No, madam.

HERMIONE:

Nay, but you will?

POLIXENES:

I may not, verily.

HERMIONE:

Verily!

You put me off with limber vows; but I,  
Though you would seek to unsphere the  
stars with oaths,  
Should yet say 'Sir, no going.' Verily,  
You shall not go: a lady's 'Verily' 's  
As potent as a lord's. Will you go yet?  
Force me to keep you as a prisoner,  
Not like a guest; so you shall pay your fees  
When you depart, and save your thanks. How say you?  
My prisoner? or my guest? by your dread 'Verily,'  
One of them you shall be.

POLIXENES:

Your guest, then, madam:  
To be your prisoner should import offending;  
Which is for me less easy to commit  
Than you to punish.

HERMIONE:

Not your gaoler, then,  
But your kind hostess. Come, I'll question you  
Of my lord's tricks and yours when you were boys:  
You were pretty lordings then?

POLIXENES:

We were, fair queen,  
Two lads that thought there was no more behind  
But such a day to-morrow as to-day,  
And to be boy eternal.

HERMIONE:

Was not my lord  
The verier wag o' the two?

POLIXENES:

We were as twinn'd lambs that did frisk i' the sun,  
And bleat the one at the other: what we changed  
Was innocence for innocence; we knew not  
The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream'd  
That any did. Had we pursued that life,  
And our weak spirits ne'er been higher rear'd

With stronger blood, we should have answer'd heaven  
Boldly 'not guilty;' the imposition clear'd  
Hereditary ours.

HERMIONE:

By this we gather  
You have tripp'd since.

POLIXENES:

O my most sacred lady!  
Temptations have since then been born to's; for  
In those unfledged days was my wife a girl;  
Your precious self had then not cross'd the eyes  
Of my young play-fellow.

HERMIONE:

Grace to boot!  
Of this make no conclusion, lest you say  
Your queen and I are devils: yet go on;  
The offences we have made you do we'll answer,  
If you first sinn'd with us and that with us  
You did continue fault and that you slipp'd not  
With any but with us.

LEONTES:

Is he won yet?

HERMIONE:

He'll stay my lord.

LEONTES:

At my request he would not.  
Hermione, my dearest, thou never spokest  
To better purpose.

HERMIONE:

Never?

LEONTES:

Never, but once.

HERMIONE:

What! have I twice said well? when was't before?  
I prithee tell me; cram's with praise, and make's  
As fat as tame things: one good deed dying tongueless  
Slaughters a thousand waiting upon that.  
Our praises are our wages: you may ride's  
With one soft kiss a thousand furlongs ere  
With spur we beat an acre. But to the goal:  
My last good deed was to entreat his stay:

What was my first? it has an elder sister,  
Or I mistake you: O, would her name were Grace!  
But once before I spoke to the purpose: when?  
Nay, let me have't; I long.

LEONTES:

Why, that was when  
Three crabbed months had sour'd themselves to death,  
Ere I could make thee open thy white hand  
And clap thyself my love: then didst thou utter  
'I am yours for ever.'

HERMIONE:

'Tis grace indeed.  
Why, lo you now, I have spoke to the purpose twice:  
The one for ever earn'd a royal husband;  
The other for some while a friend.

LEONTES:

MAMILLIUS:

Ay, my good lord.

LEONTES:

I' fecks!  
Why, that's my bawcock. What, hast  
smutch'd thy nose?  
They say it is a copy out of mine. Come, captain,  
We must be neat; not neat, but cleanly, captain:  
And yet the steer, the heifer and the calf  
Are all call'd neat.--Still virginalling  
Upon his palm!--How now, you wanton calf!  
Art thou my calf?

MAMILLIUS:

Yes, if you will, my lord.

LEONTES:

Thou want'st a rough pash and the shoots that I have,  
To be full like me: yet they say we are  
Almost as like as eggs; women say so,  
That will say anything but were they false  
As o'er-dyed blacks, as wind, as waters, false  
As dice are to be wish'd by one that fixes  
No bourn 'twixt his and mine, yet were it true  
To say this boy were like me. Come, sir page,  
Look on me with your welkin eye: sweet villain!  
Most dear'st! my collop! Can thy dam?--may't be?--  
Affection! thy intention stabs the centre:  
Thou dost make possible things not so held,

Communicatest with dreams;--how can this be?--  
With what's unreal thou coactive art,  
And fellow'st nothing: then 'tis very credent  
Thou mayst co-join with something; and thou dost,  
And that beyond commission, and I find it,  
And that to the infection of my brains  
And hardening of my brows.

POLIXENES:  
What means Sicilia?

HERMIONE:  
He something seems unsettled.

POLIXENES:  
How, my lord!  
What cheer? how is't with you, best brother?

HERMIONE:  
You look as if you held a brow of much distraction  
Are you moved, my lord?

LEONTES:  
No, in good earnest.  
How sometimes nature will betray its folly,  
Its tenderness, and make itself a pastime  
To harder bosoms! Looking on the lines  
Of my boy's face, methoughts I did recoil  
Twenty-three years, and saw myself unbreech'd,  
In my green velvet coat, my dagger muzzled,  
Lest it should bite its master, and so prove,  
As ornaments oft do, too dangerous:  
How like, methought, I then was to this kernel,  
This squash, this gentleman. Mine honest friend,  
Will you take eggs for money?

MAMILLIUS:  
No, my lord, I'll fight.

LEONTES:  
You will! why, happy man be's dole! My brother,  
Are you so fond of your young prince as we  
Do seem to be of ours?

POLIXENES:  
If at home, sir,  
He's all my exercise, my mirth, my matter,  
Now my sworn friend and then mine enemy,  
My parasite, my soldier, statesman, all:  
He makes a July's day short as December,



And with his varying childness cures in me  
Thoughts that would thicken my blood.

LEONTES:

So stands this squire  
Officed with me: we two will walk, my lord,  
And leave you to your graver steps. Hermione,  
How thou lovest us, show in our brother's welcome;  
Let what is dear in Sicily be cheap:  
Next to thyself and my young rover, he's  
Apparent to my heart.

HERMIONE:

If you would seek us,  
We are yours in the garden: shall's attend you there?

LEONTES:

To your own bents dispose you: you'll be found,  
Be you beneath the sky.  
I am angling now,  
Though you perceive me not how I give line.  
Go to, go to!  
How she holds up the neb, the bill to him!  
And arms her with the boldness of a wife  
To her allowing husband!  
Gone already!  
Inch-thick, knee-deep, o'er head and  
ears a fork'd one!  
Go, play, boy, play: thy mother plays, and I  
Play too, but so disgraced a part, whose issue  
Will hiss me to my grave: contempt and clamour  
Will be my knell. Go, play, boy, play.  
There have been,  
Or I am much deceived, cuckolds ere now;  
And many a man there is, even at this present,  
Now while I speak this, holds his wife by the arm,  
That little thinks she has been sluiced in's absence  
And his pond fish'd by his next neighbour, by  
Sir Smile, his neighbour: nay, there's comfort in't  
Whiles other men have gates and those gates open'd,  
As mine, against their will. Should all despair  
That have revolted wives, the tenth of mankind  
Would hang themselves. Physic for't there is none;  
It is a bawdy planet, that will strike  
Where 'tis predominant; and 'tis powerful, think it,  
From east, west, north and south: be it concluded,  
No barricado for a belly; know't;  
It will let in and out the enemy  
With bag and baggage: many thousand on's  
Have the disease, and feel't not. How now, boy!

MAMILLIUS:

I am like you, they say.

LEONTES:

Why that's some comfort. What, Camillo there?

CAMILLO:

Ay, my good lord.

LEONTES:

Go play, Mamillius; thou'rt an honest man.

Camillo, this great sir will yet stay longer.

CAMILLO:

You had much ado to make his anchor hold:

When you cast out, it still came home.

LEONTES:

Didst note it?

CAMILLO:

He would not stay at your petitions: made

His business more material.

LEONTES:

Didst perceive it?

They're here with me already, whispering, rounding

'Sicilia is a so-forth:' 'tis far gone,

When I shall gust it last. How came't, Camillo,

That he did stay?

CAMILLO:

At the good queen's entreaty.

LEONTES:

At the queen's be't: 'good' should be pertinent

But, so it is, it is not. Was this taken

By any understanding pate but thine?

For thy conceit is soaking, will draw in

More than the common blocks: not noted, is't,

But of the finer natures? by some severals

Of head-piece extraordinary? lower messes

Perchance are to this business purblind? say.

CAMILLO:

Business, my lord! I think most understand

Bohemia stays here longer.

LEONTES:

Ha!

CAMILLO:

Stays here longer.

LEONTES:

Ay, but why?

CAMILLO:

To satisfy your highness and the entreaties  
Of our most gracious mistress.

LEONTES:

Satisfy!

The entreaties of your mistress! satisfy!  
Let that suffice. I have trusted thee, Camillo,  
With all the nearest things to my heart, as well  
My chamber-councils, wherein, priest-like, thou  
Hast cleansed my bosom, I from thee departed  
Thy penitent reform'd: but we have been  
Deceived in thy integrity, deceived  
In that which seems so.

CAMILLO:

Be it forbid, my lord!

LEONTES:

To bide upon't, thou art not honest, or,  
If thou inclinest that way, thou art a coward,  
Which hoxes honesty behind, restraining  
From course required; or else thou must be counted  
A servant grafted in my serious trust  
And therein negligent; or else a fool  
That seest a game play'd home, the rich stake drawn,  
And takest it all for jest.

CAMILLO:

My gracious lord,  
I may be negligent, foolish and fearful;  
In every one of these no man is free,  
But that his negligence, his folly, fear,  
Among the infinite doings of the world,  
Sometime puts forth. In your affairs, my lord,  
If ever I were wilful-negligent,  
It was my folly; if industriously  
I play'd the fool, it was my negligence,  
Not weighing well the end; if ever fearful  
To do a thing, where I the issue doubted,  
Where of the execution did cry out  
Against the non-performance, 'twas a fear

Which oft infects the wisest: these, my lord,  
Are such allow'd infirmities that honesty  
Is never free of. But, beseech your grace,  
Be plainer with me; let me know my trespass  
By its own visage: if I then deny it,  
'Tis none of mine.

LEONTES:

Ha' not you seen, Camillo,--  
But that's past doubt, you have, or your eye-glass  
Is thicker than a cuckold's horn,--or heard,--  
For to a vision so apparent rumour  
Cannot be mute,--or thought,--for cogitation  
Resides not in that man that does not think,--  
My wife is slippery? If thou wilt confess,  
Or else be impudently negative,  
To have nor eyes nor ears nor thought, then say  
My wife's a hobby-horse, deserves a name  
As rank as any flax-wench that puts to  
Before her troth-plight: say't and justify't.

CAMILLO:

I would not be a stander-by to hear  
My sovereign mistress clouded so, without  
My present vengeance taken: 'shrew my heart,  
You never spoke what did become you less  
Than this; which to reiterate were sin  
As deep as that, though true.

LEONTES:

Is whispering nothing?  
Is leaning cheek to cheek? is meeting noses?  
Kissing with inside lip? stopping the career  
Of laughing with a sigh?--a note infallible  
Of breaking honesty--horsing foot on foot?  
Skulking in corners? wishing clocks more swift?  
Hours, minutes? noon, midnight? and all eyes  
Blind with the pin and web but theirs, theirs only,  
That would unseen be wicked? is this nothing?  
Why, then the world and all that's in't is nothing;  
The covering sky is nothing; Bohemia nothing;  
My wife is nothing; nor nothing have these nothings,  
If this be nothing.

CAMILLO:

Good my lord, be cured  
Of this diseased opinion, and betimes;  
For 'tis most dangerous.

LEONTES:

Say it be, 'tis true.

CAMILLO:

No, no, my lord.

LEONTES:

It is; you lie, you lie:  
I say thou liest, Camillo, and I hate thee,  
Pronounce thee a gross lout, a mindless slave,  
Or else a hovering temporizer, that  
Canst with thine eyes at once see good and evil,  
Inclining to them both: were my wife's liver  
Infected as her life, she would not live  
The running of one glass.

CAMILLO:

Who does infect her?

LEONTES:

Why, he that wears her like a medal, hanging  
About his neck, Bohemia: who, if I  
Had servants true about me, that bare eyes  
To see alike mine honour as their profits,  
Their own particular thrifts, they would do that  
Which should undo more doing: ay, and thou,  
His cupbearer,--whom I from meaner form  
Have benched and reared to worship, who mayst see  
Plainly as heaven sees earth and earth sees heaven,  
How I am galled,--mightst bespice a cup,  
To give mine enemy a lasting wink;  
Which draught to me were cordial.

CAMILLO:

Sir, my lord,  
I could do this, and that with no rash potion,  
But with a lingering dram that should not work  
Maliciously like poison: but I cannot  
Believe this crack to be in my dread mistress,  
So sovereignly being honourable.  
I have loved thee,--

LEONTES:

Make that thy question, and go rot!  
Dost think I am so muddy, so unsettled,  
To appoint myself in this vexation, sully  
The purity and whiteness of my sheets,  
Which to preserve is sleep, which being spotted  
Is goads, thorns, nettles, tails of wasps,  
Give scandal to the blood o' the prince my son,  
Who I do think is mine and love as mine,

Without ripe moving to't? Would I do this?  
Could man so blench?

CAMILLO:

I must believe you, sir:  
I do; and will fetch off Bohemia for't;  
Provided that, when he's removed, your highness  
Will take again your queen as yours at first,  
Even for your son's sake; and thereby for sealing  
The injury of tongues in courts and kingdoms  
Known and allied to yours.

LEONTES:

Thou dost advise me  
Even so as I mine own course have set down:  
I'll give no blemish to her honour, none.

CAMILLO:

My lord,  
Go then; and with a countenance as clear  
As friendship wears at feasts, keep with Bohemia  
And with your queen. I am his cupbearer:  
If from me he have wholesome beverage,  
Account me not your servant.

LEONTES:

This is all:  
Do't and thou hast the one half of my heart;  
Do't not, thou split'st thine own.

CAMILLO:

I'll do't, my lord.

LEONTES:

I will seem friendly, as thou hast advised me.

CAMILLO:

O miserable lady! But, for me,  
What case stand I in? I must be the poisoner  
Of good Polixenes; and my ground to do't  
Is the obedience to a master, one  
Who in rebellion with himself will have  
All that are his so too. To do this deed,  
Promotion follows. If I could find example  
Of thousands that had struck anointed kings  
And flourish'd after, I'd not do't; but since  
Nor brass nor stone nor parchment bears not one,  
Let villany itself forswear't. I must  
Forsake the court: to do't, or no, is certain  
To me a break-neck. Happy star, reign now!

Here comes Bohemia.

POLIXENES:

This is strange: methinks  
My favour here begins to warp. Not speak?  
Good day, Camillo.

CAMILLO:

Hail, most royal sir!

POLIXENES:

What is the news i' the court?

CAMILLO:

None rare, my lord.

POLIXENES:

The king hath on him such a countenance  
As he had lost some province and a region  
Loved as he loves himself: even now I met him  
With customary compliment; when he,  
Wafting his eyes to the contrary and falling  
A lip of much contempt, speeds from me and  
So leaves me to consider what is breeding  
That changeth thus his manners.

CAMILLO:

I dare not know, my lord.

POLIXENES:

How! dare not! do not. Do you know, and dare not?  
Be intelligent to me: 'tis thereabouts;  
For, to yourself, what you do know, you must.  
And cannot say, you dare not. Good Camillo,  
Your changed complexions are to me a mirror  
Which shows me mine changed too; for I must be  
A party in this alteration, finding  
Myself thus alter'd with 't.

CAMILLO:

There is a sickness  
Which puts some of us in distemper, but  
I cannot name the disease; and it is caught  
Of you that yet are well.

POLIXENES:

How! caught of me!  
Make me not sighted like the basilisk:  
I have look'd on thousands, who have sped the better  
By my regard, but kill'd none so. Camillo,--

As you are certainly a gentleman, thereto  
Clerk-like experienced, which no less adorns  
Our gentry than our parents' noble names,  
In whose success we are gentle,--I beseech you,  
If you know aught which does behove my knowledge  
Thereof to be inform'd, imprison't not  
In ignorant concealment.

CAMILLO:  
I may not answer.

POLIXENES:  
A sickness caught of me, and yet I well!  
I must be answer'd. Dost thou hear, Camillo,  
I conjure thee, by all the parts of man  
Which honour does acknowledge, whereof the least  
Is not this suit of mine, that thou declare  
What incidency thou dost guess of harm  
Is creeping toward me; how far off, how near;  
Which way to be prevented, if to be;  
If not, how best to bear it.

CAMILLO:  
Sir, I will tell you;  
Since I am charged in honour and by him  
That I think honourable: therefore mark my counsel,  
Which must be even as swiftly follow'd as  
I mean to utter it, or both yourself and me  
Cry lost, and so good night!

POLIXENES:  
On, good Camillo.

CAMILLO:  
I am appointed him to murder you.

POLIXENES:  
By whom, Camillo?

CAMILLO:  
By the king.

POLIXENES:  
For what?

CAMILLO:  
He thinks, nay, with all confidence he swears,  
As he had seen't or been an instrument  
To vice you to't, that you have touch'd his queen  
Forbiddenly.



POLIXENES:

O, then my best blood turn  
To an infected jelly and my name  
Be yoked with his that did betray the Best!  
Turn then my freshest reputation to  
A savour that may strike the dullest nostril  
Where I arrive, and my approach be shunn'd,  
Nay, hated too, worse than the great'st infection  
That e'er was heard or read!

CAMILLO:

Swear his thought over  
By each particular star in heaven and  
By all their influences, you may as well  
Forbid the sea for to obey the moon  
As or by oath remove or counsel shake  
The fabric of his folly, whose foundation  
Is piled upon his faith and will continue  
The standing of his body.

POLIXENES:

How should this grow?

CAMILLO:

I know not: but I am sure 'tis safer to  
Avoid what's grown than question how 'tis born.  
If therefore you dare trust my honesty,  
That lies enclosed in this trunk which you  
Shall bear along impawn'd, away to-night!  
Your followers I will whisper to the business,  
And will by twos and threes at several posterns  
Clear them o' the city. For myself, I'll put  
My fortunes to your service, which are here  
By this discovery lost. Be not uncertain;  
For, by the honour of my parents, I  
Have utter'd truth: which if you seek to prove,  
I dare not stand by; nor shall you be safer  
Than one condemn'd by the king's own mouth, thereon  
His execution sworn.

POLIXENES:

I do believe thee:  
I saw his heart in 's face. Give me thy hand:  
Be pilot to me and thy places shall  
Still neighbour mine. My ships are ready and  
My people did expect my hence departure  
Two days ago. This jealousy  
Is for a precious creature: as she's rare,  
Must it be great, and as his person's mighty,

Must it be violent, and as he does conceive  
He is dishonour'd by a man which ever  
Profess'd to him, why, his revenges must  
In that be made more bitter. Fear o'ershades me:  
Good expedition be my friend, and comfort  
The gracious queen, part of his theme, but nothing  
Of his ill-ta'en suspicion! Come, Camillo;  
I will respect thee as a father if  
Thou bear'st my life off hence: let us avoid.

CAMILLO:

It is in mine authority to command  
The keys of all the posterns: please your highness  
To take the urgent hour. Come, sir, away.

HERMIONE:

Take the boy to you: he so troubles me,  
'Tis past enduring.

First Lady:

Come, my gracious lord,  
Shall I be your playfellow?

MAMILLIUS:

No, I'll none of you.

First Lady:

Why, my sweet lord?

MAMILLIUS:

You'll kiss me hard and speak to me as if  
I were a baby still. I love you better.

Second Lady:

And why so, my lord?

MAMILLIUS:

Not for because  
Your brows are blacker; yet black brows, they say,  
Become some women best, so that there be not  
Too much hair there, but in a semicircle  
Or a half-moon made with a pen.

Second Lady:

Who taught you this?

MAMILLIUS:

I learnt it out of women's faces. Pray now  
What colour are your eyebrows?

First Lady:  
Blue, my lord.

MAMILLIUS:  
Nay, that's a mock: I have seen a lady's nose  
That has been blue, but not her eyebrows.

First Lady:  
Hark ye;  
The queen your mother rounds apace: we shall  
Present our services to a fine new prince  
One of these days; and then you'd wanton with us,  
If we would have you.

Second Lady:  
She is spread of late  
Into a goodly bulk: good time encounter her!

HERMIONE:  
What wisdom stirs amongst you? Come, sir, now  
I am for you again: pray you, sit by us,  
And tell 's a tale.

MAMILLIUS:  
Merry or sad shall't be?

HERMIONE:  
As merry as you will.

MAMILLIUS:  
A sad tale's best for winter: I have one  
Of sprites and goblins.

HERMIONE:  
Let's have that, good sir.  
Come on, sit down: come on, and do your best  
To fright me with your sprites; you're powerful at it.

MAMILLIUS:  
There was a man--

HERMIONE:  
Nay, come, sit down; then on.

MAMILLIUS:  
Dwelt by a churchyard: I will tell it softly;  
Yond crickets shall not hear it.

HERMIONE:  
Come on, then,

And give't me in mine ear.

LEONTES:

Was he met there? his train? Camillo with him?

First Lord:

Behind the tuft of pines I met them; never  
Saw I men scour so on their way: I eyed them  
Even to their ships.

LEONTES:

How blest am I

In my just censure, in my true opinion!

Alack, for lesser knowledge! how accursed

In being so blest! There may be in the cup

A spider steep'd, and one may drink, depart,

And yet partake no venom, for his knowledge

Is not infected: but if one present

The abhorr'd ingredient to his eye, make known

How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,

With violent hefts. I have drunk,

and seen the spider.

Camillo was his help in this, his pander:

There is a plot against my life, my crown;

All's true that is mistrusted: that false villain

Whom I employ'd was pre-employ'd by him:

He has discover'd my design, and I

Remain a pinch'd thing; yea, a very trick

For them to play at will. How came the posterns

So easily open?

First Lord:

By his great authority;

Which often hath no less prevail'd than so

On your command.

LEONTES:

I know't too well.

Give me the boy: I am glad you did not nurse him:

Though he does bear some signs of me, yet you

Have too much blood in him.

HERMIONE:

What is this? sport?

LEONTES:

Bear the boy hence; he shall not come about her;

Away with him! and let her sport herself

With that she's big with; for 'tis Polixenes

Has made thee swell thus.

HERMIONE:

But I'd say he had not,  
And I'll be sworn you would believe my saying,  
Howe'er you lean to the nayward.

LEONTES:

You, my lords,  
Look on her, mark her well; be but about  
To say 'she is a goodly lady,' and  
The justice of your bearts will thereto add  
'Tis pity she's not honest, honourable:  
Praise her but for this her without-door form,  
Which on my faith deserves high speech, and straight  
The shrug, the hum or ha, these petty brands  
That calumny doth use--O, I am out--  
That mercy does, for calumny will sear  
Virtue itself: these shrugs, these hums and ha's,  
When you have said 'she's goodly,' come between  
Ere you can say 'she's honest:' but be 't known,  
From him that has most cause to grieve it should be,  
She's an adulteress.

HERMIONE:

Should a villain say so,  
The most replenish'd villain in the world,  
He were as much more villain: you, my lord,  
Do but mistake.

LEONTES:

You have mistook, my lady,  
Polixenes for Leontes: O thou thing!  
Which I'll not call a creature of thy place,  
Lest barbarism, making me the precedent,  
Should a like language use to all degrees  
And mannerly distinguishment leave out  
Betwixt the prince and beggar: I have said  
She's an adulteress; I have said with whom:  
More, she's a traitor and Camillo is  
A federary with her, and one that knows  
What she should shame to know herself  
But with her most vile principal, that she's  
A bed-swerver, even as bad as those  
That vulgars give bold'st titles, ay, and privy  
To this their late escape.

HERMIONE:

No, by my life.  
Privy to none of this. How will this grieve you,  
When you shall come to clearer knowledge, that

You thus have publish'd me! Gentle my lord,  
You scarce can right me throughly then to say  
You did mistake.

LEONTES:

No; if I mistake  
In those foundations which I build upon,  
The centre is not big enough to bear  
A school-boy's top. Away with her! to prison!  
He who shall speak for her is afar off guilty  
But that he speaks.

HERMIONE:

There's some ill planet reigns:  
I must be patient till the heavens look  
With an aspect more favourable. Good my lords,  
I am not prone to weeping, as our sex  
Commonly are; the want of which vain dew  
Perchance shall dry your pities: but I have  
That honourable grief lodged here which burns  
Worse than tears drown: beseech you all, my lords,  
With thoughts so qualified as your charities  
Shall best instruct you, measure me; and so  
The king's will be perform'd!

LEONTES:

Shall I be heard?

HERMIONE:

Who is't that goes with me? Beseech your highness,  
My women may be with me; for you see  
My plight requires it. Do not weep, good fools;  
There is no cause: when you shall know your mistress  
Has deserved prison, then abound in tears  
As I come out: this action I now go on  
Is for my better grace. Adieu, my lord:  
I never wish'd to see you sorry; now  
I trust I shall. My women, come; you have leave.

LEONTES:

Go, do our bidding; hence!

First Lord:

Beseech your highness, call the queen again.

ANTIGONUS:

Be certain what you do, sir, lest your justice  
Prove violence; in the which three great ones suffer,  
Yourself, your queen, your son.

First Lord:

For her, my lord,  
I dare my life lay down and will do't, sir,  
Please you to accept it, that the queen is spotless  
I' the eyes of heaven and to you; I mean,  
In this which you accuse her.

ANTIGONUS:

If it prove  
She's otherwise, I'll keep my stables where  
I lodge my wife; I'll go in couples with her;  
Than when I feel and see her no farther trust her;  
For every inch of woman in the world,  
Ay, every dram of woman's flesh is false, If she be.

LEONTES:

Hold your peaces.

First Lord:

Good my lord,--

ANTIGONUS:

It is for you we speak, not for ourselves:  
You are abused and by some putter-on  
That will be damn'd for't; would I knew the villain,  
I would land-damn him. Be she honour-flaw'd,  
I have three daughters; the eldest is eleven  
The second and the third, nine, and some five;  
If this prove true, they'll pay for't:  
by mine honour,  
I'll geld 'em all; fourteen they shall not see,  
To bring false generations: they are co-heirs;  
And I had rather glib myself than they  
Should not produce fair issue.

LEONTES:

Cease; no more.  
You smell this business with a sense as cold  
As is a dead man's nose: but I do see't and feel't  
As you feel doing thus; and see withal  
The instruments that feel.

ANTIGONUS:

If it be so,  
We need no grave to bury honesty:  
There's not a grain of it the face to sweeten  
Of the whole dungy earth.

LEONTES:

What! lack I credit?

First Lord:

I had rather you did lack than I, my lord,  
Upon this ground; and more it would content me  
To have her honour true than your suspicion,  
Be blamed for't how you might.

LEONTES:

Why, what need we  
Commune with you of this, but rather follow  
Our forceful instigation? Our prerogative  
Calls not your counsels, but our natural goodness  
Imparts this; which if you, or stupefied  
Or seeming so in skill, cannot or will not  
Relish a truth like us, inform yourselves  
We need no more of your advice: the matter,  
The loss, the gain, the ordering on't, is all  
Properly ours.

ANTIGONUS:

And I wish, my liege,  
You had only in your silent judgment tried it,  
Without more overture.

LEONTES:

How could that be?  
Either thou art most ignorant by age,  
Or thou wert born a fool. Camillo's flight,  
Added to their familiarity,  
Which was as gross as ever touch'd conjecture,  
That lack'd sight only, nought for approbation  
But only seeing, all other circumstances  
Made up to the deed, doth push on this proceeding:  
Yet, for a greater confirmation,  
For in an act of this importance 'twere  
Most piteous to be wild, I have dispatch'd in post  
To sacred Delphos, to Apollo's temple,  
Cleomenes and Dion, whom you know  
Of stuff'd sufficiency: now from the oracle  
They will bring all; whose spiritual counsel had,  
Shall stop or spur me. Have I done well?

First Lord:

Well done, my lord.

LEONTES:

Though I am satisfied and need no more  
Than what I know, yet shall the oracle  
Give rest to the minds of others, such as he  
Whose ignorant credulity will not



Come up to the truth. So have we thought it good  
From our free person she should be confined,  
Lest that the treachery of the two fled hence  
Be left her to perform. Come, follow us;  
We are to speak in public; for this business  
Will raise us all.

ANTIGONUS:

PAULINA:  
The keeper of the prison, call to him;  
let him have knowledge who I am.  
Good lady,  
No court in Europe is too good for thee;  
What dost thou then in prison?  
Now, good sir,  
You know me, do you not?

Gaoler:  
For a worthy lady  
And one whom much I honour.

PAULINA:  
Pray you then,  
Conduct me to the queen.

Gaoler:  
I may not, madam:  
To the contrary I have express commandment.

PAULINA:  
Here's ado,  
To lock up honesty and honour from  
The access of gentle visitors!  
Is't lawful, pray you,  
To see her women? any of them? Emilia?

Gaoler:  
So please you, madam,  
To put apart these your attendants, I  
Shall bring Emilia forth.

PAULINA:  
I pray now, call her.  
Withdraw yourselves.

Gaoler:  
And, madam,  
I must be present at your conference.

PAULINA:

Well, be't so, prithee.  
Here's such ado to make no stain a stain  
As passes colouring.  
Dear gentlewoman,  
How fares our gracious lady?

EMILIA:

As well as one so great and so forlorn  
May hold together: on her frights and griefs,  
Which never tender lady hath born greater,  
She is something before her time deliver'd.

PAULINA:

A boy?

EMILIA:

A daughter, and a goodly babe,  
Lusty and like to live: the queen receives  
Much comfort in't; says 'My poor prisoner,  
I am innocent as you.'

PAULINA:

I dare be sworn  
These dangerous unsafe lunes i' the king,  
beshrew them!  
He must be told on't, and he shall: the office  
Becomes a woman best; I'll take't upon me:  
If I prove honey-mouth'd let my tongue blister  
And never to my red-look'd anger be  
The trumpet any more. Pray you, Emilia,  
Commend my best obedience to the queen:  
If she dares trust me with her little babe,  
I'll show't the king and undertake to be  
Her advocate to the loud'st. We do not know  
How he may soften at the sight o' the child:  
The silence often of pure innocence  
Persuades when speaking fails.

EMILIA:

Most worthy madam,  
Your honour and your goodness is so evident  
That your free undertaking cannot miss  
A thriving issue: there is no lady living  
So meet for this great errand. Please your ladyship  
To visit the next room, I'll presently  
Acquaint the queen of your most noble offer;  
Who but to-day hammer'd of this design,  
But durst not tempt a minister of honour,  
Lest she should be denied.

PAULINA:

Tell her, Emilia.

I'll use that tongue I have: if wit flow from't  
As boldness from my bosom, let 't not be doubted  
I shall do good.

EMILIA:

Now be you blest for it!

I'll to the queen: please you,  
come something nearer.

Gaoler:

Madam, if't please the queen to send the babe,  
I know not what I shall incur to pass it,  
Having no warrant.

PAULINA:

You need not fear it, sir:

This child was prisoner to the womb and is  
By law and process of great nature thence  
Freed and enfranchised, not a party to  
The anger of the king nor guilty of,  
If any be, the trespass of the queen.

Gaoler:

I do believe it.

PAULINA:

Do not you fear: upon mine honour,  
I will stand betwixt you and danger.

LEONTES:

Nor night nor day no rest: it is but weakness  
To bear the matter thus; mere weakness. If  
The cause were not in being,--part o' the cause,  
She the adulteress; for the harlot king  
Is quite beyond mine arm, out of the blank  
And level of my brain, plot-proof; but she  
I can hook to me: say that she were gone,  
Given to the fire, a moiety of my rest  
Might come to me again. Who's there?

First Servant:

My lord?

LEONTES:

How does the boy?

First Servant:

He took good rest to-night;  
'Tis hoped his sickness is discharged.

LEONTES:

To see his nobleness!  
Conceiving the dishonour of his mother,  
He straight declined, droop'd, took it deeply,  
Fasten'd and fix'd the shame on't in himself,  
Threw off his spirit, his appetite, his sleep,  
And downright languish'd. Leave me solely: go,  
See how he fares.  
Fie, fie! no thought of him:  
The thought of my revenges that way  
Recoil upon me: in himself too mighty,  
And in his parties, his alliance; let him be  
Until a time may serve: for present vengeance,  
Take it on her. Camillo and Polixenes  
Laugh at me, make their pastime at my sorrow:  
They should not laugh if I could reach them, nor  
Shall she within my power.

First Lord:

You must not enter.

PAULINA:

Nay, rather, good my lords, be second to me:  
Fear you his tyrannous passion more, alas,  
Than the queen's life? a gracious innocent soul,  
More free than he is jealous.

ANTIGONUS:

That's enough.

Second Servant:

Madam, he hath not slept tonight; commanded  
None should come at him.

PAULINA:

Not so hot, good sir:  
I come to bring him sleep. 'Tis such as you,  
That creep like shadows by him and do sigh  
At each his needless heavings, such as you  
Nourish the cause of his awaking: I  
Do come with words as medicinal as true,  
Honest as either, to purge him of that humour  
That presses him from sleep.

LEONTES:

What noise there, ho?

PAULINA:

No noise, my lord; but needful conference  
About some gossips for your highness.

LEONTES:

How!

Away with that audacious lady! Antigonus,  
I charged thee that she should not come about me:  
I knew she would.

ANTIGONUS:

I told her so, my lord,  
On your displeasure's peril and on mine,  
She should not visit you.

LEONTES:

What, canst not rule her?

PAULINA:

From all dishonesty he can: in this,  
Unless he take the course that you have done,  
Commit me for committing honour, trust it,  
He shall not rule me.

ANTIGONUS:

La you now, you hear:  
When she will take the rein I let her run;  
But she'll not stumble.

PAULINA:

Good my liege, I come;  
And, I beseech you, hear me, who profess  
Myself your loyal servant, your physician,  
Your most obedient counsellor, yet that dare  
Less appear so in comforting your evils,  
Than such as most seem yours: I say, I come  
From your good queen.

LEONTES:

Good queen!

PAULINA:

Good queen, my lord,  
Good queen; I say good queen;  
And would by combat make her good, so were I  
A man, the worst about you.

LEONTES:

Force her hence.

PAULINA:

Let him that makes but trifles of his eyes  
First hand me: on mine own accord I'll off;  
But first I'll do my errand. The good queen,  
For she is good, hath brought you forth a daughter;  
Here 'tis; commends it to your blessing.

LEONTES:

Out!

A mankind witch! Hence with her, out o' door:  
A most intelligencing bawd!

PAULINA:

Not so:

I am as ignorant in that as you  
In so entitling me, and no less honest  
Than you are mad; which is enough, I'll warrant,  
As this world goes, to pass for honest.

LEONTES:

Traitors!

Will you not push her out? Give her the bastard.  
Thou dotard! thou art woman-tired, unroosted  
By thy dame Partlet here. Take up the bastard;  
Take't up, I say; give't to thy crone.

PAULINA:

For ever

Unvenerable be thy hands, if thou  
Takest up the princess by that forced baseness  
Which he has put upon't!

LEONTES:

He dreads his wife.

PAULINA:

So I would you did; then 'twere past all doubt  
You'd call your children yours.

LEONTES:

A nest of traitors!

ANTIGONUS:

I am none, by this good light.

PAULINA:

Nor I, nor any

But one that's here, and that's himself, for he  
The sacred honour of himself, his queen's,  
His hopeful son's, his babe's, betrays to slander,

Whose sting is sharper than the sword's;  
and will not--  
For, as the case now stands, it is a curse  
He cannot be compell'd to't--once remove  
The root of his opinion, which is rotten  
As ever oak or stone was sound.

LEONTES:

A callat

Of boundless tongue, who late hath beat her husband  
And now baits me! This brat is none of mine;  
It is the issue of Polixenes:  
Hence with it, and together with the dam  
Commit them to the fire!

PAULINA:

It is yours;

And, might we lay the old proverb to your charge,  
So like you, 'tis the worse. Behold, my lords,  
Although the print be little, the whole matter  
And copy of the father, eye, nose, lip,  
The trick of's frown, his forehead, nay, the valley,  
The pretty dimples of his chin and cheek,  
His smiles,  
The very mould and frame of hand, nail, finger:  
And thou, good goddess Nature, which hast made it  
So like to him that got it, if thou hast  
The ordering of the mind too, 'mongst all colours  
No yellow in't, lest she suspect, as he does,  
Her children not her husband's!

LEONTES:

A gross hag

And, lozel, thou art worthy to be hang'd,  
That wilt not stay her tongue.

ANTIGONUS:

Hang all the husbands

That cannot do that feat, you'll leave yourself  
Hardly one subject.

LEONTES:

Once more, take her hence.

PAULINA:

A most unworthy and unnatural lord  
Can do no more.

LEONTES:

I'll ha' thee burnt.

PAULINA:

I care not:

It is an heretic that makes the fire,  
Not she which burns in't. I'll not call you tyrant;  
But this most cruel usage of your queen,  
Not able to produce more accusation  
Than your own weak-hinged fancy, something savours  
Of tyranny and will ignoble make you,  
Yea, scandalous to the world.

LEONTES:

On your allegiance,  
Out of the chamber with her! Were I a tyrant,  
Where were her life? she durst not call me so,  
If she did know me one. Away with her!

PAULINA:

I pray you, do not push me; I'll be gone.  
Look to your babe, my lord; 'tis yours:  
Jove send her  
A better guiding spirit! What needs these hands?  
You, that are thus so tender o'er his follies,  
Will never do him good, not one of you.  
So, so: farewell; we are gone.

LEONTES:

Thou, traitor, hast set on thy wife to this.  
My child? away with't! Even thou, that hast  
A heart so tender o'er it, take it hence  
And see it instantly consumed with fire;  
Even thou and none but thou. Take it up straight:  
Within this hour bring me word 'tis done,  
And by good testimony, or I'll seize thy life,  
With what thou else call'st thine. If thou refuse  
And wilt encounter with my wrath, say so;  
The bastard brains with these my proper hands  
Shall I dash out. Go, take it to the fire;  
For thou set'st on thy wife.

ANTIGONUS:

I did not, sir:  
These lords, my noble fellows, if they please,  
Can clear me in't.

Lords:

We can: my royal liege,  
He is not guilty of her coming hither.

LEONTES:



You're liars all.

First Lord:

Beseech your highness, give us better credit:  
We have always truly served you, and beseech you  
So to esteem of us, and on our knees we beg,  
As recompense of our dear services  
Past and to come, that you do change this purpose,  
Which being so horrible, so bloody, must  
Lead on to some foul issue: we all kneel.

LEONTES:

I am a feather for each wind that blows:  
Shall I live on to see this bastard kneel  
And call me father? better burn it now  
Than curse it then. But be it; let it live.  
It shall not neither. You, sir, come you hither;  
You that have been so tenderly officious  
With Lady Margery, your midwife there,  
To save this bastard's life,—for 'tis a bastard,  
So sure as this beard's grey,  
—what will you adventure  
To save this brat's life?

ANTIGONUS:

Any thing, my lord,  
That my ability may undergo  
And nobleness impose: at least thus much:  
I'll pawn the little blood which I have left  
To save the innocent: any thing possible.

LEONTES:

It shall be possible. Swear by this sword  
Thou wilt perform my bidding.

ANTIGONUS:

I will, my lord.

LEONTES:

Mark and perform it, see'st thou! for the fail  
Of any point in't shall not only be  
Death to thyself but to thy lewd-tongued wife,  
Whom for this time we pardon. We enjoin thee,  
As thou art liege-man to us, that thou carry  
This female bastard hence and that thou bear it  
To some remote and desert place quite out  
Of our dominions, and that there thou leave it,  
Without more mercy, to its own protection  
And favour of the climate. As by strange fortune  
It came to us, I do in justice charge thee,

On thy soul's peril and thy body's torture,  
That thou commend it strangely to some place  
Where chance may nurse or end it. Take it up.

ANTIGONUS:

I swear to do this, though a present death  
Had been more merciful. Come on, poor babe:  
Some powerful spirit instruct the kites and ravens  
To be thy nurses! Wolves and bears, they say  
Casting their savageness aside have done  
Like offices of pity. Sir, be prosperous  
In more than this deed does require! And blessing  
Against this cruelty fight on thy side,  
Poor thing, condemn'd to loss!

LEONTES:

No, I'll not rear  
Another's issue.

Servant:

Please your highness, posts  
From those you sent to the oracle are come  
An hour since: Cleomenes and Dion,  
Being well arrived from Delphos, are both landed,  
Hasting to the court.

First Lord:

So please you, sir, their speed  
Hath been beyond account.

LEONTES:

Twenty-three days  
They have been absent: 'tis good speed; foretells  
The great Apollo suddenly will have  
The truth of this appear. Prepare you, lords;  
Summon a session, that we may arraign  
Our most disloyal lady, for, as she hath  
Been publicly accused, so shall she have  
A just and open trial. While she lives  
My heart will be a burthen to me. Leave me,  
And think upon my bidding.

CLEOMENES:

The climate's delicate, the air most sweet,  
Fertile the isle, the temple much surpassing  
The common praise it bears.

DION:

I shall report,  
For most it caught me, the celestial habits,

Methinks I so should term them, and the reverence  
Of the grave wearers. O, the sacrifice!  
How ceremonious, solemn and unearthly  
It was i' the offering!

CLEOMENES:

But of all, the burst  
And the ear-deafening voice o' the oracle,  
Kin to Jove's thunder, so surprised my sense.  
That I was nothing.

DION:

If the event o' the journey  
Prove as successful to the queen,--O be't so!--  
As it hath been to us rare, pleasant, speedy,  
The time is worth the use on't.

CLEOMENES:

Great Apollo  
Turn all to the best! These proclamations,  
So forcing faults upon Hermione,  
I little like.

DION:

The violent carriage of it  
Will clear or end the business: when the oracle,  
Thus by Apollo's great divine seal'd up,  
Shall the contents discover, something rare  
Even then will rush to knowledge. Go: fresh horses!  
And gracious be the issue!

LEONTES:

This sessions, to our great grief we pronounce,  
Even pushes 'gainst our heart: the party tried  
The daughter of a king, our wife, and one  
Of us too much beloved. Let us be clear'd  
Of being tyrannous, since we so openly  
Proceed in justice, which shall have due course,  
Even to the guilt or the purgation.  
Produce the prisoner.

Officer:

It is his highness' pleasure that the queen  
Appear in person here in court. Silence!

LEONTES:

Read the indictment.

Officer:

HERMIONE:

Since what I am to say must be but that  
Which contradicts my accusation and  
The testimony on my part no other  
But what comes from myself, it shall scarce boot me  
To say 'not guilty:' mine integrity  
Being counted falsehood, shall, as I express it,  
Be so received. But thus: if powers divine  
Behold our human actions, as they do,  
I doubt not then but innocence shall make  
False accusation blush and tyranny  
Tremble at patience. You, my lord, best know,  
Who least will seem to do so, my past life  
Hath been as continent, as chaste, as true,  
As I am now unhappy; which is more  
Than history can pattern, though devised  
And play'd to take spectators. For behold me  
A fellow of the royal bed, which owe  
A moiety of the throne a great king's daughter,  
The mother to a hopeful prince, here standing  
To prate and talk for life and honour 'fore  
Who please to come and hear. For life, I prize it  
As I weigh grief, which I would spare: for honour,  
'Tis a derivative from me to mine,  
And only that I stand for. I appeal  
To your own conscience, sir, before Polixenes  
Came to your court, how I was in your grace,  
How merited to be so; since he came,  
With what encounter so uncurrent I  
Have strain'd to appear thus: if one jot beyond  
The bound of honour, or in act or will  
That way inclining, harden'd be the hearts  
Of all that hear me, and my near'st of kin  
Cry fie upon my grave!

LEONTES:

I ne'er heard yet  
That any of these bolder vices wanted  
Less impudence to gainsay what they did  
Than to perform it first.

HERMIONE:

That's true enough;  
Through 'tis a saying, sir, not due to me.

LEONTES:

You will not own it.

HERMIONE:

More than mistress of

Which comes to me in name of fault, I must not  
At all acknowledge. For Polixenes,  
With whom I am accused, I do confess  
I loved him as in honour he required,  
With such a kind of love as might become  
A lady like me, with a love even such,  
So and no other, as yourself commanded:  
Which not to have done I think had been in me  
Both disobedience and ingratitude  
To you and toward your friend, whose love had spoke,  
Even since it could speak, from an infant, freely  
That it was yours. Now, for conspiracy,  
I know not how it tastes; though it be dish'd  
For me to try how: all I know of it  
Is that Camillo was an honest man;  
And why he left your court, the gods themselves,  
Wotting no more than I, are ignorant.

LEONTES:

You knew of his departure, as you know  
What you have underta'en to do in's absence.

HERMIONE:

Sir,  
You speak a language that I understand not:  
My life stands in the level of your dreams,  
Which I'll lay down.

LEONTES:

Your actions are my dreams;  
You had a bastard by Polixenes,  
And I but dream'd it. As you were past all shame,--  
Those of your fact are so--so past all truth:  
Which to deny concerns more than avails; for as  
Thy brat hath been cast out, like to itself,  
No father owning it,--which is, indeed,  
More criminal in thee than it,--so thou  
Shalt feel our justice, in whose easiest passage  
Look for no less than death.

HERMIONE:

Sir, spare your threats:  
The bug which you would fright me with I seek.  
To me can life be no commodity:  
The crown and comfort of my life, your favour,  
I do give lost; for I do feel it gone,  
But know not how it went. My second joy  
And first-fruits of my body, from his presence  
I am barr'd, like one infectious. My third comfort  
Starr'd most unluckily, is from my breast,

The innocent milk in its most innocent mouth,  
Haled out to murder: myself on every post  
Proclaimed a strumpet: with immodest hatred  
The child-bed privilege denied, which 'longs  
To women of all fashion; lastly, hurried  
Here to this place, i' the open air, before  
I have got strength of limit. Now, my liege,  
Tell me what blessings I have here alive,  
That I should fear to die? Therefore proceed.  
But yet hear this: mistake me not; no life,  
I prize it not a straw, but for mine honour,  
Which I would free, if I shall be condemn'd  
Upon surmises, all proofs sleeping else  
But what your jealousies awake, I tell you  
'Tis rigor and not law. Your honours all,  
I do refer me to the oracle:  
Apollo be my judge!

First Lord:  
This your request  
Is altogether just: therefore bring forth,  
And in Apollos name, his oracle.

HERMIONE:  
The Emperor of Russia was my father:  
O that he were alive, and here beholding  
His daughter's trial! that he did but see  
The flatness of my misery, yet with eyes  
Of pity, not revenge!

Officer:  
You here shall swear upon this sword of justice,  
That you, Cleomenes and Dion, have  
Been both at Delphos, and from thence have brought  
The seal'd-up oracle, by the hand deliver'd  
Of great Apollo's priest; and that, since then,  
You have not dared to break the holy seal  
Nor read the secrets in't.

CLEOMENES:  
All this we swear.

LEONTES:  
Break up the seals and read.

Officer:

Lords:  
Now blessed be the great Apollo!

HERMIONE:  
Praised!

LEONTES:  
Hast thou read truth?

Officer:  
Ay, my lord; even so  
As it is here set down.

LEONTES:  
There is no truth at all i' the oracle:  
The sessions shall proceed: this is mere falsehood.

Servant:  
My lord the king, the king!

LEONTES:  
What is the business?

Servant:  
O sir, I shall be hated to report it!  
The prince your son, with mere conceit and fear  
Of the queen's speed, is gone.

LEONTES:  
How! gone!

Servant:  
Is dead.

LEONTES:  
Apollo's angry; and the heavens themselves  
Do strike at my injustice.  
How now there!

PAULINA:  
This news is mortal to the queen: look down  
And see what death is doing.

LEONTES:  
Take her hence:  
Her heart is but o'ercharged; she will recover:  
I have too much believed mine own suspicion:  
Beseech you, tenderly apply to her  
Some remedies for life.  
Apollo, pardon  
My great profaneness 'gainst thine oracle!  
I'll reconcile me to Polixenes,  
New woo my queen, recall the good Camillo,

Whom I proclaim a man of truth, of mercy;  
For, being transported by my jealousies  
To bloody thoughts and to revenge, I chose  
Camillo for the minister to poison  
My friend Polixenes: which had been done,  
But that the good mind of Camillo tardied  
My swift command, though I with death and with  
Reward did threaten and encourage him,  
Not doing 't and being done: he, most humane  
And fill'd with honour, to my kingly guest  
Unclasp'd my practise, quit his fortunes here,  
Which you knew great, and to the hazard  
Of all encertainties himself commended,  
No richer than his honour: how he glisters  
Thorough my rust! and how his pity  
Does my deeds make the blacker!

PAULINA:

Woe the while!

O, cut my lace, lest my heart, cracking it,  
Break too.

First Lord:

What fit is this, good lady?

PAULINA:

What studied torments, tyrant, hast for me?  
What wheels? racks? fires? what flaying? boiling?  
In leads or oils? what old or newer torture  
Must I receive, whose every word deserves  
To taste of thy most worst? Thy tyranny  
Together working with thy jealousies,  
Fancies too weak for boys, too green and idle  
For girls of nine, O, think what they have done  
And then run mad indeed, stark mad! for all  
Thy by-gone fooleries were but spices of it.  
That thou betray'dst Polixenes, 'twas nothing;  
That did but show thee, of a fool, inconstant  
And damnable ingrateful: nor was't much,  
Thou wouldst have poison'd good Camillo's honour,  
To have him kill a king: poor trespasses,  
More monstrous standing by: whereof I reckon  
The casting forth to crows thy baby-daughter  
To be or none or little; though a devil  
Would have shed water out of fire ere done't:  
Nor is't directly laid to thee, the death  
Of the young prince, whose honourable thoughts,  
Thoughts high for one so tender, cleft the heart  
That could conceive a gross and foolish sire  
Blemish'd his gracious dam: this is not, no,



Laid to thy answer: but the last,--O lords,  
When I have said, cry 'woe!' the queen, the queen,  
The sweet'st, dear'st creature's dead,  
and vengeance for't  
Not dropp'd down yet.

First Lord:  
The higher powers forbid!

PAULINA:

I say she's dead; I'll swear't. If word nor oath  
Prevail not, go and see: if you can bring  
Tincture or lustre in her lip, her eye,  
Heat outwardly or breath within, I'll serve you  
As I would do the gods. But, O thou tyrant!  
Do not repent these things, for they are heavier  
Than all thy woes can stir; therefore betake thee  
To nothing but despair. A thousand knees  
Ten thousand years together, naked, fasting,  
Upon a barren mountain and still winter  
In storm perpetual, could not move the gods  
To look that way thou wert.

LEONTES:

Go on, go on  
Thou canst not speak too much; I have deserved  
All tongues to talk their bitterest.

First Lord:  
Say no more:  
Howe'er the business goes, you have made fault  
I' the boldness of your speech.

PAULINA:

I am sorry for't:  
All faults I make, when I shall come to know them,  
I do repent. Alas! I have show'd too much  
The rashness of a woman: he is touch'd  
To the noble heart. What's gone and what's past help  
Should be past grief: do not receive affliction  
At my petition; I beseech you, rather  
Let me be punish'd, that have minded you  
Of what you should forget. Now, good my liege  
Sir, royal sir, forgive a foolish woman:  
The love I bore your queen--lo, fool again!--  
I'll speak of her no more, nor of your children;  
I'll not remember you of my own lord,  
Who is lost too: take your patience to you,  
And I'll say nothing.

LEONTES:

Thou didst speak but well  
When most the truth; which I receive much better  
Than to be pitied of thee. Prithee, bring me  
To the dead bodies of my queen and son:  
One grave shall be for both: upon them shall  
The causes of their death appear, unto  
Our shame perpetual. Once a day I'll visit  
The chapel where they lie, and tears shed there  
Shall be my recreation: so long as nature  
Will bear up with this exercise, so long  
I daily vow to use it. Come and lead me  
Unto these sorrows.

ANTIGONUS:

Thou art perfect then, our ship hath touch'd upon  
The deserts of Bohemia?

Mariner:

Ay, my lord: and fear  
We have landed in ill time: the skies look grimly  
And threaten present blusters. In my conscience,  
The heavens with that we have in hand are angry  
And frown upon 's.

ANTIGONUS:

Their sacred wills be done! Go, get aboard;  
Look to thy bark: I'll not be long before  
I call upon thee.

Mariner:

Make your best haste, and go not  
Too far i' the land: 'tis like to be loud weather;  
Besides, this place is famous for the creatures  
Of prey that keep upon't.

ANTIGONUS:

Go thou away:  
I'll follow instantly.

Mariner:

I am glad at heart  
To be so rid o' the business.

ANTIGONUS:

Come, poor babe:  
I have heard, but not believed,  
the spirits o' the dead  
May walk again: if such thing be, thy mother  
Appear'd to me last night, for ne'er was dream

So like a waking. To me comes a creature,  
Sometimes her head on one side, some another;  
I never saw a vessel of like sorrow,  
So fill'd and so becoming: in pure white robes,  
Like very sanctity, she did approach  
My cabin where I lay; thrice bow'd before me,  
And gasping to begin some speech, her eyes  
Became two spouts: the fury spent, anon  
Did this break—from her: 'Good Antigonus,  
Since fate, against thy better disposition,  
Hath made thy person for the thrower-out  
Of my poor babe, according to thine oath,  
Places remote enough are in Bohemia,  
There weep and leave it crying; and, for the babe  
Is counted lost for ever, Perdita,  
I prithee, call't. For this ungentle business  
Put on thee by my lord, thou ne'er shalt see  
Thy wife Paulina more.' And so, with shrieks  
She melted into air. Affrighted much,  
I did in time collect myself and thought  
This was so and no slumber. Dreams are toys:  
Yet for this once, yea, superstitiously,  
I will be squared by this. I do believe  
Hermione hath suffer'd death, and that  
Apollo would, this being indeed the issue  
Of King Polixenes, it should here be laid,  
Either for life or death, upon the earth  
Of its right father. Blossom, speed thee well!  
There lie, and there thy character: there these;  
Which may, if fortune please, both breed thee, pretty,  
And still rest thine. The storm begins; poor wretch,  
That for thy mother's fault art thus exposed  
To loss and what may follow! Weep I cannot,  
But my heart bleeds; and most accursed am I  
To be by oath enjoin'd to this. Farewell!  
The day frowns more and more: thou'rt like to have  
A lullaby too rough: I never saw  
The heavens so dim by day. A savage clamour!  
Well may I get aboard! This is the chase:  
I am gone for ever.

Shepherd:

I would there were no age between sixteen and  
three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the  
rest; for there is nothing in the between but  
getting wenches with child, wronging the ancientry,  
stealing, fighting--Hark you now! Would any but  
these boiled brains of nineteen and two-and-twenty  
hunt this weather? They have scared away two of my  
best sheep, which I fear the wolf will sooner find

than the master: if any where I have them, 'tis by the seaside, browsing of ivy. Good luck, an't be thy will what have we here! Mercy on 's, a barne a very pretty barne! A boy or a child, I wonder? A pretty one; a very pretty one: sure, some 'scape: though I am not bookish, yet I can read waiting-gentlewoman in the 'scape. This has been some stair-work, some trunk-work, some behind-door-work: they were warmer that got this than the poor thing is here. I'll take it up for pity: yet I'll tarry till my son come; he halloosed but even now. Whoa, ho, ho!

Clown:  
Hilloa, loa!

Shepherd:  
What, art so near? If thou'lt see a thing to talk on when thou art dead and rotten, come hither. What ailest thou, man?

Clown:  
I have seen two such sights, by sea and by land! but I am not to say it is a sea, for it is now the sky: betwixt the firmament and it you cannot thrust a bodkin's point.

Shepherd:  
Why, boy, how is it?

Clown:  
I would you did but see how it chafes, how it rages, how it takes up the shore! but that's not the point. O, the most piteous cry of the poor souls! sometimes to see 'em, and not to see 'em; now the ship boring the moon with her main-mast, and anon swallowed with yest and froth, as you'ld thrust a cork into a hogshead. And then for the land-service, to see how the bear tore out his shoulder-bone; how he cried to me for help and said his name was Antigonus, a nobleman. But to make an end of the ship, to see how the sea flap-dragoned it: but, first, how the poor souls roared, and the sea mocked them; and how the poor gentleman roared and the bear mocked him, both roaring louder than the sea or weather.

Shepherd:  
Name of mercy, when was this, boy?

Clown:

Now, now: I have not winked since I saw these sights: the men are not yet cold under water, nor the bear half dined on the gentleman: he's at it now.

Shepherd:

Would I had been by, to have helped the old man!

Clown:

I would you had been by the ship side, to have helped her: there your charity would have lacked footing.

Shepherd:

Heavy matters! heavy matters! but look thee here, boy. Now bless thyself: thou mettest with things dying, I with things newborn. Here's a sight for thee; look thee, a bearing-cloth for a squire's child! look thee here; take up, take up, boy; open't. So, let's see: it was told me I should be rich by the fairies. This is some changeling: open't. What's within, boy?

Clown:

You're a made old man: if the sins of your youth are forgiven you, you're well to live. Gold! all gold!

Shepherd:

This is fairy gold, boy, and 'twill prove so: up with't, keep it close: home, home, the next way. We are lucky, boy; and to be so still requires nothing but secrecy. Let my sheep go: come, good boy, the next way home.

Clown:

Go you the next way with your findings. I'll go see if the bear be gone from the gentleman and how much he hath eaten: they are never curst but when they are hungry: if there be any of him left, I'll bury it.

Shepherd:

That's a good deed. If thou mayest discern by that which is left of him what he is, fetch me to the sight of him.

Clown:

Marry, will I; and you shall help to put him i' the ground.

Shepherd:

'Tis a lucky day, boy, and we'll do good deeds on't.

Time:

I, that please some, try all, both joy and terror  
Of good and bad, that makes and unfolds error,  
Now take upon me, in the name of Time,  
To use my wings. Impute it not a crime  
To me or my swift passage, that I slide  
O'er sixteen years and leave the growth untried  
Of that wide gap, since it is in my power  
To o'erthrow law and in one self-born hour  
To plant and o'erwhelm custom. Let me pass  
The same I am, ere ancient'st order was  
Or what is now received: I witness to  
The times that brought them in; so shall I do  
To the freshest things now reigning and make stale  
The glistening of this present, as my tale  
Now seems to it. Your patience this allowing,  
I turn my glass and give my scene such growing  
As you had slept between: Leontes leaving,  
The effects of his fond jealousies so grieving  
That he shuts up himself, imagine me,  
Gentle spectators, that I now may be  
In fair Bohemia, and remember well,  
I mentioned a son o' the king's, which Florizel  
I now name to you; and with speed so pace  
To speak of Perdita, now grown in grace  
Equal with wondering: what of her ensues  
I list not prophecy; but let Time's news  
Be known when 'tis brought forth.  
A shepherd's daughter,  
And what to her adheres, which follows after,  
Is the argument of Time. Of this allow,  
If ever you have spent time worse ere now;  
If never, yet that Time himself doth say  
He wishes earnestly you never may.

POLIXENES:

I pray thee, good Camillo, be no more importunate:  
'tis a sickness denying thee any thing; a death to  
grant this.

CAMILLO:

It is fifteen years since I saw my country: though  
I have for the most part been aired abroad, I  
desire to lay my bones there. Besides, the penitent  
king, my master, hath sent for me; to whose feeling  
sorrows I might be some allay, or I o'erween to  
think so, which is another spur to my departure.

POLIXENES:

As thou lovest me, Camillo, wipe not out the rest of thy services by leaving me now: the need I have of thee thine own goodness hath made; better not to have had thee than thus to want thee: thou, having made me businesses which none without thee can sufficiently manage, must either stay to execute them thyself or take away with thee the very services thou hast done; which if I have not enough considered, as too much I cannot, to be more thankful to thee shall be my study, and my profit therein the heaping friendships. Of that fatal country, Sicilia, prithee speak no more; whose very naming punishes me with the remembrance of that penitent, as thou callest him, and reconciled king, my brother; whose loss of his most precious queen and children are even now to be afresh lamented. Say to me, when sawest thou the Prince Florizel, my son? Kings are no less unhappy, their issue not being gracious, than they are in losing them when they have approved their virtues.

CAMILLO:

Sir, it is three days since I saw the prince. What his happier affairs may be, are to me unknown: but I have missingly noted, he is of late much retired from court and is less frequent to his princely exercises than formerly he hath appeared.

POLIXENES:

I have considered so much, Camillo, and with some care; so far that I have eyes under my service which look upon his removedness; from whom I have this intelligence, that he is seldom from the house of a most homely shepherd; a man, they say, that from very nothing, and beyond the imagination of his neighbours, is grown into an unspeakable estate.

CAMILLO:

I have heard, sir, of such a man, who hath a daughter of most rare note: the report of her is extended more than can be thought to begin from such a cottage.

POLIXENES:

That's likewise part of my intelligence; but, I fear, the angle that plucks our son thither. Thou shalt accompany us to the place; where we will, not appearing what we are, have some question with the shepherd; from whose simplicity I think it not uneasy to get the cause of my son's resort thither.

Prithee, be my present partner in this business, and lay aside the thoughts of Sicilia.

CAMILLO:

I willingly obey your command.

POLIXENES:

My best Camillo! We must disguise ourselves.

AUTOLYCUS:

When daffodils begin to peer,  
With heigh! the doxy over the dale,  
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year;  
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.  
The white sheet bleaching on the hedge,  
With heigh! the sweet birds, O, how they sing!  
Doth set my pugging tooth on edge;  
For a quart of ale is a dish for a king.  
The lark, that tirra-lyra chants,  
With heigh! with heigh! the thrush and the jay,  
Are summer songs for me and my aunts,  
While we lie tumbling in the hay.  
I have served Prince Florizel and in my time  
wore three-pile; but now I am out of service:  
But shall I go mourn for that, my dear?  
The pale moon shines by night:  
And when I wander here and there,  
I then do most go right.  
If tinkers may have leave to live,  
And bear the sow-skin budget,  
Then my account I well may, give,  
And in the stocks avouch it.  
My traffic is sheets; when the kite builds, look to  
lesser linen. My father named me Autolycus; who  
being, as I am, littered under Mercury, was likewise  
a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. With die and  
drab I purchased this caparison, and my revenue is  
the silly cheat. Gallows and knock are too powerful  
on the highway: beating and hanging are terrors to  
me: for the life to come, I sleep out the thought  
of it. A prize! a prize!

Clown:

Let me see: every 'leven wether tods; every tod  
yields pound and odd shilling; fifteen hundred  
shorn. what comes the wool to?

AUTOLYCUS:

Clown:



I cannot do't without counters. Let me see; what am I to buy for our sheep-shearing feast? Three pound of sugar, five pound of currants, rice,--what will this sister of mine do with rice? But my father hath made her mistress of the feast, and she lays it on. She hath made me four and twenty nose-gays for the shearers, three-man-song-men all, and very good ones; but they are most of them means and bases; but one puritan amongst them, and he sings psalms to horn-pipes. I must have saffron to colour the warden pies; mace; dates?--none, that's out of my note; nutmegs, seven; a race or two of ginger, but that I may beg; four pound of prunes, and as many of raisins o' the sun.

AUTOLYCUS:

O that ever I was born!

Clown:

I' the name of me--

AUTOLYCUS:

O, help me, help me! pluck but off these rags; and then, death, death!

Clown:

Alack, poor soul! thou hast need of more rags to lay on thee, rather than have these off.

AUTOLYCUS:

O sir, the loathsomeness of them offends me more than the stripes I have received, which are mighty ones and millions.

Clown:

Alas, poor man! a million of beating may come to a great matter.

AUTOLYCUS:

I am robbed, sir, and beaten; my money and apparel ta'en from me, and these detestable things put upon me.

Clown:

What, by a horseman, or a footman?

AUTOLYCUS:

A footman, sweet sir, a footman.

Clown:

Indeed, he should be a footman by the garments he has left with thee: if this be a horseman's coat, it hath seen very hot service. Lend me thy hand, I'll help thee: come, lend me thy hand.

AUTOLYCUS:

O, good sir, tenderly, O!

Clown:

Alas, poor soul!

AUTOLYCUS:

O, good sir, softly, good sir! I fear, sir, my shoulder-blade is out.

Clown:

How now! canst stand?

AUTOLYCUS:

Clown:

Dost lack any money? I have a little money for thee.

AUTOLYCUS:

No, good sweet sir; no, I beseech you, sir: I have a kinsman not past three quarters of a mile hence, unto whom I was going; I shall there have money, or any thing I want: offer me no money, I pray you; that kills my heart.

Clown:

What manner of fellow was he that robbed you?

AUTOLYCUS:

A fellow, sir, that I have known to go about with troll-my-dames; I knew him once a servant of the prince: I cannot tell, good sir, for which of his virtues it was, but he was certainly whipped out of the court.

Clown:

His vices, you would say; there's no virtue whipped out of the court: they cherish it to make it stay there; and yet it will no more but abide.

AUTOLYCUS:

Vices, I would say, sir. I know this man well: he hath been since an ape-bearer; then a process-server, a bailiff; then he compassed a motion of the Prodigal Son, and married a tinker's wife within a mile where my land and living lies;

and, having flown over many knavish professions, he settled only in rogue: some call him Autolycus.

Clown:

Out upon him! prig, for my life, prig: he haunts wakes, fairs and bear-baitings.

AUTOLYCUS:

Very true, sir; he, sir, he; that's the rogue that put me into this apparel.

Clown:

Not a more cowardly rogue in all Bohemia: if you had but looked big and spit at him, he'd have run.

AUTOLYCUS:

I must confess to you, sir, I am no fighter: I am false of heart that way; and that he knew, I warrant him.

Clown:

How do you now?

AUTOLYCUS:

Sweet sir, much better than I was; I can stand and walk: I will even take my leave of you, and pace softly towards my kinsman's.

Clown:

Shall I bring thee on the way?

AUTOLYCUS:

No, good-faced sir; no, sweet sir.

Clown:

Then fare thee well: I must go buy spices for our sheep-shearing.

AUTOLYCUS:

Prosper you, sweet sir!

Your purse is not hot enough to purchase your spice.

I'll be with you at your sheep-shearing too: if I

make not this cheat bring out another and the

shearers prove sheep, let me be unrolled and my name put in the book of virtue!

Jog on, jog on, the foot-path way,

And merrily hent the stile-a:

A merry heart goes all the day,

Your sad tires in a mile-a.

FLORIZEL:

These your unusual weeds to each part of you  
Do give a life: no shepherdess, but Flora  
Peering in April's front. This your sheep-shearing  
Is as a meeting of the petty gods,  
And you the queen on't.

PERDITA:

Sir, my gracious lord,  
To chide at your extremes it not becomes me:  
O, pardon, that I name them! Your high self,  
The gracious mark o' the land, you have obscured  
With a swain's wearing, and me, poor lowly maid,  
Most goddess-like prank'd up: but that our feasts  
In every mess have folly and the feeders  
Digest it with a custom, I should blush  
To see you so attired, sworn, I think,  
To show myself a glass.

FLORIZEL:

I bless the time  
When my good falcon made her flight across  
Thy father's ground.

PERDITA:

Now Jove afford you cause!  
To me the difference forges dread; your greatness  
Hath not been used to fear. Even now I tremble  
To think your father, by some accident,  
Should pass this way as you did: O, the Fates!  
How would he look, to see his work so noble  
Vilely bound up? What would he say? Or how  
Should I, in these my borrow'd flaunts, behold  
The sternness of his presence?

FLORIZEL:

Apprehend  
Nothing but jollity. The gods themselves,  
Humbling their deities to love, have taken  
The shapes of beasts upon them: Jupiter  
Became a bull, and bellow'd; the green Neptune  
A ram, and bleated; and the fire-robed god,  
Golden Apollo, a poor humble swain,  
As I seem now. Their transformations  
Were never for a piece of beauty rarer,  
Nor in a way so chaste, since my desires  
Run not before mine honour, nor my lusts  
Burn hotter than my faith.

PERDITA:

O, but, sir,  
Your resolution cannot hold, when 'tis  
Opposed, as it must be, by the power of the king:  
One of these two must be necessities,  
Which then will speak, that you must  
change this purpose,  
Or I my life.

FLORIZEL:

Thou dearest Perdita,  
With these forced thoughts, I prithee, darken not  
The mirth o' the feast. Or I'll be thine, my fair,  
Or not my father's. For I cannot be  
Mine own, nor any thing to any, if  
I be not thine. To this I am most constant,  
Though destiny say no. Be merry, gentle;  
Strangle such thoughts as these with any thing  
That you behold the while. Your guests are coming:  
Lift up your countenance, as it were the day  
Of celebration of that nuptial which  
We two have sworn shall come.

PERDITA:

O lady Fortune,  
Stand you auspicious!

FLORIZEL:

See, your guests approach:  
Address yourself to entertain them sprightly,  
And let's be red with mirth.

Shepherd:

Fie, daughter! when my old wife lived, upon  
This day she was both pantler, butler, cook,  
Both dame and servant; welcomed all, served all;  
Would sing her song and dance her turn; now here,  
At upper end o' the table, now i' the middle;  
On his shoulder, and his; her face o' fire  
With labour and the thing she took to quench it,  
She would to each one sip. You are retired,  
As if you were a feasted one and not  
The hostess of the meeting: pray you, bid  
These unknown friends to's welcome; for it is  
A way to make us better friends, more known.  
Come, quench your blushes and present yourself  
That which you are, mistress o' the feast: come on,  
And bid us welcome to your sheep-shearing,  
As your good flock shall prosper.

PERDITA:

POLIXENES:  
Shepherdess,  
A fair one are you--well you fit our ages  
With flowers of winter.

PERDITA:  
Sir, the year growing ancient,  
Not yet on summer's death, nor on the birth  
Of trembling winter, the fairest  
flowers o' the season  
Are our carnations and streak'd gillyvors,  
Which some call nature's bastards: of that kind  
Our rustic garden's barren; and I care not  
To get slips of them.

POLIXENES:  
Wherefore, gentle maiden,  
Do you neglect them?

PERDITA:  
For I have heard it said  
There is an art which in their piedness shares  
With great creating nature.

POLIXENES:  
Say there be;  
Yet nature is made better by no mean  
But nature makes that mean: so, over that art  
Which you say adds to nature, is an art  
That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry  
A gentler scion to the wildest stock,  
And make conceive a bark of baser kind  
By bud of nobler race: this is an art  
Which does mend nature, change it rather, but  
The art itself is nature.

PERDITA:  
So it is.

POLIXENES:  
Then make your garden rich in gillyvors,  
And do not call them bastards.

PERDITA:  
I'll not put  
The dibble in earth to set one slip of them;  
No more than were I painted I would wish  
This youth should say 'twere well and only therefore  
Desire to breed by me. Here's flowers for you;

Hot lavender, mints, savoury, marjoram;  
The marigold, that goes to bed wi' the sun  
And with him rises weeping: these are flowers  
Of middle summer, and I think they are given  
To men of middle age. You're very welcome.

CAMILLO:

I should leave grazing, were I of your flock,  
And only live by gazing.

PERDITA:

Out, alas!

You'd be so lean, that blasts of January  
Would blow you through and through.  
Now, my fair'st friend,  
I would I had some flowers o' the spring that might  
Become your time of day; and yours, and yours,  
That wear upon your virgin branches yet  
Your maidenheads growing: O Proserpina,  
For the flowers now, that frightened thou let'st fall  
From Dis's waggon! daffodils,  
That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,  
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes  
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses  
That die unmarried, ere they can behold  
Bright Phoebus in his strength--a malady  
Most incident to maids; bold oxlips and  
The crown imperial; lilies of all kinds,  
The flower-de-luce being one! O, these I lack,  
To make you garlands of, and my sweet friend,  
To strew him o'er and o'er!

FLORIZEL:

What, like a corse?

PERDITA:

No, like a bank for love to lie and play on;  
Not like a corse; or if, not to be buried,  
But quick and in mine arms. Come, take your flowers:  
Methinks I play as I have seen them do  
In Whitsun pastorals: sure this robe of mine  
Does change my disposition.

FLORIZEL:

What you do

Still betters what is done. When you speak, sweet.  
I'd have you do it ever: when you sing,  
I'd have you buy and sell so, so give alms,  
Pray so; and, for the ordering your affairs,

To sing them too: when you do dance, I wish you  
A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do  
Nothing but that; move still, still so,  
And own no other function: each your doing,  
So singular in each particular,  
Crowns what you are doing in the present deed,  
That all your acts are queens.

PERDITA:

O Doricles,  
Your praises are too large: but that your youth,  
And the true blood which peepeth fairly through't,  
Do plainly give you out an unstain'd shepherd,  
With wisdom I might fear, my Doricles,  
You woo'd me the false way.

FLORIZEL:

I think you have  
As little skill to fear as I have purpose  
To put you to't. But come; our dance, I pray:  
Your hand, my Perdita: so turtles pair,  
That never mean to part.

PERDITA:

I'll swear for 'em.

POLIXENES:

This is the prettiest low-born lass that ever  
Ran on the green-sward: nothing she does or seems  
But smacks of something greater than herself,  
Too noble for this place.

CAMILLO:

He tells her something  
That makes her blood look out: good sooth, she is  
The queen of curds and cream.

Clown:

Come on, strike up!

DORCAS:

Mopsa must be your mistress: marry, garlic,  
To mend her kissing with!

MOPSA:

Now, in good time!

Clown:

Not a word, a word; we stand upon our manners.  
Come, strike up!



POLIXENES:

Pray, good shepherd, what fair swain is this  
Which dances with your daughter?

Shepherd:

They call him Doricles; and boasts himself  
To have a worthy feeding: but I have it  
Upon his own report and I believe it;  
He looks like sooth. He says he loves my daughter:  
I think so too; for never gazed the moon  
Upon the water as he'll stand and read  
As 'twere my daughter's eyes: and, to be plain.  
I think there is not half a kiss to choose  
Who loves another best.

POLIXENES:

She dances featly.

Shepherd:

So she does any thing; though I report it,  
That should be silent: if young Doricles  
Do light upon her, she shall bring him that  
Which he not dreams of.

Servant:

O master, if you did but hear the pedlar at the  
door, you would never dance again after a tabour and  
pipe; no, the bagpipe could not move you: he sings  
several tunes faster than you'll tell money; he  
utters them as he had eaten ballads and all men's  
ears grew to his tunes.

Clown:

He could never come better; he shall come in. I  
love a ballad but even too well, if it be doleful  
matter merrily set down, or a very pleasant thing  
indeed and sung lamentably.

Servant:

He hath songs for man or woman, of all sizes; no  
milliner can so fit his customers with gloves: he  
has the prettiest love-songs for maids; so without  
bawdry, which is strange; with such delicate  
burthens of dildos and fadings, 'jump her and thump  
her;' and where some stretch-mouthed rascal would,  
as it were, mean mischief and break a foul gap into  
the matter, he makes the maid to answer 'Whoop, do me  
no harm, good man;' puts him off, slights him, with  
'Whoop, do me no harm, good man.'

POLIXENES:

This is a brave fellow.

Clown:

Believe me, thou talkest of an admirable conceited fellow. Has he any unbraided wares?

Servant:

He hath ribbons of an the colours i' the rainbow; points more than all the lawyers in Bohemia can learnedly handle, though they come to him by the gross: inkles, caddisses, cambrics, lawns: why, he sings 'em over as they were gods or goddesses; you would think a smock were a she-angel, he so chants to the sleeve-hand and the work about the square on't.

Clown:

Prithee bring him in; and let him approach singing.

PERDITA:

Forewarn him that he use no scurrilous words in 's tunes.

Clown:

You have of these pedlars, that have more in them than you'd think, sister.

PERDITA:

Ay, good brother, or go about to think.

AUTOLYCUS:

Lawn as white as driven snow;  
Cyprus black as e'er was crow;  
Gloves as sweet as damask roses;  
Masks for faces and for noses;  
Bugle bracelet, necklace amber,  
Perfume for a lady's chamber;  
Golden quoifs and stomachers,  
For my lads to give their dears:  
Pins and poking-sticks of steel,  
What maids lack from head to heel:  
Come buy of me, come; come buy, come buy;  
Buy lads, or else your lasses cry: Come buy.

Clown:

If I were not in love with Mopsa, thou shouldst take no money of me; but being enthralled as I am, it will also be the bondage of certain ribbons and gloves.

MOPSA:

I was promised them against the feast; but they come not too late now.

DORCAS:

He hath promised you more than that, or there be liars.

MOPSA:

He hath paid you all he promised you; may be, he has paid you more, which will shame you to give him again.

Clown:

Is there no manners left among maids? will they wear their plackets where they should bear their faces? Is there not milking-time, when you are going to bed, or kiln-hole, to whistle off these secrets, but you must be tittle-tattling before all our guests? 'tis well they are whispering: clamour your tongues, and not a word more.

MOPSA:

I have done. Come, you promised me a tawdry-lace and a pair of sweet gloves.

Clown:

Have I not told thee how I was cozened by the way and lost all my money?

AUTOLYCUS:

And indeed, sir, there are cozeners abroad; therefore it behoves men to be wary.

Clown:

Fear not thou, man, thou shalt lose nothing here.

AUTOLYCUS:

I hope so, sir; for I have about me many parcels of charge.

Clown:

What hast here? ballads?

MOPSA:

Pray now, buy some: I love a ballad in print o' life, for then we are sure they are true.

AUTOLYCUS:

Here's one to a very doleful tune, how a usurer's wife was brought to bed of twenty money-bags at a burthen and how she longed to eat adders' heads and toads carbonadoed.

MOPSA:

Is it true, think you?

AUTOLYCUS:

Very true, and but a month old.

DORCAS:

Bless me from marrying a usurer!

AUTOLYCUS:

Here's the midwife's name to't, one Mistress Tale-porter, and five or six honest wives that were present. Why should I carry lies abroad?

MOPSA:

Pray you now, buy it.

Clown:

Come on, lay it by: and let's first see moe ballads; we'll buy the other things anon.

AUTOLYCUS:

Here's another ballad of a fish, that appeared upon the coast on Wednesday the four-score of April, forty thousand fathom above water, and sung this ballad against the hard hearts of maids: it was thought she was a woman and was turned into a cold fish for she would not exchange flesh with one that loved her: the ballad is very pitiful and as true.

DORCAS:

Is it true too, think you?

AUTOLYCUS:

Five justices' hands at it, and witnesses more than my pack will hold.

Clown:

Lay it by too: another.

AUTOLYCUS:

This is a merry ballad, but a very pretty one.

MOPSA:

Let's have some merry ones.

AUTOLYCUS:

Why, this is a passing merry one and goes to the tune of 'Two maids wooing a man:' there's scarce a maid westward but she sings it; 'tis in

request, I can tell you.

MOPSA:

We can both sing it: if thou'lt bear a part, thou shalt hear; 'tis in three parts.

DORCAS:

We had the tune on't a month ago.

AUTOLYCUS:

I can bear my part; you must know 'tis my occupation; have at it with you.

AUTOLYCUS:

Get you hence, for I must go  
Where it fits not you to know.

DORCAS:

Whither?

MOPSA:

O, whither?

DORCAS:

Whither?

MOPSA:

It becomes thy oath full well,  
Thou to me thy secrets tell.

DORCAS:

Me too, let me go thither.

MOPSA:

Or thou goest to the orange or mill.

DORCAS:

If to either, thou dost ill.

AUTOLYCUS:

Neither.

DORCAS:

What, neither?

AUTOLYCUS:

Neither.

DORCAS:

Thou hast sworn my love to be.

MOPSA:

Thou hast sworn it more to me:  
Then whither goest? say, whither?

Clown:

We'll have this song out anon by ourselves: my  
father and the gentlemen are in sad talk, and we'll  
not trouble them. Come, bring away thy pack after  
me. Wenches, I'll buy for you both. Pedlar, let's  
have the first choice. Follow me, girls.

AUTOLYCUS:

And you shall pay well for 'em.  
Will you buy any tape,  
Or lace for your cape,  
My dainty duck, my dear-a?  
Any silk, any thread,  
Any toys for your head,  
Of the new'st and finest, finest wear-a?  
Come to the pedlar;  
Money's a medler.  
That doth utter all men's ware-a.

Servant:

Master, there is three carters, three shepherds,  
three neat-herds, three swine-herds, that have made  
themselves all men of hair, they call themselves  
Saltiers, and they have a dance which the wenches  
say is a gallimaufry of gambols, because they are  
not in't; but they themselves are o' the mind, if it  
be not too rough for some that know little but  
bowling, it will please plentifully.

Shepherd:

Away! we'll none on 't: here has been too much  
homely foolery already. I know, sir, we weary you.

POLIXENES:

You weary those that refresh us: pray, let's see  
these four threes of herdsmen.

Servant:

One three of them, by their own report, sir, hath  
danced before the king; and not the worst of the  
three but jumps twelve foot and a half by the squier.

Shepherd:

Leave your prating: since these good men are  
pleased, let them come in; but quickly now.

Servant:

Why, they stay at door, sir.

POLIXENES:

O, father, you'll know more of that hereafter.  
Is it not too far gone? 'Tis time to part them.  
He's simple and tells much.  
How now, fair shepherd!  
Your heart is full of something that does take  
Your mind from feasting. Sooth, when I was young  
And handed love as you do, I was wont  
To load my she with knacks: I would have ransack'd  
The pedlar's silken treasury and have pour'd it  
To her acceptance; you have let him go  
And nothing marted with him. If your lass  
Interpretation should abuse and call this  
Your lack of love or bounty, you were straited  
For a reply, at least if you make a care  
Of happy holding her.

FLORIZEL:

Old sir, I know  
She prizes not such trifles as these are:  
The gifts she looks from me are pack'd and lock'd  
Up in my heart; which I have given already,  
But not deliver'd. O, hear me breathe my life  
Before this ancient sir, who, it should seem,  
Hath sometime loved! I take thy hand, this hand,  
As soft as dove's down and as white as it,  
Or Ethiopian's tooth, or the fann'd  
snow that's bolted  
By the northern blasts twice o'er.

POLIXENES:

What follows this?  
How prettily the young swain seems to wash  
The hand was fair before! I have put you out:  
But to your protestation; let me hear  
What you profess.

FLORIZEL:

Do, and be witness to 't.

POLIXENES:

And this my neighbour too?

FLORIZEL:

And he, and more  
Than he, and men, the earth, the heavens, and all:

That, were I crown'd the most imperial monarch,  
Thereof most worthy, were I the fairest youth  
That ever made eye swerve, had force and knowledge  
More than was ever man's, I would not prize them  
Without her love; for her employ them all;  
Commend them and condemn them to her service  
Or to their own perdition.

POLIXENES:  
Fairly offer'd.

CAMILLO:  
This shows a sound affection.

Shepherd:  
But, my daughter,  
Say you the like to him?

PERDITA:  
I cannot speak  
So well, nothing so well; no, nor mean better:  
By the pattern of mine own thoughts I cut out  
The purity of his.

Shepherd:  
Take hands, a bargain!  
And, friends unknown, you shall bear witness to 't:  
I give my daughter to him, and will make  
Her portion equal his.

FLORIZEL:  
O, that must be  
I' the virtue of your daughter: one being dead,  
I shall have more than you can dream of yet;  
Enough then for your wonder. But, come on,  
Contract us 'fore these witnesses.

Shepherd:  
Come, your hand;  
And, daughter, yours.

POLIXENES:  
Soft, swain, awhile, beseech you;  
Have you a father?

FLORIZEL:  
I have: but what of him?

POLIXENES:  
Knows he of this?



FLORIZEL:

He neither does nor shall.

POLIXENES:

Methinks a father

Is at the nuptial of his son a guest

That best becomes the table. Pray you once more,

Is not your father grown incapable

Of reasonable affairs? is he not stupid

With age and altering rheums? can he speak? hear?

Know man from man? dispute his own estate?

Lies he not bed-rid? and again does nothing

But what he did being childish?

FLORIZEL:

No, good sir;

He has his health and ampler strength indeed

Than most have of his age.

POLIXENES:

By my white beard,

You offer him, if this be so, a wrong

Something unfilial: reason my son

Should choose himself a wife, but as good reason

The father, all whose joy is nothing else

But fair posterity, should hold some counsel

In such a business.

FLORIZEL:

I yield all this;

But for some other reasons, my grave sir,

Which 'tis not fit you know, I not acquaint

My father of this business.

POLIXENES:

Let him know't.

FLORIZEL:

He shall not.

POLIXENES:

Prithee, let him.

FLORIZEL:

No, he must not.

Shepherd:

Let him, my son: he shall not need to grieve

At knowing of thy choice.

FLORIZEL:

Come, come, he must not.  
Mark our contract.

POLIXENES:

Mark your divorce, young sir,  
Whom son I dare not call; thou art too base  
To be acknowledged: thou a sceptre's heir,  
That thus affect'st a sheep-hook! Thou old traitor,  
I am sorry that by hanging thee I can  
But shorten thy life one week. And thou, fresh piece  
Of excellent witchcraft, who of force must know  
The royal fool thou copest with,--

Shepherd:

O, my heart!

POLIXENES:

I'll have thy beauty scratch'd with briers, and made  
More homely than thy state. For thee, fond boy,  
If I may ever know thou dost but sigh  
That thou no more shalt see this knack, as never  
I mean thou shalt, we'll bar thee from succession;  
Not hold thee of our blood, no, not our kin,  
Far than Deucalion off: mark thou my words:  
Follow us to the court. Thou churl, for this time,  
Though full of our displeasure, yet we free thee  
From the dead blow of it. And you, enchantment.--  
Worthy enough a herdsman: yea, him too,  
That makes himself, but for our honour therein,  
Unworthy thee,--if ever henceforth thou  
These rural latches to his entrance open,  
Or hoop his body more with thy embraces,  
I will devise a death as cruel for thee  
As thou art tender to't.

PERDITA:

Even here undone!

I was not much afeard; for once or twice  
I was about to speak and tell him plainly,  
The selfsame sun that shines upon his court  
Hides not his visage from our cottage but  
Looks on alike. Will't please you, sir, be gone?  
I told you what would come of this: beseech you,  
Of your own state take care: this dream of mine,--  
Being now awake, I'll queen it no inch farther,  
But milk my ewes and weep.

CAMILLO:

Why, how now, father!  
Speak ere thou diest.

Shepherd:

I cannot speak, nor think  
Nor dare to know that which I know. O sir!  
You have undone a man of fourscore three,  
That thought to fill his grave in quiet, yea,  
To die upon the bed my father died,  
To lie close by his honest bones: but now  
Some hangman must put on my shroud and lay me  
Where no priest shovels in dust. O cursed wretch,  
That knew'st this was the prince,  
and wouldst adventure  
To mingle faith with him! Undone! undone!  
If I might die within this hour, I have lived  
To die when I desire.

FLORIZEL:

Why look you so upon me?  
I am but sorry, not afeard; delay'd,  
But nothing alter'd: what I was, I am;  
More straining on for plucking back, not following  
My leash unwillingly.

CAMILLO:

Gracious my lord,  
You know your father's temper: at this time  
He will allow no speech, which I do guess  
You do not purpose to him; and as hardly  
Will he endure your sight as yet, I fear:  
Then, till the fury of his highness settle,  
Come not before him.

FLORIZEL:

I not purpose it.  
I think, Camillo?

CAMILLO:

Even he, my lord.

PERDITA:

How often have I told you 'twould be thus!  
How often said, my dignity would last  
But till 'twere known!

FLORIZEL:

It cannot fail but by  
The violation of my faith; and then  
Let nature crush the sides o' the earth together

And mar the seeds within! Lift up thy looks:  
From my succession wipe me, father; I  
Am heir to my affection.

CAMILLO:  
Be advised.

FLORIZEL:  
I am, and by my fancy: if my reason  
Will thereto be obedient, I have reason;  
If not, my senses, better pleased with madness,  
Do bid it welcome.

CAMILLO:  
This is desperate, sir.

FLORIZEL:  
So call it: but it does fulfil my vow;  
I needs must think it honesty. Camillo,  
Not for Bohemia, nor the pomp that may  
Be thereat glean'd, for all the sun sees or  
The close earth wombs or the profound sea hides  
In unknown fathoms, will I break my oath  
To this my fair beloved: therefore, I pray you,  
As you have ever been my father's honour'd friend,  
When he shall miss me,--as, in faith, I mean not  
To see him any more,--cast your good counsels  
Upon his passion; let myself and fortune  
Tug for the time to come. This you may know  
And so deliver, I am put to sea  
With her whom here I cannot hold on shore;  
And most opportune to our need I have  
A vessel rides fast by, but not prepared  
For this design. What course I mean to hold  
Shall nothing benefit your knowledge, nor  
Concern me the reporting.

CAMILLO:  
O my lord!  
I would your spirit were easier for advice,  
Or stronger for your need.

FLORIZEL:  
Hark, Perdita  
I'll hear you by and by.

CAMILLO:  
He's irremovable,  
Resolved for flight. Now were I happy, if  
His going I could frame to serve my turn,

Save him from danger, do him love and honour,  
Purchase the sight again of dear Sicilia  
And that unhappy king, my master, whom  
I so much thirst to see.

FLORIZEL:

Now, good Camillo;  
I am so fraught with curious business that  
I leave out ceremony.

CAMILLO:

Sir, I think  
You have heard of my poor services, i' the love  
That I have borne your father?

FLORIZEL:

Very nobly  
Have you deserved: it is my father's music  
To speak your deeds, not little of his care  
To have them recompensed as thought on.

CAMILLO:

Well, my lord,  
If you may please to think I love the king  
And through him what is nearest to him, which is  
Your gracious self, embrace but my direction:  
If your more ponderous and settled project  
May suffer alteration, on mine honour,  
I'll point you where you shall have such receiving  
As shall become your highness; where you may  
Enjoy your mistress, from the whom, I see,  
There's no disjunction to be made, but by--  
As heavens forefend!--your ruin; marry her,  
And, with my best endeavours in your absence,  
Your discontenting father strive to qualify  
And bring him up to liking.

FLORIZEL:

How, Camillo,  
May this, almost a miracle, be done?  
That I may call thee something more than man  
And after that trust to thee.

CAMILLO:

Have you thought on  
A place whereto you'll go?

FLORIZEL:

Not any yet:  
But as the unthought-on accident is guilty

To what we wildly do, so we profess  
Ourselves to be the slaves of chance and flies  
Of every wind that blows.

CAMILLO:

Then list to me:

This follows, if you will not change your purpose  
But undergo this flight, make for Sicilia,  
And there present yourself and your fair princess,  
For so I see she must be, 'fore Leontes:  
She shall be habited as it becomes  
The partner of your bed. Methinks I see  
Leontes opening his free arms and weeping  
His welcomes forth; asks thee the son forgiveness,  
As 'twere i' the father's person; kisses the hands  
Of your fresh princess; o'er and o'er divides him  
'Twixt his unkindness and his kindness; the one  
He chides to hell and bids the other grow  
Faster than thought or time.

FLORIZEL:

Worthy Camillo,  
What colour for my visitation shall I  
Hold up before him?

CAMILLO:

Sent by the king your father  
To greet him and to give him comforts. Sir,  
The manner of your bearing towards him, with  
What you as from your father shall deliver,  
Things known betwixt us three, I'll write you down:  
The which shall point you forth at every sitting  
What you must say; that he shall not perceive  
But that you have your father's bosom there  
And speak his very heart.

FLORIZEL:

I am bound to you:  
There is some sap in this.

CAMILLO:

A cause more promising  
Than a wild dedication of yourselves  
To unpath'd waters, undream'd shores, most certain  
To miseries enough; no hope to help you,  
But as you shake off one to take another;  
Nothing so certain as your anchors, who  
Do their best office, if they can but stay you  
Where you'll be loath to be: besides you know  
Prosperity's the very bond of love,

Whose fresh complexion and whose heart together  
Affliction alters.

PERDITA:

One of these is true:  
I think affliction may subdue the cheek,  
But not take in the mind.

CAMILLO:

Yea, say you so?  
There shall not at your father's house these  
seven years  
Be born another such.

FLORIZEL:

My good Camillo,  
She is as forward of her breeding as  
She is i' the rear our birth.

CAMILLO:

I cannot say 'tis pity  
She lacks instructions, for she seems a mistress  
To most that teach.

PERDITA:

Your pardon, sir; for this  
I'll blush you thanks.

FLORIZEL:

My prettiest Perdita!  
But O, the thorns we stand upon! Camillo,  
Preserver of my father, now of me,  
The medicine of our house, how shall we do?  
We are not furnish'd like Bohemia's son,  
Nor shall appear in Sicilia.

CAMILLO:

My lord,  
Fear none of this: I think you know my fortunes  
Do all lie there: it shall be so my care  
To have you royally appointed as if  
The scene you play were mine. For instance, sir,  
That you may know you shall not want, one word.

AUTOLYCUS:

Ha, ha! what a fool Honesty is! and Trust, his  
sworn brother, a very simple gentleman! I have sold  
all my trumpery; not a counterfeit stone, not a  
ribbon, glass, pomander, brooch, table-book, ballad,  
knife, tape, glove, shoe-tie, bracelet, horn-ring,

to keep my pack from fasting: they throng who should buy first, as if my trinkets had been hallowed and brought a benediction to the buyer: by which means I saw whose purse was best in picture; and what I saw, to my good use I remembered. My clown, who wants but something to be a reasonable man, grew so in love with the wenches' song, that he would not stir his pettitoes till he had both tune and words; which so drew the rest of the herd to me that all their other senses stuck in ears: you might have pinched a placket, it was senseless; 'twas nothing to geld a codpiece of a purse; I could have filed keys off that hung in chains: no hearing, no feeling, but my sir's song, and admiring the nothing of it. So that in this time of lethargy I picked and cut most of their festival purses; and had not the old man come in with a whoo-bub against his daughter and the king's son and scared my choughs from the chaff, I had not left a purse alive in the whole army.

CAMILLO:

Nay, but my letters, by this means being there  
So soon as you arrive, shall clear that doubt.

FLORIZEL:

And those that you'll procure from King Leontes--

CAMILLO:

Shall satisfy your father.

PERDITA:

Happy be you!  
All that you speak shows fair.

CAMILLO:

Who have we here?  
We'll make an instrument of this, omit  
Nothing may give us aid.

AUTOLYCUS:

If they have overheard me now, why, hanging.

CAMILLO:

How now, good fellow! why shakest thou so? Fear  
not, man; here's no harm intended to thee.

AUTOLYCUS:

I am a poor fellow, sir.



CAMILLO:

Why, be so still; here's nobody will steal that from thee: yet for the outside of thy poverty we must make an exchange; therefore discase thee instantly, --thou must think there's a necessity in't,--and change garments with this gentleman: though the pennyworth on his side be the worst, yet hold thee, there's some boot.

AUTOLYCUS:

I am a poor fellow, sir.  
I know ye well enough.

CAMILLO:

Nay, prithee, dispatch: the gentleman is half flayed already.

AUTOLYCUS:

Are you in earnest, sir?  
I smell the trick on't.

FLORIZEL:

Dispatch, I prithee.

AUTOLYCUS:

Indeed, I have had earnest: but I cannot with conscience take it.

CAMILLO:

Unbuckle, unbuckle.  
Fortunate mistress,--let my prophecy  
Come home to ye!--you must retire yourself  
Into some covert: take your sweetheart's hat  
And pluck it o'er your brows, muffle your face,  
Dismantle you, and, as you can, disliken  
The truth of your own seeming; that you may--  
For I do fear eyes over--to shipboard  
Get undescried.

PERDITA:

I see the play so lies  
That I must bear a part.

CAMILLO:

No remedy.  
Have you done there?

FLORIZEL:

Should I now meet my father,  
He would not call me son.

CAMILLO:

Nay, you shall have no hat.

Come, lady, come. Farewell, my friend.

AUTOLYCUS:

Adieu, sir.

FLORIZEL:

O Perdita, what have we twain forgot!

Pray you, a word.

CAMILLO:

FLORIZEL:

Fortune speed us!

Thus we set on, Camillo, to the sea-side.

CAMILLO:

The swifter speed the better.

AUTOLYCUS:

I understand the business, I hear it: to have an open ear, a quick eye, and a nimble hand, is necessary for a cut-purse; a good nose is requisite also, to smell out work for the other senses. I see this is the time that the unjust man doth thrive. What an exchange had this been without boot! What a boot is here with this exchange! Sure the gods do this year connive at us, and we may do any thing extempore. The prince himself is about a piece of iniquity, stealing away from his father with his clog at his heels: if I thought it were a piece of honesty to acquaint the king withal, I would not do't: I hold it the more knavery to conceal it; and therein am I constant to my profession.

Aside, aside; here is more matter for a hot brain: every lane's end, every shop, church, session, hanging, yields a careful man work.

Clown:

See, see; what a man you are now!

There is no other way but to tell the king she's a changeling and none of your flesh and blood.

Shepherd:

Nay, but hear me.

Clown:

Nay, but hear me.

Shepherd:  
Go to, then.

Clown:  
She being none of your flesh and blood, your flesh and blood has not offended the king; and so your flesh and blood is not to be punished by him. Show those things you found about her, those secret things, all but what she has with her: this being done, let the law go whistle: I warrant you.

Shepherd:  
I will tell the king all, every word, yea, and his son's pranks too; who, I may say, is no honest man, neither to his father nor to me, to go about to make me the king's brother-in-law.

Clown:  
Indeed, brother-in-law was the farthest off you could have been to him and then your blood had been the dearer by I know how much an ounce.

AUTOLYCUS:

Shepherd:  
Well, let us to the king: there is that in this fardel will make him scratch his beard.

AUTOLYCUS:

Clown:  
Pray heartily he be at palace.

AUTOLYCUS:

Shepherd:  
To the palace, an it like your worship.

AUTOLYCUS:  
Your affairs there, what, with whom, the condition of that fardel, the place of your dwelling, your names, your ages, of what having, breeding, and any thing that is fitting to be known, discover.

Clown:  
We are but plain fellows, sir.

AUTOLYCUS:  
A lie; you are rough and hairy. Let me have no

lying: it becomes none but tradesmen, and they often give us soldiers the lie: but we pay them for it with stamped coin, not stabbing steel; therefore they do not give us the lie.

Clown:

Your worship had like to have given us one, if you had not taken yourself with the manner.

Shepherd:

Are you a courtier, an't like you, sir?

AUTOLYCUS:

Whether it like me or no, I am a courtier. Seest thou not the air of the court in these enfoldings? hath not my gait in it the measure of the court? receives not thy nose court-odor from me? reflect I not on thy baseness court-contempt? Thinkest thou, for that I insinuate, or toaze from thee thy business, I am therefore no courtier? I am courtier cap-a-pe; and one that will either push on or pluck back thy business there: whereupon I command thee to open thy affair.

Shepherd:

My business, sir, is to the king.

AUTOLYCUS:

What advocate hast thou to him?

Shepherd:

I know not, an't like you.

Clown:

Advocate's the court-word for a pheasant: say you have none.

Shepherd:

None, sir; I have no pheasant, cock nor hen.

AUTOLYCUS:

How blessed are we that are not simple men!  
Yet nature might have made me as these are,  
Therefore I will not disdain.

Clown:

This cannot be but a great courtier.

Shepherd:

His garments are rich, but he wears

them not handsomely.

Clown:

He seems to be the more noble in being fantastical:  
a great man, I'll warrant; I know by the picking  
on's teeth.

AUTOLYCUS:

The fardel there? what's i' the fardel?  
Wherefore that box?

Shepherd:

Sir, there lies such secrets in this fardel and box,  
which none must know but the king; and which he  
shall know within this hour, if I may come to the  
speech of him.

AUTOLYCUS:

Age, thou hast lost thy labour.

Shepherd:

Why, sir?

AUTOLYCUS:

The king is not at the palace; he is gone aboard a  
new ship to purge melancholy and air himself: for,  
if thou beest capable of things serious, thou must  
know the king is full of grief.

Shepard:

So 'tis said, sir; about his son, that should have  
married a shepherd's daughter.

AUTOLYCUS:

If that shepherd be not in hand-fast, let him fly:  
the curses he shall have, the tortures he shall  
feel, will break the back of man, the heart of monster.

Clown:

Think you so, sir?

AUTOLYCUS:

Not he alone shall suffer what wit can make heavy  
and vengeance bitter; but those that are germane to  
him, though removed fifty times, shall all come  
under the hangman: which though it be great pity,  
yet it is necessary. An old sheep-whistling rogue a  
ram-tender, to offer to have his daughter come into  
grace! Some say he shall be stoned; but that death  
is too soft for him, say I draw our throne into a

sheep-cote! all deaths are too few, the sharpest too easy.

Clown:

Has the old man e'er a son, sir, do you hear. an't like you, sir?

AUTOLYCUS:

He has a son, who shall be flayed alive; then 'nointed over with honey, set on the head of a wasp's nest; then stand till he be three quarters and a dram dead; then recovered again with aqua-vitae or some other hot infusion; then, raw as he is, and in the hottest day prognostication proclaims, shall be set against a brick-wall, the sun looking with a southward eye upon him, where he is to behold him with flies blown to death. But what talk we of these traitorly rascals, whose miseries are to be smiled at, their offences being so capital? Tell me, for you seem to be honest plain men, what you have to the king: being something gently considered, I'll bring you where he is aboard, tender your persons to his presence, whisper him in your behalfs; and if it be in man besides the king to effect your suits, here is man shall do it.

Clown:

He seems to be of great authority: close with him, give him gold; and though authority be a stubborn bear, yet he is oft led by the nose with gold: show the inside of your purse to the outside of his hand, and no more ado. Remember 'stoned,' and 'flayed alive.'

Shepherd:

An't please you, sir, to undertake the business for us, here is that gold I have: I'll make it as much more and leave this young man in pawn till I bring it you.

AUTOLYCUS:

After I have done what I promised?

Shepherd:

Ay, sir.

AUTOLYCUS:

Well, give me the moiety. Are you a party in this business?

Clown:

In some sort, sir: but though my case be a pitiful one, I hope I shall not be flayed out of it.

AUTOLYCUS:

O, that's the case of the shepherd's son: hang him,  
he'll be made an example.

Clown:

Comfort, good comfort! We must to the king and show  
our strange sights: he must know 'tis none of your  
daughter nor my sister; we are gone else. Sir, I  
will give you as much as this old man does when the  
business is performed, and remain, as he says, your  
pawn till it be brought you.

AUTOLYCUS:

I will trust you. Walk before toward the sea-side;  
go on the right hand: I will but look upon the  
hedge and follow you.

Clown:

We are blest in this man, as I may say, even blest.

Shepherd:

Let's before as he bids us: he was provided to do us good.

AUTOLYCUS:

If I had a mind to be honest, I see Fortune would  
not suffer me: she drops booties in my mouth. I am  
courted now with a double occasion, gold and a means  
to do the prince my master good; which who knows how  
that may turn back to my advancement? I will bring  
these two moles, these blind ones, aboard him: if he  
think it fit to shore them again and that the  
complaint they have to the king concerns him  
nothing, let him call me rogue for being so far  
officious; for I am proof against that title and  
what shame else belongs to't. To him will I present  
them: there may be matter in it.

CLEOMENES:

Sir, you have done enough, and have perform'd  
A saint-like sorrow: no fault could you make,  
Which you have not redeem'd; indeed, paid down  
More penitence than done trespass: at the last,  
Do as the heavens have done, forget your evil;  
With them forgive yourself.

LEONTES:

Whilst I remember  
Her and her virtues, I cannot forget  
My blemishes in them, and so still think of

The wrong I did myself; which was so much,  
That heirless it hath made my kingdom and  
Destroy'd the sweet'st companion that e'er man  
Bred his hopes out of.

PAULINA:

True, too true, my lord:  
If, one by one, you wedded all the world,  
Or from the all that are took something good,  
To make a perfect woman, she you kill'd  
Would be unparallel'd.

LEONTES:

I think so. Kill'd!  
She I kill'd! I did so: but thou strikest me  
Sorely, to say I did; it is as bitter  
Upon thy tongue as in my thought: now, good now,  
Say so but seldom.

CLEOMENES:

Not at all, good lady:  
You might have spoken a thousand things that would  
Have done the time more benefit and graced  
Your kindness better.

PAULINA:

You are one of those  
Would have him wed again.

DION:

If you would not so,  
You pity not the state, nor the remembrance  
Of his most sovereign name; consider little  
What dangers, by his highness' fail of issue,  
May drop upon his kingdom and devour  
Uncertain lookers on. What were more holy  
Than to rejoice the former queen is well?  
What holier than, for royalty's repair,  
For present comfort and for future good,  
To bless the bed of majesty again  
With a sweet fellow to't?

PAULINA:

There is none worthy,  
Respecting her that's gone. Besides, the gods  
Will have fulfill'd their secret purposes;  
For has not the divine Apollo said,  
Is't not the tenor of his oracle,  
That King Leontes shall not have an heir  
Till his lost child be found? which that it shall,



Is all as monstrous to our human reason  
As my Antigonus to break his grave  
And come again to me; who, on my life,  
Did perish with the infant. 'Tis your counsel  
My lord should to the heavens be contrary,  
Oppose against their wills.  
Care not for issue;  
The crown will find an heir: great Alexander  
Left his to the worthiest; so his successor  
Was like to be the best.

LEONTES:  
Good Paulina,  
Who hast the memory of Hermione,  
I know, in honour, O, that ever I  
Had squared me to thy counsel! then, even now,  
I might have look'd upon my queen's full eyes,  
Have taken treasure from her lips--

PAULINA:  
And left them  
More rich for what they yielded.

LEONTES:  
Thou speak'st truth.  
No more such wives; therefore, no wife: one worse,  
And better used, would make her sainted spirit  
Again possess her corpse, and on this stage,  
Where we're offenders now, appear soul-vex'd,  
And begin, 'Why to me?'

PAULINA:  
Had she such power,  
She had just cause.

LEONTES:  
She had; and would incense me  
To murder her I married.

PAULINA:  
I should so.  
Were I the ghost that walk'd, I'd bid you mark  
Her eye, and tell me for what dull part in't  
You chose her; then I'd shriek, that even your ears  
Should rift to hear me; and the words that follow'd  
Should be 'Remember mine.'

LEONTES:  
Stars, stars,  
And all eyes else dead coals! Fear thou no wife;

I'll have no wife, Paulina.

PAULINA:

Will you swear  
Never to marry but by my free leave?

LEONTES:

Never, Paulina; so be blest my spirit!

PAULINA:

Then, good my lords, bear witness to his oath.

CLEOMENES:

You tempt him over-much.

PAULINA:

Unless another,  
As like Hermione as is her picture,  
Affront his eye.

CLEOMENES:

Good madam,--

PAULINA:

I have done.  
Yet, if my lord will marry,--if you will, sir,  
No remedy, but you will,--give me the office  
To choose you a queen: she shall not be so young  
As was your former; but she shall be such  
As, walk'd your first queen's ghost,  
it should take joy  
To see her in your arms.

LEONTES:

My true Paulina,  
We shall not marry till thou bid'st us.

PAULINA:

That  
Shall be when your first queen's again in breath;  
Never till then.

Gentleman:

One that gives out himself Prince Florizel,  
Son of Polixenes, with his princess, she  
The fairest I have yet beheld, desires access  
To your high presence.

LEONTES:

What with him? he comes not

Like to his father's greatness: his approach,  
So out of circumstance and sudden, tells us  
'Tis not a visitation framed, but forced  
By need and accident. What train?

Gentleman:  
But few,  
And those but mean.

LEONTES:  
His princess, say you, with him?

Gentleman:  
Ay, the most peerless piece of earth, I think,  
That e'er the sun shone bright on.

PAULINA:  
O Hermione,  
As every present time doth boast itself  
Above a better gone, so must thy grave  
Give way to what's seen now! Sir, you yourself  
Have said and writ so, but your writing now  
Is colder than that theme, 'She had not been,  
Nor was not to be equall'd;'--thus your verse  
Flow'd with her beauty once: 'tis shrewdly ebb'd,  
To say you have seen a better.

Gentleman:  
Pardon, madam:  
The one I have almost forgot,--your pardon,--  
The other, when she has obtain'd your eye,  
Will have your tongue too. This is a creature,  
Would she begin a sect, might quench the zeal  
Of all professors else, make proselytes  
Of who she but bid follow.

PAULINA:  
How! not women?

Gentleman:  
Women will love her, that she is a woman  
More worth than any man; men, that she is  
The rarest of all women.

LEONTES:  
Go, Cleomenes;  
Yourself, assisted with your honour'd friends,  
Bring them to our embracement. Still, 'tis strange  
He thus should steal upon us.

PAULINA:

Had our prince,  
Jewel of children, seen this hour, he had pair'd  
Well with this lord: there was not full a month  
Between their births.

LEONTES:

Prithee, no more; cease; thou know'st  
He dies to me again when talk'd of: sure,  
When I shall see this gentleman, thy speeches  
Will bring me to consider that which may  
Unfurnish me of reason. They are come.  
Your mother was most true to wedlock, prince;  
For she did print your royal father off,  
Conceiving you: were I but twenty-one,  
Your father's image is so hit in you,  
His very air, that I should call you brother,  
As I did him, and speak of something wildly  
By us perform'd before. Most dearly welcome!  
And your fair princess,--goddess!--O, alas!  
I lost a couple, that 'twixt heaven and earth  
Might thus have stood begetting wonder as  
You, gracious couple, do: and then I lost--  
All mine own folly--the society,  
Amity too, of your brave father, whom,  
Though bearing misery, I desire my life  
Once more to look on him.

FLORIZEL:

By his command  
Have I here touch'd Sicilia and from him  
Give you all greetings that a king, at friend,  
Can send his brother: and, but infirmity  
Which waits upon worn times hath something seized  
His wish'd ability, he had himself  
The lands and waters 'twixt your throne and his  
Measured to look upon you; whom he loves--  
He bade me say so--more than all the sceptres  
And those that bear them living.

LEONTES:

O my brother,  
Good gentleman! the wrongs I have done thee stir  
Afresh within me, and these thy offices,  
So rarely kind, are as interpreters  
Of my behind-hand slackness. Welcome hither,  
As is the spring to the earth. And hath he too  
Exposed this paragon to the fearful usage,  
At least ungentle, of the dreadful Neptune,  
To greet a man not worth her pains, much less

The adventure of her person?

FLORIZEL:

Good my lord,  
She came from Libya.

LEONTES:

Where the warlike Smalus,  
That noble honour'd lord, is fear'd and loved?

FLORIZEL:

Most royal sir, from thence; from him, whose daughter  
His tears proclaim'd his, parting with her: thence,  
A prosperous south-wind friendly, we have cross'd,  
To execute the charge my father gave me  
For visiting your highness: my best train  
I have from your Sicilian shores dismiss'd;  
Who for Bohemia bend, to signify  
Not only my success in Libya, sir,  
But my arrival and my wife's in safety  
Here where we are.

LEONTES:

The blessed gods  
Purge all infection from our air whilst you  
Do climate here! You have a holy father,  
A graceful gentleman; against whose person,  
So sacred as it is, I have done sin:  
For which the heavens, taking angry note,  
Have left me issueless; and your father's blest,  
As he from heaven merits it, with you  
Worthy his goodness. What might I have been,  
Might I a son and daughter now have look'd on,  
Such goodly things as you!

Lord:

Most noble sir,  
That which I shall report will bear no credit,  
Were not the proof so nigh. Please you, great sir,  
Bohemia greets you from himself by me;  
Desires you to attach his son, who has--  
His dignity and duty both cast off--  
Fled from his father, from his hopes, and with  
A shepherd's daughter.

LEONTES:

Where's Bohemia? speak.

Lord:

Here in your city; I now came from him:

I speak amazedly; and it becomes  
My marvel and my message. To your court  
Whiles he was hastening, in the chase, it seems,  
Of this fair couple, meets he on the way  
The father of this seeming lady and  
Her brother, having both their country quitted  
With this young prince.

FLORIZEL:  
Camillo has betray'd me;  
Whose honour and whose honesty till now  
Endured all weathers.

Lord:  
Lay't so to his charge:  
He's with the king your father.

LEONTES:  
Who? Camillo?

Lord:  
Camillo, sir; I spake with him; who now  
Has these poor men in question. Never saw I  
Wretches so quake: they kneel, they kiss the earth;  
Forswear themselves as often as they speak:  
Bohemia stops his ears, and threatens them  
With divers deaths in death.

PERDITA:  
O my poor father!  
The heaven sets spies upon us, will not have  
Our contract celebrated.

LEONTES:  
You are married?

FLORIZEL:  
We are not, sir, nor are we like to be;  
The stars, I see, will kiss the valleys first:  
The odds for high and low's alike.

LEONTES:  
My lord,  
Is this the daughter of a king?

FLORIZEL:  
She is,  
When once she is my wife.

LEONTES:

That 'once' I see by your good father's speed  
Will come on very slowly. I am sorry,  
Most sorry, you have broken from his liking  
Where you were tied in duty, and as sorry  
Your choice is not so rich in worth as beauty,  
That you might well enjoy her.

FLORIZEL:

Dear, look up:  
Though Fortune, visible an enemy,  
Should chase us with my father, power no jot  
Hath she to change our loves. Beseech you, sir,  
Remember since you owed no more to time  
Than I do now: with thought of such affections,  
Step forth mine advocate; at your request  
My father will grant precious things as trifles.

LEONTES:

Would he do so, I'd beg your precious mistress,  
Which he counts but a trifle.

PAULINA:

Sir, my liege,  
Your eye hath too much youth in't: not a month  
'Fore your queen died, she was more worth such gazes  
Than what you look on now.

LEONTES:

I thought of her,  
Even in these looks I made.  
But your petition  
Is yet unanswer'd. I will to your father:  
Your honour not o'erthrown by your desires,  
I am friend to them and you: upon which errand  
I now go toward him; therefore follow me  
And mark what way I make: come, good my lord.

AUTOLYCUS:

Beseech you, sir, were you present at this relation?

First Gentleman:

I was by at the opening of the fardel, heard the old  
shepherd deliver the manner how he found it:  
whereupon, after a little amazedness, we were all  
commanded out of the chamber; only this methought I  
heard the shepherd say, he found the child.

AUTOLYCUS:

I would most gladly know the issue of it.

First Gentleman:

I make a broken delivery of the business; but the changes I perceived in the king and Camillo were very notes of admiration: they seemed almost, with staring on one another, to tear the cases of their eyes; there was speech in their dumbness, language in their very gesture; they looked as they had heard of a world ransomed, or one destroyed: a notable passion of wonder appeared in them; but the wisest beholder, that knew no more but seeing, could not say if the importance were joy or sorrow; but in the extremity of the one, it must needs be.

Here comes a gentleman that haply knows more.  
The news, Rogero?

Second Gentleman:

Nothing but bonfires: the oracle is fulfilled; the king's daughter is found: such a deal of wonder is broken out within this hour that ballad-makers cannot be able to express it.

Here comes the Lady Paulina's steward: he can deliver you more. How goes it now, sir? this news which is called true is so like an old tale, that the verity of it is in strong suspicion: has the king found his heir?

Third Gentleman:

Most true, if ever truth were pregnant by circumstance: that which you hear you'll swear you see, there is such unity in the proofs. The mantle of Queen Hermione's, her jewel about the neck of it, the letters of Antigonus found with it which they know to be his character, the majesty of the creature in resemblance of the mother, the affection of nobleness which nature shows above her breeding, and many other evidences proclaim her with all certainty to be the king's daughter. Did you see the meeting of the two kings?

Second Gentleman:

No.

Third Gentleman:

Then have you lost a sight, which was to be seen, cannot be spoken of. There might you have beheld one joy crown another, so and in such manner that it seemed sorrow wept to take leave of them, for their joy waded in tears. There was casting up of eyes, holding up of hands, with countenances of such distraction that they were to be known by garment,



not by favour. Our king, being ready to leap out of himself for joy of his found daughter, as if that joy were now become a loss, cries 'O, thy mother, thy mother!' then asks Bohemia forgiveness; then embraces his son-in-law; then again worries he his daughter with clipping her; now he thanks the old shepherd, which stands by like a weather-bitten conduit of many kings' reigns. I never heard of such another encounter, which lames report to follow it and undoes description to do it.

Second Gentleman:

What, pray you, became of Antigonus, that carried hence the child?

Third Gentleman:

Like an old tale still, which will have matter to rehearse, though credit be asleep and not an ear open. He was torn to pieces with a bear: this avouches the shepherd's son; who has not only his innocence, which seems much, to justify him, but a handkerchief and rings of his that Paulina knows.

First Gentleman:

What became of his bark and his followers?

Third Gentleman:

Wrecked the same instant of their master's death and in the view of the shepherd: so that all the instruments which aided to expose the child were even then lost when it was found. But O, the noble combat that 'twixt joy and sorrow was fought in Paulina! She had one eye declined for the loss of her husband, another elevated that the oracle was fulfilled: she lifted the princess from the earth, and so locks her in embracing, as if she would pin her to her heart that she might no more be in danger of losing.

First Gentleman:

The dignity of this act was worth the audience of kings and princes; for by such was it acted.

Third Gentleman:

One of the prettiest touches of all and that which angled for mine eyes, caught the water though not the fish, was when, at the relation of the queen's death, with the manner how she came to't bravely confessed and lamented by the king, how attentiveness wounded his daughter; till, from one

sign of dolour to another, she did, with an 'Alas,'  
I would fain say, bleed tears, for I am sure my  
heart wept blood. Who was most marble there changed  
colour; some swooned, all sorrowed: if all the world  
could have seen 't, the woe had been universal.

First Gentleman:  
Are they returned to the court?

Third Gentleman:  
No: the princess hearing of her mother's statue,  
which is in the keeping of Paulina,—a piece many  
years in doing and now newly performed by that rare  
Italian master, Julio Romano, who, had he himself  
eternity and could put breath into his work, would  
beguile Nature of her custom, so perfectly he is her  
ape: he so near to Hermione hath done Hermione that  
they say one would speak to her and stand in hope of  
answer: thither with all greediness of affection  
are they gone, and there they intend to sup.

Second Gentleman:  
I thought she had some great matter there in hand;  
for she hath privately twice or thrice a day, ever  
since the death of Hermione, visited that removed  
house. Shall we thither and with our company piece  
the rejoicing?

First Gentleman:  
Who would be thence that has the benefit of access?  
every wink of an eye some new grace will be born:  
our absence makes us unthrifty to our knowledge.  
Let's along.

AUTOLYCUS:  
Now, had I not the dash of my former life in me,  
would preferment drop on my head. I brought the old  
man and his son aboard the prince: told him I heard  
them talk of a fardel and I know not what: but he  
at that time, overfond of the shepherd's daughter,  
so he then took her to be, who began to be much  
sea-sick, and himself little better, extremity of  
weather continuing, this mystery remained  
undiscovered. But 'tis all one to me; for had I  
been the finder out of this secret, it would not  
have relished among my other discredits.  
Here come those I have done good to against my will,  
and already appearing in the blossoms of their fortune.

Shepherd:

Come, boy; I am past moe children, but thy sons and daughters will be all gentlemen born.

Clown:

You are well met, sir. You denied to fight with me this other day, because I was no gentleman born. See you these clothes? say you see them not and think me still no gentleman born: you were best say these robes are not gentlemen born: give me the lie, do, and try whether I am not now a gentleman born.

AUTOLYCUS:

I know you are now, sir, a gentleman born.

Clown:

Ay, and have been so any time these four hours.

Shepherd:

And so have I, boy.

Clown:

So you have: but I was a gentleman born before my father; for the king's son took me by the hand, and called me brother; and then the two kings called my father brother; and then the prince my brother and the princess my sister called my father father; and so we wept, and there was the first gentleman-like tears that ever we shed.

Shepherd:

We may live, son, to shed many more.

Clown:

Ay; or else 'twere hard luck, being in so preposterous estate as we are.

AUTOLYCUS:

I humbly beseech you, sir, to pardon me all the faults I have committed to your worship and to give me your good report to the prince my master.

Shepherd:

Prithee, son, do; for we must be gentle, now we are gentlemen.

Clown:

Thou wilt amend thy life?

AUTOLYCUS:

Ay, an it like your good worship.

Clown:

Give me thy hand: I will swear to the prince thou art as honest a true fellow as any is in Bohemia.

Shepherd:

You may say it, but not swear it.

Clown:

Not swear it, now I am a gentleman? Let boors and franklins say it, I'll swear it.

Shepherd:

How if it be false, son?

Clown:

If it be ne'er so false, a true gentleman may swear it in the behalf of his friend: and I'll swear to the prince thou art a tall fellow of thy hands and that thou wilt not be drunk; but I know thou art no tall fellow of thy hands and that thou wilt be drunk: but I'll swear it, and I would thou wouldst be a tall fellow of thy hands.

AUTOLYCUS:

I will prove so, sir, to my power.

Clown:

Ay, by any means prove a tall fellow: if I do not wonder how thou darest venture to be drunk, not being a tall fellow, trust me not. Hark! the kings and the princes, our kindred, are going to see the queen's picture. Come, follow us: we'll be thy good masters.

LEONTES:

O grave and good Paulina, the great comfort  
That I have had of thee!

PAULINA:

What, sovereign sir,  
I did not well I meant well. All my services  
You have paid home: but that you have vouchsafed,  
With your crown'd brother and these your contracted  
Heirs of your kingdoms, my poor house to visit,  
It is a surplus of your grace, which never  
My life may last to answer.

LEONTES:

O Paulina,

We honour you with trouble: but we came  
To see the statue of our queen: your gallery  
Have we pass'd through, not without much content  
In many singularities; but we saw not  
That which my daughter came to look upon,  
The statue of her mother.

PAULINA:

As she lived peerless,  
So her dead likeness, I do well believe,  
Excels whatever yet you look'd upon  
Or hand of man hath done; therefore I keep it  
Lonely, apart. But here it is: prepare  
To see the life as lively mock'd as ever  
Still sleep mock'd death: behold, and say 'tis well.  
I like your silence, it the more shows off  
Your wonder: but yet speak; first, you, my liege,  
Comes it not something near?

LEONTES:

Her natural posture!  
Chide me, dear stone, that I may say indeed  
Thou art Hermione; or rather, thou art she  
In thy not chiding, for she was as tender  
As infancy and grace. But yet, Paulina,  
Hermione was not so much wrinkled, nothing  
So aged as this seems.

POLIXENES:

O, not by much.

PAULINA:

So much the more our carver's excellence;  
Which lets go by some sixteen years and makes her  
As she lived now.

LEONTES:

As now she might have done,  
So much to my good comfort, as it is  
Now piercing to my soul. O, thus she stood,  
Even with such life of majesty, warm life,  
As now it coldly stands, when first I woo'd her!  
I am ashamed: does not the stone rebuke me  
For being more stone than it? O royal piece,  
There's magic in thy majesty, which has  
My evils conjured to remembrance and  
From thy admiring daughter took the spirits,  
Standing like stone with thee.

PERDITA:

And give me leave,  
And do not say 'tis superstition, that  
I kneel and then implore her blessing. Lady,  
Dear queen, that ended when I but began,  
Give me that hand of yours to kiss.

PAULINA:  
O, patience!  
The statue is but newly fix'd, the colour's Not dry.

CAMILLO:  
My lord, your sorrow was too sore laid on,  
Which sixteen winters cannot blow away,  
So many summers dry; scarce any joy  
Did ever so long live; no sorrow  
But kill'd itself much sooner.

POLIXENES:  
Dear my brother,  
Let him that was the cause of this have power  
To take off so much grief from you as he  
Will piece up in himself.

PAULINA:  
Indeed, my lord,  
If I had thought the sight of my poor image  
Would thus have wrought you,--for the stone is mine--  
I'd not have show'd it.

LEONTES:  
Do not draw the curtain.

PAULINA:  
No longer shall you gaze on't, lest your fancy  
May think anon it moves.

LEONTES:  
Let be, let be.  
Would I were dead, but that, methinks, already--  
What was he that did make it? See, my lord,  
Would you not deem it breathed? and that those veins  
Did verily bear blood?

POLIXENES:  
Masterly done:  
The very life seems warm upon her lip.

LEONTES:  
The fixture of her eye has motion in't,  
As we are mock'd with art.

PAULINA:

I'll draw the curtain:  
My lord's almost so far transported that  
He'll think anon it lives.

LEONTES:

O sweet Paulina,  
Make me to think so twenty years together!  
No settled senses of the world can match  
The pleasure of that madness. Let 't alone.

PAULINA:

I am sorry, sir, I have thus far stirr'd you: but  
I could afflict you farther.

LEONTES:

Do, Paulina;  
For this affliction has a taste as sweet  
As any cordial comfort. Still, methinks,  
There is an air comes from her: what fine chisel  
Could ever yet cut breath? Let no man mock me,  
For I will kiss her.

PAULINA:

Good my lord, forbear:  
The ruddiness upon her lip is wet;  
You'll mar it if you kiss it, stain your own  
With oily painting. Shall I draw the curtain?

LEONTES:

No, not these twenty years.

PERDITA:

So long could I  
Stand by, a looker on.

PAULINA:

Either forbear,  
Quit presently the chapel, or resolve you  
For more amazement. If you can behold it,  
I'll make the statue move indeed, descend  
And take you by the hand; but then you'll think--  
Which I protest against--I am assisted  
By wicked powers.

LEONTES:

What you can make her do,  
I am content to look on: what to speak,  
I am content to hear; for 'tis as easy

To make her speak as move.

PAULINA:

It is required  
You do awake your faith. Then all stand still;  
On: those that think it is unlawful business  
I am about, let them depart.

LEONTES:

Proceed:  
No foot shall stir.

PAULINA:

Music, awake her; strike!  
'Tis time; descend; be stone no more; approach;  
Strike all that look upon with marvel. Come,  
I'll fill your grave up: stir, nay, come away,  
Bequeath to death your numbness, for from him  
Dear life redeems you. You perceive she stirs:  
Start not; her actions shall be holy as  
You hear my spell is lawful: do not shun her  
Until you see her die again; for then  
You kill her double. Nay, present your hand:  
When she was young you woo'd her; now in age  
Is she become the suitor?

LEONTES:

O, she's warm!  
If this be magic, let it be an art  
Lawful as eating.

POLIXENES:

She embraces him.

CAMILLO:

She hangs about his neck:  
If she pertain to life let her speak too.

POLIXENES:

Ay, and make't manifest where she has lived,  
Or how stolen from the dead.

PAULINA:

That she is living,  
Were it but told you, should be hooted at  
Like an old tale: but it appears she lives,  
Though yet she speak not. Mark a little while.  
Please you to interpose, fair madam: kneel  
And pray your mother's blessing. Turn, good lady;  
Our Perdita is found.



HERMIONE:

You gods, look down  
And from your sacred vials pour your graces  
Upon my daughter's head! Tell me, mine own.  
Where hast thou been preserved? where lived? how found  
Thy father's court? for thou shalt hear that I,  
Knowing by Paulina that the oracle  
Gave hope thou wast in being, have preserved  
Myself to see the issue.

PAULINA:

There's time enough for that;  
Lest they desire upon this push to trouble  
Your joys with like relation. Go together,  
You precious winners all; your exultation  
Partake to every one. I, an old turtle,  
Will wing me to some wither'd bough and there  
My mate, that's never to be found again,  
Lament till I am lost.

LEONTES:

O, peace, Paulina!  
Thou shouldst a husband take by my consent,  
As I by thine a wife: this is a match,  
And made between's by vows. Thou hast found mine;  
But how, is to be question'd; for I saw her,  
As I thought, dead, and have in vain said many  
A prayer upon her grave. I'll not seek far--  
For him, I partly know his mind--to find thee  
An honourable husband. Come, Camillo,  
And take her by the hand, whose worth and honesty  
Is richly noted and here justified  
By us, a pair of kings. Let's from this place.  
What! look upon my brother: both your pardons,  
That e'er I put between your holy looks  
My ill suspicion. This is your son-in-law,  
And son unto the king, who, heavens directing,  
Is troth-plight to your daughter. Good Paulina,  
Lead us from hence, where we may leisurely  
Each one demand an answer to his part  
Perform'd in this wide gap of time since first  
We were dissever'd: hastily lead away.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Escalus.

ESCALUS:

My lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Of government the properties to unfold,  
Would seem in me to affect speech and discourse;  
Since I am put to know that your own science  
Exceeds, in that, the lists of all advice  
My strength can give you: then no more remains,  
But that to your sufficiency, as your Worth is able,  
And let them work. The nature of our people,  
Our city's institutions, and the terms  
For common justice, you're as pregnant in  
As art and practise hath enriched any  
That we remember. There is our commission,  
From which we would not have you warp. Call hither,  
I say, bid come before us Angelo.  
What figure of us think you he will bear?  
For you must know, we have with special soul  
Elected him our absence to supply,  
Lent him our terror, dress'd him with our love,  
And given his deputation all the organs  
Of our own power: what think you of it?

ESCALUS:

If any in Vienna be of worth  
To undergo such ample grace and honour,  
It is Lord Angelo.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Look where he comes.

ANGELO:

Always obedient to your grace's will,  
I come to know your pleasure.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Angelo,  
There is a kind of character in thy life,  
That to the observer doth thy history  
Fully unfold. Thyself and thy belongings  
Are not thine own so proper as to waste  
Thyself upon thy virtues, they on thee.  
Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,  
Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues  
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike  
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touch'd  
But to fine issues, nor Nature never lends  
The smallest scruple of her excellence  
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines  
Herself the glory of a creditor,  
Both thanks and use. But I do bend my speech  
To one that can my part in him advertise;

Hold therefore, Angelo:--  
In our remove be thou at full ourself;  
Mortality and mercy in Vienna  
Live in thy tongue and heart: old Escalus,  
Though first in question, is thy secondary.  
Take thy commission.

ANGELO:  
Now, good my lord,  
Let there be some more test made of my metal,  
Before so noble and so great a figure  
Be stamp'd upon it.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
No more evasion:  
We have with a leaven'd and prepared choice  
Proceeded to you; therefore take your honours.  
Our haste from hence is of so quick condition  
That it prefers itself and leaves unquestion'd  
Matters of needful value. We shall write to you,  
As time and our concernings shall importune,  
How it goes with us, and do look to know  
What doth befall you here. So, fare you well;  
To the hopeful execution do I leave you  
Of your commissions.

ANGELO:  
Yet give leave, my lord,  
That we may bring you something on the way.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
My haste may not admit it;  
Nor need you, on mine honour, have to do  
With any scruple; your scope is as mine own  
So to enforce or qualify the laws  
As to your soul seems good. Give me your hand:  
I'll privily away. I love the people,  
But do not like to stage me to their eyes:  
Through it do well, I do not relish well  
Their loud applause and Aves vehement;  
Nor do I think the man of safe discretion  
That does affect it. Once more, fare you well.

ANGELO:  
The heavens give safety to your purposes!

ESCALUS:  
Lead forth and bring you back in happiness!

DUKE:

I thank you. Fare you well.

ESCALUS:

I shall desire you, sir, to give me leave  
To have free speech with you; and it concerns me  
To look into the bottom of my place:  
A power I have, but of what strength and nature  
I am not yet instructed.

ANGELO:

'Tis so with me. Let us withdraw together,  
And we may soon our satisfaction have  
Touching that point.

ESCALUS:

I'll wait upon your honour.

LUCIO:

If the duke with the other dukes come not to  
composition with the King of Hungary, why then all  
the dukes fall upon the king.

First Gentleman:

Heaven grant us its peace, but not the King of  
Hungary's!

Second Gentleman:

Amen.

LUCIO:

Thou concludest like the sanctimonious pirate, that  
went to sea with the Ten Commandments, but scraped  
one out of the table.

Second Gentleman:

'Thou shalt not steal'?

LUCIO:

Ay, that he razed.

First Gentleman:

Why, 'twas a commandment to command the captain and  
all the rest from their functions: they put forth  
to steal. There's not a soldier of us all, that, in  
the thanksgiving before meat, do relish the petition  
well that prays for peace.

Second Gentleman:

I never heard any soldier dislike it.

LUCIO:

I believe thee; for I think thou never wast where grace was said.

Second Gentleman:

No? a dozen times at least.

First Gentleman:

What, in metre?

LUCIO:

In any proportion or in any language.

First Gentleman:

I think, or in any religion.

LUCIO:

Ay, why not? Grace is grace, despite of all controversy: as, for example, thou thyself art a wicked villain, despite of all grace.

First Gentleman:

Well, there went but a pair of shears between us.

LUCIO:

I grant; as there may between the lists and the velvet. Thou art the list.

First Gentleman:

And thou the velvet: thou art good velvet; thou'rt a three-piled piece, I warrant thee: I had as lief be a list of an English kersey as be piled, as thou art piled, for a French velvet. Do I speak feelingly now?

LUCIO:

I think thou dost; and, indeed, with most painful feeling of thy speech: I will, out of thine own confession, learn to begin thy health; but, whilst I live, forget to drink after thee.

First Gentleman:

I think I have done myself wrong, have I not?

Second Gentleman:

Yes, that thou hast, whether thou art tainted or free.

LUCIO:

Behold, behold. where Madam Mitigation comes! I have purchased as many diseases under her roof as come to--

Second Gentleman:  
To what, I pray?

LUCIO:  
Judge.

Second Gentleman:  
To three thousand dolours a year.

First Gentleman:  
Ay, and more.

LUCIO:  
A French crown more.

First Gentleman:  
Thou art always figuring diseases in me; but thou  
art full of error; I am sound.

LUCIO:  
Nay, not as one would say, healthy; but so sound as  
things that are hollow: thy bones are hollow;  
impiety has made a feast of thee.

First Gentleman:  
How now! which of your hips has the most profound sciatica?

MISTRESS OVERDONE:  
Well, well; there's one yonder arrested and carried  
to prison was worth five thousand of you all.

Second Gentleman:  
Who's that, I pray thee?

MISTRESS OVERDONE:  
Marry, sir, that's Claudio, Signior Claudio.

First Gentleman:  
Claudio to prison? 'tis not so.

MISTRESS OVERDONE:  
Nay, but I know 'tis so: I saw him arrested, saw  
him carried away; and, which is more, within these  
three days his head to be chopped off.

LUCIO:  
But, after all this fooling, I would not have it so.  
Art thou sure of this?

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

I am too sure of it: and it is for getting Madam Julietta with child.

LUCIO:

Believe me, this may be: he promised to meet me two hours since, and he was ever precise in promise-keeping.

Second Gentleman:

Besides, you know, it draws something near to the speech we had to such a purpose.

First Gentleman:

But, most of all, agreeing with the proclamation.

LUCIO:

Away! let's go learn the truth of it.

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

Thus, what with the war, what with the sweat, what with the gallows and what with poverty, I am custom-shrunk.

How now! what's the news with you?

POMPEY:

Yonder man is carried to prison.

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

Well; what has he done?

POMPEY:

A woman.

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

But what's his offence?

POMPEY:

Groping for trouts in a peculiar river.

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

What, is there a maid with child by him?

POMPEY:

No, but there's a woman with maid by him. You have not heard of the proclamation, have you?

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

What proclamation, man?

POMPEY:

All houses in the suburbs of Vienna must be plucked down.

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

And what shall become of those in the city?

POMPEY:

They shall stand for seed: they had gone down too,  
but that a wise burgher put in for them.

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

But shall all our houses of resort in the suburbs be  
pulled down?

POMPEY:

To the ground, mistress.

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

Why, here's a change indeed in the commonwealth!  
What shall become of me?

POMPEY:

Come; fear you not: good counsellors lack no  
clients: though you change your place, you need not  
change your trade; I'll be your tapster still.  
Courage! there will be pity taken on you: you that  
have worn your eyes almost out in the service, you  
will be considered.

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

What's to do here, Thomas tapster? let's withdraw.

POMPEY:

Here comes Signior Claudio, led by the provost to  
prison; and there's Madam Juliet.

CLAUDIO:

Fellow, why dost thou show me thus to the world?  
Bear me to prison, where I am committed.

Provost:

I do it not in evil disposition,  
But from Lord Angelo by special charge.

CLAUDIO:

Thus can the demigod Authority  
Make us pay down for our offence by weight  
The words of heaven; on whom it will, it will;  
On whom it will not, so; yet still 'tis just.



LUCIO:

Why, how now, Claudio! whence comes this restraint?

CLAUDIO:

From too much liberty, my Lucio, liberty:  
As surfeit is the father of much fast,  
So every scope by the immoderate use  
Turns to restraint. Our natures do pursue,  
Like rats that ravin down their proper bane,  
A thirsty evil; and when we drink we die.

LUCIO:

If could speak so wisely under an arrest, I would  
send for certain of my creditors: and yet, to say  
the truth, I had as lief have the foppery of freedom  
as the morality of imprisonment. What's thy  
offence, Claudio?

CLAUDIO:

What but to speak of would offend again.

LUCIO:

What, is't murder?

CLAUDIO:

No.

LUCIO:

Lechery?

CLAUDIO:

Call it so.

Provost:

Away, sir! you must go.

CLAUDIO:

One word, good friend. Lucio, a word with you.

LUCIO:

A hundred, if they'll do you any good.  
Is lechery so look'd after?

CLAUDIO:

Thus stands it with me: upon a true contract  
I got possession of Julietta's bed:  
You know the lady; she is fast my wife,  
Save that we do the denunciation lack  
Of outward order: this we came not to,  
Only for propagation of a dower

Remaining in the coffer of her friends,  
From whom we thought it meet to hide our love  
Till time had made them for us. But it chanches  
The stealth of our most mutual entertainment  
With character too gross is writ on Juliet.

LUCIO:  
With child, perhaps?

CLAUDIO:  
Unhappily, even so.  
And the new deputy now for the duke--  
Whether it be the fault and glimpse of newness,  
Or whether that the body public be  
A horse whereon the governor doth ride,  
Who, newly in the seat, that it may know  
He can command, lets it straight feel the spur;  
Whether the tyranny be in his place,  
Or in his emmence that fills it up,  
I stagger in:--but this new governor  
Awakes me all the enrolled penalties  
Which have, like unscour'd armour, hung by the wall  
So long that nineteen zodiacs have gone round  
And none of them been worn; and, for a name,  
Now puts the drowsy and neglected act  
Freshly on me: 'tis surely for a name.

LUCIO:  
I warrant it is: and thy head stands so tickle on  
thy shoulders that a milkmaid, if she be in love,  
may sigh it off. Send after the duke and appeal to  
him.

CLAUDIO:  
I have done so, but he's not to be found.  
I prithee, Lucio, do me this kind service:  
This day my sister should the cloister enter  
And there receive her approbation:  
Acquaint her with the danger of my state:  
Implore her, in my voice, that she make friends  
To the strict deputy; bid herself assay him:  
I have great hope in that; for in her youth  
There is a prone and speechless dialect,  
Such as move men; beside, she hath prosperous art  
When she will play with reason and discourse,  
And well she can persuade.

LUCIO:  
I pray she may; as well for the encouragement of the  
like, which else would stand under grievous

imposition, as for the enjoying of thy life, who I would be sorry should be thus foolishly lost at a game of tick-tack. I'll to her.

CLAUDIO:

I thank you, good friend Lucio.

LUCIO:

Within two hours.

CLAUDIO:

Come, officer, away!

DUKE VINCENTIO:

No, holy father; throw away that thought;  
Believe not that the dribbling dart of love  
Can pierce a complete bosom. Why I desire thee  
To give me secret harbour, hath a purpose  
More grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends  
Of burning youth.

FRIAR THOMAS:

May your grace speak of it?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

My holy sir, none better knows than you  
How I have ever loved the life removed  
And held in idle price to haunt assemblies  
Where youth, and cost, and witless bravery keeps.  
I have deliver'd to Lord Angelo,  
A man of stricture and firm abstinence,  
My absolute power and place here in Vienna,  
And he supposes me travell'd to Poland;  
For so I have strew'd it in the common ear,  
And so it is received. Now, pious sir,  
You will demand of me why I do this?

FRIAR THOMAS:

Gladly, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

We have strict statutes and most biting laws.  
The needful bits and curbs to headstrong weeds,  
Which for this nineteen years we have let slip;  
Even like an o'ergrown lion in a cave,  
That goes not out to prey. Now, as fond fathers,  
Having bound up the threatening twigs of birch,  
Only to stick it in their children's sight  
For terror, not to use, in time the rod  
Becomes more mock'd than fear'd; so our decrees,

Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead;  
And liberty plucks justice by the nose;  
The baby beats the nurse, and quite athwart  
Goes all decorum.

FRIAR THOMAS:

It rested in your grace  
To unloose this tied-up justice when you pleased:  
And it in you more dreadful would have seem'd  
Than in Lord Angelo.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

I do fear, too dreadful:  
Sith 'twas my fault to give the people scope,  
'Twould be my tyranny to strike and gall them  
For what I bid them do: for we bid this be done,  
When evil deeds have their permissive pass  
And not the punishment. Therefore indeed, my father,  
I have on Angelo imposed the office;  
Who may, in the ambush of my name, strike home,  
And yet my nature never in the fight  
To do in slander. And to behold his sway,  
I will, as 'twere a brother of your order,  
Visit both prince and people: therefore, I prithee,  
Supply me with the habit and instruct me  
How I may formally in person bear me  
Like a true friar. More reasons for this action  
At our more leisure shall I render you;  
Only, this one: Lord Angelo is precise;  
Stands at a guard with envy; scarce confesses  
That his blood flows, or that his appetite  
Is more to bread than stone: hence shall we see,  
If power change purpose, what our seemers be.

ISABELLA:

And have you nuns no farther privileges?

FRANCISCA:

Are not these large enough?

ISABELLA:

Yes, truly; I speak not as desiring more;  
But rather wishing a more strict restraint  
Upon the sisterhood, the votarists of Saint Clare.

LUCIO:

ISABELLA:

Who's that which calls?

FRANCISCA:

It is a man's voice. Gentle Isabella,  
Turn you the key, and know his business of him;  
You may, I may not; you are yet unsworn.  
When you have vow'd, you must not speak with men  
But in the presence of the prioress:  
Then, if you speak, you must not show your face,  
Or, if you show your face, you must not speak.  
He calls again; I pray you, answer him.

ISABELLA:

Peace and prosperity! Who is't that calls

LUCIO:

Hail, virgin, if you be, as those cheek-roses  
Proclaim you are no less! Can you so stead me  
As bring me to the sight of Isabella,  
A novice of this place and the fair sister  
To her unhappy brother Claudio?

ISABELLA:

Why 'her unhappy brother'? let me ask,  
The rather for I now must make you know  
I am that Isabella and his sister.

LUCIO:

Gentle and fair, your brother kindly greets you:  
Not to be weary with you, he's in prison.

ISABELLA:

Woe me! for what?

LUCIO:

For that which, if myself might be his judge,  
He should receive his punishment in thanks:  
He hath got his friend with child.

ISABELLA:

Sir, make me not your story.

LUCIO:

It is true.  
I would not--though 'tis my familiar sin  
With maids to seem the lapwing and to jest,  
Tongue far from heart--play with all virgins so:  
I hold you as a thing ensky'd and sainted.  
By your renouncement an immortal spirit,  
And to be talk'd with in sincerity,  
As with a saint.

ISABELLA:

You do blaspheme the good in mocking me.

LUCIO:

Do not believe it. Fewness and truth, 'tis thus:  
Your brother and his lover have embraced:  
As those that feed grow full, as blossoming time  
That from the seedness the bare fallow brings  
To teeming foison, even so her plenteous womb  
Expresseth his full tilth and husbandry.

ISABELLA:

Some one with child by him? My cousin Juliet?

LUCIO:

Is she your cousin?

ISABELLA:

Adoptedly; as school-maids change their names  
By vain though apt affection.

LUCIO:

She it is.

ISABELLA:

O, let him marry her.

LUCIO:

This is the point.  
The duke is very strangely gone from hence;  
Bore many gentlemen, myself being one,  
In hand and hope of action: but we do learn  
By those that know the very nerves of state,  
His givings-out were of an infinite distance  
From his true-meant design. Upon his place,  
And with full line of his authority,  
Governs Lord Angelo; a man whose blood  
Is very snow-broth; one who never feels  
The wanton stings and motions of the sense,  
But doth rebate and blunt his natural edge  
With profits of the mind, study and fast.  
He--to give fear to use and liberty,  
Which have for long run by the hideous law,  
As mice by lions--hath pick'd out an act,  
Under whose heavy sense your brother's life  
Falls into forfeit: he arrests him on it;  
And follows close the rigour of the statute,  
To make him an example. All hope is gone,  
Unless you have the grace by your fair prayer  
To soften Angelo: and that's my pith of business

'Twixt you and your poor brother.

ISABELLA:

Doth he so seek his life?

LUCIO:

Has censured him  
Already; and, as I hear, the provost hath  
A warrant for his execution.

ISABELLA:

Alas! what poor ability's in me  
To do him good?

LUCIO:

Assay the power you have.

ISABELLA:

My power? Alas, I doubt--

LUCIO:

Our doubts are traitors  
And make us lose the good we oft might win  
By fearing to attempt. Go to Lord Angelo,  
And let him learn to know, when maidens sue,  
Men give like gods; but when they weep and kneel,  
All their petitions are as freely theirs  
As they themselves would owe them.

ISABELLA:

I'll see what I can do.

LUCIO:

But speedily.

ISABELLA:

I will about it straight;  
No longer staying but to give the mother  
Notice of my affair. I humbly thank you:  
Commend me to my brother: soon at night  
I'll send him certain word of my success.

LUCIO:

I take my leave of you.

ISABELLA:

Good sir, adieu.

ANGELO:

We must not make a scarecrow of the law,

Setting it up to fear the birds of prey,  
And let it keep one shape, till custom make it  
Their perch and not their terror.

ESCALUS:

Ay, but yet  
Let us be keen, and rather cut a little,  
Than fall, and bruise to death. Alas, this gentleman  
Whom I would save, had a most noble father!  
Let but your honour know,  
Whom I believe to be most strait in virtue,  
That, in the working of your own affections,  
Had time cohered with place or place with wishing,  
Or that the resolute acting of your blood  
Could have attain'd the effect of your own purpose,  
Whether you had not sometime in your life  
Err'd in this point which now you censure him,  
And pull'd the law upon you.

ANGELO:

'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus,  
Another thing to fall. I not deny,  
The jury, passing on the prisoner's life,  
May in the sworn twelve have a thief or two  
Guiltier than him they try. What's open made to justice,  
That justice seizes: what know the laws  
That thieves do pass on thieves? 'Tis very pregnant,  
The jewel that we find, we stoop and take't  
Because we see it; but what we do not see  
We tread upon, and never think of it.  
You may not so extenuate his offence  
For I have had such faults; but rather tell me,  
When I, that censure him, do so offend,  
Let mine own judgment pattern out my death,  
And nothing come in partial. Sir, he must die.

ESCALUS:

Be it as your wisdom will.

ANGELO:

Where is the provost?

Provost:

Here, if it like your honour.

ANGELO:

See that Claudio  
Be executed by nine to-morrow morning:  
Bring him his confessor, let him be prepared;  
For that's the utmost of his pilgrimage.



ESCALUS:

ELBOW:

Come, bring them away: if these be good people in a commonweal that do nothing but use their abuses in common houses, I know no law: bring them away.

ANGELO:

How now, sir! What's your name? and what's the matter?

ELBOW:

If it Please your honour, I am the poor duke's constable, and my name is Elbow: I do lean upon justice, sir, and do bring in here before your good honour two notorious benefactors.

ANGELO:

Benefactors? Well; what benefactors are they? are they not malefactors?

ELBOW:

If it? please your honour, I know not well what they are: but precise villains they are, that I am sure of; and void of all profanation in the world that good Christians ought to have.

ESCALUS:

This comes off well; here's a wise officer.

ANGELO:

Go to: what quality are they of? Elbow is your name? why dost thou not speak, Elbow?

POMPEY:

He cannot, sir; he's out at elbow.

ANGELO:

What are you, sir?

ELBOW:

He, sir! a tapster, sir; parcel-bawd; one that serves a bad woman; whose house, sir, was, as they say, plucked down in the suburbs; and now she professes a hot-house, which, I think, is a very ill house too.

ESCALUS:

How know you that?

ELBOW:

My wife, sir, whom I detest before heaven and your honour,--

ESCALUS:  
How? thy wife?

ELBOW:  
Ay, sir; whom, I thank heaven, is an honest woman,--

ESCALUS:  
Dost thou detest her therefore?

ELBOW:  
I say, sir, I will detest myself also, as well as she, that this house, if it be not a bawd's house, it is pity of her life, for it is a naughty house.

ESCALUS:  
How dost thou know that, constable?

ELBOW:  
Marry, sir, by my wife; who, if she had been a woman cardinally given, might have been accused in fornication, adultery, and all uncleanness there.

ESCALUS:  
By the woman's means?

ELBOW:  
Ay, sir, by Mistress Overdone's means: but as she spit in his face, so she defied him.

POMPEY:  
Sir, if it please your honour, this is not so.

ELBOW:  
Prove it before these varlets here, thou honourable man; prove it.

ESCALUS:  
Do you hear how he misplaces?

POMPEY:  
Sir, she came in great with child; and longing, saving your honour's reverence, for stewed prunes; sir, we had but two in the house, which at that very distant time stood, as it were, in a fruit-dish, a dish of some three-pence; your honours have seen such dishes; they are not China dishes, but very good dishes,--

ESCALUS:

Go to, go to: no matter for the dish, sir.

POMPEY:

No, indeed, sir, not of a pin; you are therein in the right: but to the point. As I say, this Mistress Elbow, being, as I say, with child, and being great-bellied, and longing, as I said, for prunes; and having but two in the dish, as I said, Master Froth here, this very man, having eaten the rest, as I said, and, as I say, paying for them very honestly; for, as you know, Master Froth, I could not give you three-pence again.

FROTH:

No, indeed.

POMPEY:

Very well: you being then, if you be remembered, cracking the stones of the foresaid prunes,--

FROTH:

Ay, so I did indeed.

POMPEY:

Why, very well; I telling you then, if you be remembered, that such a one and such a one were past cure of the thing you wot of, unless they kept very good diet, as I told you,--

FROTH:

All this is true.

POMPEY:

Why, very well, then,--

ESCALUS:

Come, you are a tedious fool: to the purpose. What was done to Elbow's wife, that he hath cause to complain of? Come me to what was done to her.

POMPEY:

Sir, your honour cannot come to that yet.

ESCALUS:

No, sir, nor I mean it not.

POMPEY:

Sir, but you shall come to it, by your honour's leave. And, I beseech you, look into Master Froth

here, sir; a man of four-score pound a year; whose father died at Hallowmas: was't not at Hallowmas, Master Froth?

FROTH:  
All-hallond eve.

POMPEY:  
Why, very well; I hope here be truths. He, sir, sitting, as I say, in a lower chair, sir; 'twas in the Bunch of Grapes, where indeed you have a delight to sit, have you not?

FROTH:  
I have so; because it is an open room and good for winter.

POMPEY:  
Why, very well, then; I hope here be truths.

ANGELO:  
This will last out a night in Russia,  
When nights are longest there: I'll take my leave.  
And leave you to the hearing of the cause;  
Hoping you'll find good cause to whip them all.

ESCALUS:  
I think no less. Good morrow to your lordship.  
Now, sir, come on: what was done to Elbow's wife, once more?

POMPEY:  
Once, sir? there was nothing done to her once.

ELBOW:  
I beseech you, sir, ask him what this man did to my wife.

POMPEY:  
I beseech your honour, ask me.

ESCALUS:  
Well, sir; what did this gentleman to her?

POMPEY:  
I beseech you, sir, look in this gentleman's face.  
Good Master Froth, look upon his honour; 'tis for a good purpose. Doth your honour mark his face?

ESCALUS:  
Ay, sir, very well.

POMPEY:

Nay; I beseech you, mark it well.

ESCALUS:  
Well, I do so.

POMPEY:  
Doth your honour see any harm in his face?

ESCALUS:  
Why, no.

POMPEY:  
I'll be supposed upon a book, his face is the worst thing about him. Good, then; if his face be the worst thing about him, how could Master Froth do the constable's wife any harm? I would know that of your honour.

ESCALUS:  
He's in the right. Constable, what say you to it?

ELBOW:  
First, an it like you, the house is a respected house; next, this is a respected fellow; and his mistress is a respected woman.

POMPEY:  
By this hand, sir, his wife is a more respected person than any of us all.

ELBOW:  
Varlet, thou liest; thou liest, wicked varlet! the time has yet to come that she was ever respected with man, woman, or child.

POMPEY:  
Sir, she was respected with him before he married with her.

ESCALUS:  
Which is the wiser here? Justice or Iniquity? Is this true?

ELBOW:  
O thou caitiff! O thou varlet! O thou wicked Hannibal! I respected with her before I was married to her! If ever I was respected with her, or she with me, let not your worship think me the poor duke's officer. Prove this, thou wicked Hannibal, or I'll have mine action of battery on thee.

ESCALUS:

If he took you a box o' the ear, you might have your action of slander too.

ELBOW:

Marry, I thank your good worship for it. What is't your worship's pleasure I shall do with this wicked caitiff?

ESCALUS:

Truly, officer, because he hath some offences in him that thou wouldst discover if thou couldst, let him continue in his courses till thou knowest what they are.

ELBOW:

Marry, I thank your worship for it. Thou seest, thou wicked varlet, now, what's come upon thee: thou art to continue now, thou varlet; thou art to continue.

ESCALUS:

Where were you born, friend?

FROTH:

Here in Vienna, sir.

ESCALUS:

Are you of fourscore pounds a year?

FROTH:

Yes, an't please you, sir.

ESCALUS:

So. What trade are you of, sir?

POMPHEY:

Tapster; a poor widow's tapster.

ESCALUS:

Your mistress' name?

POMPHEY:

Mistress Overdone.

ESCALUS:

Hath she had any more than one husband?

POMPEY:

Nine, sir; Overdone by the last.

ESCALUS:

Nine! Come hither to me, Master Froth. Master Froth, I would not have you acquainted with tapsters: they will draw you, Master Froth, and you will hang them. Get you gone, and let me hear no more of you.

FROTH:

I thank your worship. For mine own part, I never come into any room in a tap-house, but I am drawn in.

ESCALUS:

Well, no more of it, Master Froth: farewell. Come you hither to me, Master tapster. What's your name, Master tapster?

POMPEY:

Pompey.

ESCALUS:

What else?

POMPEY:

Bum, sir.

ESCALUS:

Troth, and your bum is the greatest thing about you; so that in the beastliest sense you are Pompey the Great. Pompey, you are partly a bawd, Pompey, howsoever you colour it in being a tapster, are you not? come, tell me true: it shall be the better for you.

POMPEY:

Truly, sir, I am a poor fellow that would live.

ESCALUS:

How would you live, Pompey? by being a bawd? What do you think of the trade, Pompey? is it a lawful trade?

POMPEY:

If the law would allow it, sir.

ESCALUS:

But the law will not allow it, Pompey; nor it shall not be allowed in Vienna.

POMPEY:

Does your worship mean to geld and splay all the youth of the city?

ESCALUS:  
No, Pompey.

POMPEY:  
Truly, sir, in my poor opinion, they will to't then.  
If your worship will take order for the drabs and  
the knaves, you need not to fear the bawds.

ESCALUS:  
There are pretty orders beginning, I can tell you:  
it is but heading and hanging.

POMPEY:  
If you head and hang all that offend that way but  
for ten year together, you'll be glad to give out a  
commission for more heads: if this law hold in  
Vienna ten year, I'll rent the fairest house in it  
after three-pence a bay: if you live to see this  
come to pass, say Pompey told you so.

ESCALUS:  
Thank you, good Pompey; and, in requital of your  
prophecy, hark you: I advise you, let me not find  
you before me again upon any complaint whatsoever;  
no, not for dwelling where you do: if I do, Pompey,  
I shall beat you to your tent, and prove a shrewd  
Caesar to you; in plain dealing, Pompey, I shall  
have you whipt: so, for this time, Pompey, fare you well.

POMPEY:  
I thank your worship for your good counsel:  
but I shall follow it as the flesh and fortune shall  
better determine.  
Whip me? No, no; let carman whip his jade:  
The valiant heart is not whipt out of his trade.

ESCALUS:  
Come hither to me, Master Elbow; come hither, Master  
constable. How long have you been in this place of constable?

ELBOW:  
Seven year and a half, sir.

ESCALUS:  
I thought, by your readiness in the office, you had  
continued in it some time. You say, seven years together?

ELBOW:  
And a half, sir.



ESCALUS:

Alas, it hath been great pains to you. They do you wrong to put you so oft upon 't: are there not men in your ward sufficient to serve it?

ELBOW:

Faith, sir, few of any wit in such matters: as they are chosen, they are glad to choose me for them; I do it for some piece of money, and go through with all.

ESCALUS:

Look you bring me in the names of some six or seven, the most sufficient of your parish.

ELBOW:

To your worship's house, sir?

ESCALUS:

To my house. Fare you well.  
What's o'clock, think you?

Justice:

Eleven, sir.

ESCALUS:

I pray you home to dinner with me.

Justice:

I humbly thank you.

ESCALUS:

It grieves me for the death of Claudio;  
But there's no remedy.

Justice:

Lord Angelo is severe.

ESCALUS:

It is but needful:  
Mercy is not itself, that oft looks so;  
Pardon is still the nurse of second woe:  
But yet,--poor Claudio! There is no remedy.  
Come, sir.

Servant:

He's hearing of a cause; he will come straight  
I'll tell him of you.

Provost:

Pray you, do.  
I'll know  
His pleasure; may be he will relent. Alas,  
He hath but as offended in a dream!  
All sects, all ages smack of this vice; and he  
To die for't!

ANGELO:  
Now, what's the matter. Provost?

Provost:  
Is it your will Claudio shall die tomorrow?

ANGELO:  
Did not I tell thee yea? hadst thou not order?  
Why dost thou ask again?

Provost:  
Lest I might be too rash:  
Under your good correction, I have seen,  
When, after execution, judgment hath  
Repented o'er his doom.

ANGELO:  
Go to; let that be mine:  
Do you your office, or give up your place,  
And you shall well be spared.

Provost:  
I crave your honour's pardon.  
What shall be done, sir, with the groaning Juliet?  
She's very near her hour.

ANGELO:  
Dispose of her  
To some more fitter place, and that with speed.

Servant:  
Here is the sister of the man condemn'd  
Desires access to you.

ANGELO:  
Hath he a sister?

Provost:  
Ay, my good lord; a very virtuous maid,  
And to be shortly of a sisterhood,  
If not already.

ANGELO:

Well, let her be admitted.  
See you the fornicatress be removed:  
Let have needful, but not lavish, means;  
There shall be order for't.

Provost:  
God save your honour!

ANGELO:  
Stay a little while.  
You're welcome: what's your will?

ISABELLA:  
I am a woeful suitor to your honour,  
Please but your honour hear me.

ANGELO:  
Well; what's your suit?

ISABELLA:  
There is a vice that most I do abhor,  
And most desire should meet the blow of justice;  
For which I would not plead, but that I must;  
For which I must not plead, but that I am  
At war 'twixt will and will not.

ANGELO:  
Well; the matter?

ISABELLA:  
I have a brother is condemn'd to die:  
I do beseech you, let it be his fault,  
And not my brother.

Provost:

ANGELO:  
Condemn the fault and not the actor of it?  
Why, every fault's condemn'd ere it be done:  
Mine were the very cipher of a function,  
To fine the faults whose fine stands in record,  
And let go by the actor.

ISABELLA:  
O just but severe law!  
I had a brother, then. Heaven keep your honour!

LUCIO:

ISABELLA:

Must he needs die?

ANGELO:  
Maiden, no remedy.

ISABELLA:  
Yes; I do think that you might pardon him,  
And neither heaven nor man grieve at the mercy.

ANGELO:  
I will not do't.

ISABELLA:  
But can you, if you would?

ANGELO:  
Look, what I will not, that I cannot do.

ISABELLA:  
But might you do't, and do the world no wrong,  
If so your heart were touch'd with that remorse  
As mine is to him?

ANGELO:  
He's sentenced; 'tis too late.

LUCIO:

ISABELLA:  
Too late? why, no; I, that do speak a word.  
May call it back again. Well, believe this,  
No ceremony that to great ones 'longs,  
Not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword,  
The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,  
Become them with one half so good a grace  
As mercy does.  
If he had been as you and you as he,  
You would have slipt like him; but he, like you,  
Would not have been so stern.

ANGELO:  
Pray you, be gone.

ISABELLA:  
I would to heaven I had your potency,  
And you were Isabel! should it then be thus?  
No; I would tell what 'twere to be a judge,  
And what a prisoner.

LUCIO:

ANGELO:

Your brother is a forfeit of the law,  
And you but waste your words.

ISABELLA:

Alas, alas!

Why, all the souls that were were forfeit once;  
And He that might the vantage best have took  
Found out the remedy. How would you be,  
If He, which is the top of judgment, should  
But judge you as you are? O, think on that;  
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,  
Like man new made.

ANGELO:

Be you content, fair maid;  
It is the law, not I condemn your brother:  
Were he my kinsman, brother, or my son,  
It should be thus with him: he must die tomorrow.

ISABELLA:

To-morrow! O, that's sudden! Spare him, spare him!  
He's not prepared for death. Even for our kitchens  
We kill the fowl of season: shall we serve heaven  
With less respect than we do minister  
To our gross selves? Good, good my lord, bethink you;  
Who is it that hath died for this offence?  
There's many have committed it.

LUCIO:

ANGELO:

The law hath not been dead, though it hath slept:  
Those many had not dared to do that evil,  
If the first that did the edict infringe  
Had answer'd for his deed: now 'tis awake  
Takes note of what is done; and, like a prophet,  
Looks in a glass, that shows what future evils,  
Either new, or by remissness new-conceived,  
And so in progress to be hatch'd and born,  
Are now to have no successive degrees,  
But, ere they live, to end.

ISABELLA:

Yet show some pity.

ANGELO:

I show it most of all when I show justice;  
For then I pity those I do not know,

Which a dismiss'd offence would after gall;  
And do him right that, answering one foul wrong,  
Lives not to act another. Be satisfied;  
Your brother dies to-morrow; be content.

ISABELLA:

So you must be the first that gives this sentence,  
And he, that suffer's. O, it is excellent  
To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous  
To use it like a giant.

LUCIO:

ISABELLA:

Could great men thunder  
As Jove himself does, Jove would ne'er be quiet,  
For every pelting, petty officer  
Would use his heaven for thunder;  
Nothing but thunder! Merciful Heaven,  
Thou rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt  
Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled oak  
Than the soft myrtle: but man, proud man,  
Drest in a little brief authority,  
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,  
His glassy essence, like an angry ape,  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven  
As make the angels weep; who, with our spleens,  
Would all themselves laugh mortal.

LUCIO:

Provost:

ISABELLA:

We cannot weigh our brother with ourself:  
Great men may jest with saints; 'tis wit in them,  
But in the less foul profanation.

LUCIO:

Thou'rt i' the right, girl; more o, that.

ISABELLA:

That in the captain's but a choleric word,  
Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy.

LUCIO:

ANGELO:

Why do you put these sayings upon me?

ISABELLA:

Because authority, though it err like others,  
Hath yet a kind of medicine in itself,  
That skins the vice o' the top. Go to your bosom;  
Knock there, and ask your heart what it doth know  
That's like my brother's fault: if it confess  
A natural guiltiness such as is his,  
Let it not sound a thought upon your tongue  
Against my brother's life.

ANGELO:

ISABELLA:

Gentle my lord, turn back.

ANGELO:

I will bethink me: come again tomorrow.

ISABELLA:

Hark how I'll bribe you: good my lord, turn back.

ANGELO:

How! bribe me?

ISABELLA:

Ay, with such gifts that heaven shall share with you.

LUCIO:

ISABELLA:

Not with fond shekels of the tested gold,  
Or stones whose rates are either rich or poor  
As fancy values them; but with true prayers  
That shall be up at heaven and enter there  
Ere sun-rise, prayers from preserved souls,  
From fasting maids whose minds are dedicate  
To nothing temporal.

ANGELO:

Well; come to me to-morrow.

LUCIO:

ISABELLA:

Heaven keep your honour safe!

ANGELO:

ISABELLA:

At what hour to-morrow

Shall I attend your lordship?

ANGELO:

At any time 'fore noon.

ISABELLA:

'Save your honour!

ANGELO:

From thee, even from thy virtue!

What's this, what's this? Is this her fault or mine?

The tempter or the tempted, who sins most?

Ha!

Not she: nor doth she tempt: but it is I

That, lying by the violet in the sun,

Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,

Corrupt with virtuous season. Can it be

That modesty may more betray our sense

Than woman's lightness? Having waste ground enough,

Shall we desire to raze the sanctuary

And pitch our evils there? O, fie, fie, fie!

What dost thou, or what art thou, Angelo?

Dost thou desire her foully for those things

That make her good? O, let her brother live!

Thieves for their robbery have authority

When judges steal themselves. What, do I love her,

That I desire to hear her speak again,

And feast upon her eyes? What is't I dream on?

O cunning enemy, that, to catch a saint,

With saints dost bait thy hook! Most dangerous

Is that temptation that doth goad us on

To sin in loving virtue: never could the strumpet,

With all her double vigour, art and nature,

Once stir my temper; but this virtuous maid

Subdues me quite. Even till now,

When men were fond, I smiled and wonder'd how.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Hail to you, provost! so I think you are.

Provost:

I am the provost. What's your will, good friar?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Bound by my charity and my blest order,

I come to visit the afflicted spirits

Here in the prison. Do me the common right

To let me see them and to make me know

The nature of their crimes, that I may minister

To them accordingly.



Provost:

I would do more than that, if more were needful.  
Look, here comes one: a gentlewoman of mine,  
Who, falling in the flaws of her own youth,  
Hath blister'd her report: she is with child;  
And he that got it, sentenced; a young man  
More fit to do another such offence  
Than die for this.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

When must he die?

Provost:

As I do think, to-morrow.  
I have provided for you: stay awhile,  
And you shall be conducted.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Repent you, fair one, of the sin you carry?

JULIET:

I do; and bear the shame most patiently.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

I'll teach you how you shall arraign your conscience,  
And try your penitence, if it be sound,  
Or hollowly put on.

JULIET:

I'll gladly learn.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Love you the man that wrong'd you?

JULIET:

Yes, as I love the woman that wrong'd him.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

So then it seems your most offenceful act  
Was mutually committed?

JULIET:

Mutually.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Then was your sin of heavier kind than his.

JULIET:

I do confess it, and repent it, father.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

'Tis meet so, daughter: but lest you do repent,  
As that the sin hath brought you to this shame,  
Which sorrow is always towards ourselves, not heaven,  
Showing we would not spare heaven as we love it,  
But as we stand in fear,--

JULIET:

I do repent me, as it is an evil,  
And take the shame with joy.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

There rest.  
Your partner, as I hear, must die to-morrow,  
And I am going with instruction to him.  
Grace go with you, Benedicite!

JULIET:

Must die to-morrow! O injurious love,  
That respites me a life, whose very comfort  
Is still a dying horror!

Provost:

'Tis pity of him.

ANGELO:

When I would pray and think, I think and pray  
To several subjects. Heaven hath my empty words;  
Whilst my invention, hearing not my tongue,  
Anchors on Isabel: Heaven in my mouth,  
As if I did but only chew his name;  
And in my heart the strong and swelling evil  
Of my conception. The state, whereon I studied  
Is like a good thing, being often read,  
Grown fear'd and tedious; yea, my gravity,  
Wherein--let no man hear me--I take pride,  
Could I with boot change for an idle plume,  
Which the air beats for vain. O place, O form,  
How often dost thou with thy case, thy habit,  
Wrench awe from fools and tie the wiser souls  
To thy false seeming! Blood, thou art blood:  
Let's write good angel on the devil's horn:  
'Tis not the devil's crest.  
How now! who's there?

Servant:

One Isabel, a sister, desires access to you.

ANGELO:

Teach her the way.  
O heavens!  
Why does my blood thus muster to my heart,  
Making both it unable for itself,  
And dispossessing all my other parts  
Of necessary fitness?  
So play the foolish throngs with one that swoons;  
Come all to help him, and so stop the air  
By which he should revive: and even so  
The general, subject to a well-wish'd king,  
Quit their own part, and in obsequious fondness  
Crowd to his presence, where their untaught love  
Must needs appear offence.  
How now, fair maid?

ISABELLA:  
I am come to know your pleasure.

ANGELO:  
That you might know it, would much better please me  
Than to demand what 'tis. Your brother cannot live.

ISABELLA:  
Even so. Heaven keep your honour!

ANGELO:  
Yet may he live awhile; and, it may be,  
As long as you or I yet he must die.

ISABELLA:  
Under your sentence?

ANGELO:  
Yea.

ISABELLA:  
When, I beseech you? that in his reprieve,  
Longer or shorter, he may be so fitted  
That his soul sicken not.

ANGELO:  
Ha! fie, these filthy vices! It were as good  
To pardon him that hath from nature stolen  
A man already made, as to remit  
Their saucy sweetness that do coin heaven's image  
In stamps that are forbid: 'tis all as easy  
Falsely to take away a life true made  
As to put metal in restrained means  
To make a false one.

ISABELLA:

'Tis set down so in heaven, but not in earth.

ANGELO:

Say you so? then I shall pose you quickly.  
Which had you rather, that the most just law  
Now took your brother's life; or, to redeem him,  
Give up your body to such sweet uncleanness  
As she that he hath stain'd?

ISABELLA:

Sir, believe this,  
I had rather give my body than my soul.

ANGELO:

I talk not of your soul: our compell'd sins  
Stand more for number than for accompt.

ISABELLA:

How say you?

ANGELO:

Nay, I'll not warrant that; for I can speak  
Against the thing I say. Answer to this:  
I, now the voice of the recorded law,  
Pronounce a sentence on your brother's life:  
Might there not be a charity in sin  
To save this brother's life?

ISABELLA:

Please you to do't,  
I'll take it as a peril to my soul,  
It is no sin at all, but charity.

ANGELO:

Pleased you to do't at peril of your soul,  
Were equal poise of sin and charity.

ISABELLA:

That I do beg his life, if it be sin,  
Heaven let me bear it! you granting of my suit,  
If that be sin, I'll make it my morn prayer  
To have it added to the faults of mine,  
And nothing of your answer.

ANGELO:

Nay, but hear me.  
Your sense pursues not mine: either you are ignorant,  
Or seem so craftily; and that's not good.

ISABELLA:

Let me be ignorant, and in nothing good,  
But graciously to know I am no better.

ANGELO:

Thus wisdom wishes to appear most bright  
When it doth tax itself; as these black masks  
Proclaim an enshield beauty ten times louder  
Than beauty could, display'd. But mark me;  
To be received plain, I'll speak more gross:  
Your brother is to die.

ISABELLA:

So.

ANGELO:

And his offence is so, as it appears,  
Accountant to the law upon that pain.

ISABELLA:

True.

ANGELO:

Admit no other way to save his life,--  
As I subscribe not that, nor any other,  
But in the loss of question,--that you, his sister,  
Finding yourself desired of such a person,  
Whose credit with the judge, or own great place,  
Could fetch your brother from the manacles  
Of the all-building law; and that there were  
No earthly mean to save him, but that either  
You must lay down the treasures of your body  
To this supposed, or else to let him suffer;  
What would you do?

ISABELLA:

As much for my poor brother as myself:  
That is, were I under the terms of death,  
The impression of keen whips I'd wear as rubies,  
And strip myself to death, as to a bed  
That longing have been sick for, ere I'd yield  
My body up to shame.

ANGELO:

Then must your brother die.

ISABELLA:

And 'twere the cheaper way:  
Better it were a brother died at once,  
Than that a sister, by redeeming him,

Should die for ever.

ANGELO:

Were not you then as cruel as the sentence  
That you have slander'd so?

ISABELLA:

Ignomy in ransom and free pardon  
Are of two houses: lawful mercy  
Is nothing kin to foul redemption.

ANGELO:

You seem'd of late to make the law a tyrant;  
And rather proved the sliding of your brother  
A merriment than a vice.

ISABELLA:

O, pardon me, my lord; it oft falls out,  
To have what we would have, we speak not what we mean:  
I something do excuse the thing I hate,  
For his advantage that I dearly love.

ANGELO:

We are all frail.

ISABELLA:

Else let my brother die,  
If not a feodary, but only he  
Owe and succeed thy weakness.

ANGELO:

Nay, women are frail too.

ISABELLA:

Ay, as the glasses where they view themselves;  
Which are as easy broke as they make forms.  
Women! Help Heaven! men their creation mar  
In profiting by them. Nay, call us ten times frail;  
For we are soft as our complexions are,  
And credulous to false prints.

ANGELO:

I think it well:  
And from this testimony of your own sex,--  
Since I suppose we are made to be no stronger  
Than faults may shake our frames,--let me be bold;  
I do arrest your words. Be that you are,  
That is, a woman; if you be more, you're none;  
If you be one, as you are well express'd  
By all external warrants, show it now,

By putting on the destined livery.

ISABELLA:

I have no tongue but one: gentle my lord,  
Let me entreat you speak the former language.

ANGELO:

Plainly conceive, I love you.

ISABELLA:

My brother did love Juliet,  
And you tell me that he shall die for it.

ANGELO:

He shall not, Isabel, if you give me love.

ISABELLA:

I know your virtue hath a licence in't,  
Which seems a little fouler than it is,  
To pluck on others.

ANGELO:

Believe me, on mine honour,  
My words express my purpose.

ISABELLA:

Ha! little honour to be much believed,  
And most pernicious purpose! Seeming, seeming!  
I will proclaim thee, Angelo; look for't:  
Sign me a present pardon for my brother,  
Or with an outstretch'd throat I'll tell the world aloud  
What man thou art.

ANGELO:

Who will believe thee, Isabel?  
My unsoil'd name, the austereness of my life,  
My vouch against you, and my place in the state,  
Will so your accusation overweigh,  
That you shall stifle in your own report  
And smell of calumny. I have begun,  
And now I give my sensual race the rein:  
Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite;  
Lay by all nicety and prolixious blushes,  
That banish what they sue for; redeem thy brother  
By yielding up thy body to my will;  
Or else he must not only die the death,  
But thy unkindness shall his death draw out  
To lingering sufferance. Answer me to-morrow,  
Or, by the affection that now guides me most,  
I'll prove a tyrant to him. As for you,

Say what you can, my false o'erweighs your true.

ISABELLA:

To whom should I complain? Did I tell this,  
Who would believe me? O perilous mouths,  
That bear in them one and the self-same tongue,  
Either of condemnation or approof;  
Bidding the law make court'sy to their will:  
Hooking both right and wrong to the appetite,  
To follow as it draws! I'll to my brother:  
Though he hath fallen by prompture of the blood,  
Yet hath he in him such a mind of honour.  
That, had he twenty heads to tender down  
On twenty bloody blocks, he'd yield them up,  
Before his sister should her body stoop  
To such abhorr'd pollution.  
Then, Isabel, live chaste, and, brother, die:  
More than our brother is our chastity.  
I'll tell him yet of Angelo's request,  
And fit his mind to death, for his soul's rest.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

So then you hope of pardon from Lord Angelo?

CLAUDIO:

The miserable have no other medicine  
But only hope:  
I've hope to live, and am prepared to die.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Be absolute for death; either death or life  
Shall thereby be the sweeter. Reason thus with life:  
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing  
That none but fools would keep: a breath thou art,  
Servile to all the skyey influences,  
That dost this habitation, where thou keep'st,  
Hourly afflict: merely, thou art death's fool;  
For him thou labour'st by thy flight to shun  
And yet runn'st toward him still. Thou art not noble;  
For all the accommodations that thou bear'st  
Are nursed by baseness. Thou'rt by no means valiant;  
For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork  
Of a poor worm. Thy best of rest is sleep,  
And that thou oft provokest; yet grossly fear'st  
Thy death, which is no more. Thou art not thyself;  
For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains  
That issue out of dust. Happy thou art not;  
For what thou hast not, still thou strivest to get,  
And what thou hast, forget'st. Thou art not certain;  
For thy complexion shifts to strange effects,



After the moon. If thou art rich, thou'rt poor;  
For, like an ass whose back with ingots bows,  
Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,  
And death unloads thee. Friend hast thou none;  
For thine own bowels, which do call thee sire,  
The mere effusion of thy proper loins,  
Do curse the gout, serpigo, and the rheum,  
For ending thee no sooner. Thou hast nor youth nor age,  
But, as it were, an after-dinner's sleep,  
Dreaming on both; for all thy blessed youth  
Becomes as aged, and doth beg the alms  
Of palsied eld; and when thou art old and rich,  
Thou hast neither heat, affection, limb, nor beauty,  
To make thy riches pleasant. What's yet in this  
That bears the name of life? Yet in this life  
Lie hid more thousand deaths: yet death we fear,  
That makes these odds all even.

CLAUDIO:

I humbly thank you.  
To sue to live, I find I seek to die;  
And, seeking death, find life: let it come on.

ISABELLA:

Provost:  
Who's there? come in: the wish deserves a welcome.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Dear sir, ere long I'll visit you again.

CLAUDIO:  
Most holy sir, I thank you.

ISABELLA:  
My business is a word or two with Claudio.

Provost:  
And very welcome. Look, signior, here's your sister.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Provost, a word with you.

Provost:  
As many as you please.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Bring me to hear them speak, where I may be concealed.

CLAUDIO:

Now, sister, what's the comfort?

ISABELLA:

Why,

As all comforts are; most good, most good indeed.  
Lord Angelo, having affairs to heaven,  
Intends you for his swift ambassador,  
Where you shall be an everlasting leiger:  
Therefore your best appointment make with speed;  
To-morrow you set on.

CLAUDIO:

Is there no remedy?

ISABELLA:

None, but such remedy as, to save a head,  
To cleave a heart in twain.

CLAUDIO:

But is there any?

ISABELLA:

Yes, brother, you may live:  
There is a devilish mercy in the judge,  
If you'll implore it, that will free your life,  
But fetter you till death.

CLAUDIO:

Perpetual durance?

ISABELLA:

Ay, just; perpetual durance, a restraint,  
Though all the world's vastidity you had,  
To a determined scope.

CLAUDIO:

But in what nature?

ISABELLA:

In such a one as, you consenting to't,  
Would bark your honour from that trunk you bear,  
And leave you naked.

CLAUDIO:

Let me know the point.

ISABELLA:

O, I do fear thee, Claudio; and I quake,  
Lest thou a feverous life shouldst entertain,  
And six or seven winters more respect

Than a perpetual honour. Darest thou die?  
The sense of death is most in apprehension;  
And the poor beetle, that we tread upon,  
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great  
As when a giant dies.

CLAUDIO:

Why give you me this shame?  
Think you I can a resolution fetch  
From flowery tenderness? If I must die,  
I will encounter darkness as a bride,  
And hug it in mine arms.

ISABELLA:

There spake my brother; there my father's grave  
Did utter forth a voice. Yes, thou must die:  
Thou art too noble to conserve a life  
In base appliances. This outward-sainted deputy,  
Whose settled visage and deliberate word  
Nips youth i' the head and follies doth emmew  
As falcon doth the fowl, is yet a devil  
His filth within being cast, he would appear  
A pond as deep as hell.

CLAUDIO:

The prenzie Angelo!

ISABELLA:

O, 'tis the cunning livery of hell,  
The damned'st body to invest and cover  
In prenzie guards! Dost thou think, Claudio?  
If I would yield him my virginity,  
Thou mightst be freed.

CLAUDIO:

O heavens! it cannot be.

ISABELLA:

Yes, he would give't thee, from this rank offence,  
So to offend him still. This night's the time  
That I should do what I abhor to name,  
Or else thou diest to-morrow.

CLAUDIO:

Thou shalt not do't.

ISABELLA:

O, were it but my life,  
I'd throw it down for your deliverance  
As frankly as a pin.

CLAUDIO:  
Thanks, dear Isabel.

ISABELLA:  
Be ready, Claudio, for your death tomorrow.

CLAUDIO:  
Yes. Has he affections in him,  
That thus can make him bite the law by the nose,  
When he would force it? Sure, it is no sin,  
Or of the deadly seven, it is the least.

ISABELLA:  
Which is the least?

CLAUDIO:  
If it were damnable, he being so wise,  
Why would he for the momentary trick  
Be perdurably fined? O Isabel!

ISABELLA:  
What says my brother?

CLAUDIO:  
Death is a fearful thing.

ISABELLA:  
And shamed life a hateful.

CLAUDIO:  
Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;  
To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;  
This sensible warm motion to become  
A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit  
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice;  
To be imprison'd in the viewless winds,  
And blown with restless violence round about  
The pendent world; or to be worse than worst  
Of those that lawless and incertain thought  
Imagine howling: 'tis too horrible!  
The weariest and most loathed worldly life  
That age, ache, penury and imprisonment  
Can lay on nature is a paradise  
To what we fear of death.

ISABELLA:  
Alas, alas!

CLAUDIO:

Sweet sister, let me live:  
What sin you do to save a brother's life,  
Nature dispenses with the deed so far  
That it becomes a virtue.

ISABELLA:

O you beast!  
O faithless coward! O dishonest wretch!  
Wilt thou be made a man out of my vice?  
Is't not a kind of incest, to take life  
From thine own sister's shame? What should I think?  
Heaven shield my mother play'd my father fair!  
For such a warped slip of wilderness  
Ne'er issued from his blood. Take my defiance!  
Die, perish! Might but my bending down  
Reprieve thee from thy fate, it should proceed:  
I'll pray a thousand prayers for thy death,  
No word to save thee.

CLAUDIO:

Nay, hear me, Isabel.

ISABELLA:

O, fie, fie, fie!  
Thy sin's not accidental, but a trade.  
Mercy to thee would prove itself a bawd:  
'Tis best thou diest quickly.

CLAUDIO:

O hear me, Isabella!

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Vouchsafe a word, young sister, but one word.

ISABELLA:

What is your will?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Might you dispense with your leisure, I would by and  
by have some speech with you: the satisfaction I  
would require is likewise your own benefit.

ISABELLA:

I have no superfluous leisure; my stay must be  
stolen out of other affairs; but I will attend you awhile.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Son, I have overheard what hath passed between you  
and your sister. Angelo had never the purpose to

corrupt her; only he hath made an essay of her virtue to practise his judgment with the disposition of natures: she, having the truth of honour in her, hath made him that gracious denial which he is most glad to receive. I am confessor to Angelo, and I know this to be true; therefore prepare yourself to death: do not satisfy your resolution with hopes that are fallible: tomorrow you must die; go to your knees and make ready.

CLAUDIO:

Let me ask my sister pardon. I am so out of love with life that I will sue to be rid of it.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Hold you there: farewell.  
Provost, a word with you!

Provost:

What's your will, father

DUKE VINCENTIO:

That now you are come, you will be gone. Leave me awhile with the maid: my mind promises with my habit no loss shall touch her by my company.

Provost:

In good time.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

The hand that hath made you fair hath made you good: the goodness that is cheap in beauty makes beauty brief in goodness; but grace, being the soul of your complexion, shall keep the body of it ever fair. The assault that Angelo hath made to you, fortune hath conveyed to my understanding; and, but that frailty hath examples for his falling, I should wonder at Angelo. How will you do to content this substitute, and to save your brother?

ISABELLA:

I am now going to resolve him: I had rather my brother die by the law than my son should be unlawfully born. But, O, how much is the good duke deceived in Angelo! If ever he return and I can speak to him, I will open my lips in vain, or discover his government.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

That shall not be much amiss: Yet, as the matter

now stands, he will avoid your accusation; he made trial of you only. Therefore fasten your ear on my advisings: to the love I have in doing good a remedy presents itself. I do make myself believe that you may most uprightously do a poor wronged lady a merited benefit; redeem your brother from the angry law; do no stain to your own gracious person; and much please the absent duke, if peradventure he shall ever return to have hearing of this business.

ISABELLA:

Let me hear you speak farther. I have spirit to do anything that appears not foul in the truth of my spirit.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Virtue is bold, and goodness never fearful. Have you not heard speak of Mariana, the sister of Frederick the great soldier who miscarried at sea?

ISABELLA:

I have heard of the lady, and good words went with her name.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

She should this Angelo have married; was affianced to her by oath, and the nuptial appointed: between which time of the contract and limit of the solemnity, her brother Frederick was wrecked at sea, having in that perished vessel the dowry of his sister. But mark how heavily this befell to the poor gentlewoman: there she lost a noble and renowned brother, in his love toward her ever most kind and natural; with him, the portion and sinew of her fortune, her marriage-dowry; with both, her combinate husband, this well-seeming Angelo.

ISABELLA:

Can this be so? did Angelo so leave her?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Left her in her tears, and dried not one of them with his comfort; swallowed his vows whole, pretending in her discoveries of dishonour: in few, bestowed her on her own lamentation, which she yet wears for his sake; and he, a marble to her tears, is washed with them, but relents not.

ISABELLA:

What a merit were it in death to take this poor maid from the world! What corruption in this life, that

it will let this man live! But how out of this can she avail?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

It is a rupture that you may easily heal: and the cure of it not only saves your brother, but keeps you from dishonour in doing it.

ISABELLA:

Show me how, good father.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

This forenamed maid hath yet in her the continuance of her first affection: his unjust unkindness, that in all reason should have quenched her love, hath, like an impediment in the current, made it more violent and unruly. Go you to Angelo; answer his requiring with a plausible obedience; agree with his demands to the point; only refer yourself to this advantage, first, that your stay with him may not be long; that the time may have all shadow and silence in it; and the place answer to convenience. This being granted in course,—and now follows all,—we shall advise this wronged maid to stead up your appointment, go in your place; if the encounter acknowledge itself hereafter, it may compel him to her recompense: and here, by this, is your brother saved, your honour untainted, the poor Mariana advantaged, and the corrupt deputy scaled. The maid will I frame and make fit for his attempt. If you think well to carry this as you may, the doubleness of the benefit defends the deceit from reproof. What think you of it?

ISABELLA:

The image of it gives me content already; and I trust it will grow to a most prosperous perfection.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

It lies much in your holding up. Haste you speedily to Angelo: if for this night he entreat you to his bed, give him promise of satisfaction. I will presently to Saint Luke's: there, at the moated grange, resides this dejected Mariana. At that place call upon me; and dispatch with Angelo, that it may be quickly.

ISABELLA:

I thank you for this comfort. Fare you well, good father.

ELBOW:



Nay, if there be no remedy for it, but that you will  
needs buy and sell men and women like beasts, we  
shall have all the world drink brown and white bastard.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

O heavens! what stuff is here

POMPEY:

'Twas never merry world since, of two usuries, the  
merriest was put down, and the worser allowed by  
order of law a furred gown to keep him warm; and  
furred with fox and lamb-skins too, to signify, that  
craft, being richer than innocency, stands for the facing.

ELBOW:

Come your way, sir. 'Bless you, good father friar.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

And you, good brother father. What offence hath  
this man made you, sir?

ELBOW:

Marry, sir, he hath offended the law: and, sir, we  
take him to be a thief too, sir; for we have found  
upon him, sir, a strange picklock, which we have  
sent to the deputy.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Fie, sirrah! a bawd, a wicked bawd!  
The evil that thou causest to be done,  
That is thy means to live. Do thou but think  
What 'tis to cram a maw or clothe a back  
From such a filthy vice: say to thyself,  
From their abominable and beastly touches  
I drink, I eat, array myself, and live.  
Canst thou believe thy living is a life,  
So stinkingly depending? Go mend, go mend.

POMPEY:

Indeed, it does stink in some sort, sir; but yet,  
sir, I would prove--

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Nay, if the devil have given thee proofs for sin,  
Thou wilt prove his. Take him to prison, officer:  
Correction and instruction must both work  
Ere this rude beast will profit.

ELBOW:

He must before the deputy, sir; he has given him

warning: the deputy cannot abide a whoremaster: if he be a whoremonger, and comes before him, he were as good go a mile on his errand.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

That we were all, as some would seem to be,  
From our faults, as faults from seeming, free!

ELBOW:

His neck will come to your waist,--a cord, sir.

POMPEY:

I spy comfort; I cry bail. Here's a gentleman and a friend of mine.

LUCIO:

How now, noble Pompey! What, at the wheels of Caesar? art thou led in triumph? What, is there none of Pygmalion's images, newly made woman, to be had now, for putting the hand in the pocket and extracting it clutch'd? What reply, ha? What sayest thou to this tune, matter and method? Is't not drowned i' the last rain, ha? What sayest thou, Trot? Is the world as it was, man? Which is the way? Is it sad, and few words? or how? The trick of it?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Still thus, and thus; still worse!

LUCIO:

How doth my dear morsel, thy mistress? Procures she still, ha?

POMPEY:

Troth, sir, she hath eaten up all her beef, and she is herself in the tub.

LUCIO:

Why, 'tis good; it is the right of it; it must be so: ever your fresh whore and your powdered bawd: an unshunned consequence; it must be so. Art going to prison, Pompey?

POMPEY:

Yes, faith, sir.

LUCIO:

Why, 'tis not amiss, Pompey. Farewell: go, say I sent thee thither. For debt, Pompey? or how?

ELBOW:

For being a bawd, for being a bawd.

LUCIO:

Well, then, imprison him: if imprisonment be the due of a bawd, why, 'tis his right: bawd is he doubtless, and of antiquity too; bawd-born. Farewell, good Pompey. Commend me to the prison, Pompey: you will turn good husband now, Pompey; you will keep the house.

POMPEY:

I hope, sir, your good worship will be my bail.

LUCIO:

No, indeed, will I not, Pompey; it is not the wear. I will pray, Pompey, to increase your bondage: If you take it not patiently, why, your mettle is the more. Adieu, trusty Pompey. 'Bless you, friar.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

And you.

LUCIO:

Does Bridget paint still, Pompey, ha?

ELBOW:

Come your ways, sir; come.

POMPEY:

You will not bail me, then, sir?

LUCIO:

Then, Pompey, nor now. What news abroad, friar? what news?

ELBOW:

Come your ways, sir; come.

LUCIO:

Go to kennel, Pompey; go.  
What news, friar, of the duke?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

I know none. Can you tell me of any?

LUCIO:

Some say he is with the Emperor of Russia; other some, he is in Rome: but where is he, think you?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

I know not where; but wheresoever, I wish him well.

LUCIO:

It was a mad fantastical trick of him to steal from the state, and usurp the beggary he was never born to. Lord Angelo dukes it well in his absence; he puts transgression to 't.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

He does well in 't.

LUCIO:

A little more lenity to lechery would do no harm in him: something too crabbed that way, friar.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

It is too general a vice, and severity must cure it.

LUCIO:

Yes, in good sooth, the vice is of a great kindred; it is well allied: but it is impossible to extirp it quite, friar, till eating and drinking be put down. They say this Angelo was not made by man and woman after this downright way of creation: is it true, think you?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

How should he be made, then?

LUCIO:

Some report a sea-maid spawned him; some, that he was begot between two stock-fishes. But it is certain that when he makes water his urine is congealed ice; that I know to be true: and he is a motion generative; that's infallible.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

You are pleasant, sir, and speak apace.

LUCIO:

Why, what a ruthless thing is this in him, for the rebellion of a codpiece to take away the life of a man! Would the duke that is absent have done this? Ere he would have hanged a man for the getting a hundred bastards, he would have paid for the nursing a thousand: he had some feeling of the sport: he knew the service, and that instructed him to mercy.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

I never heard the absent duke much detected for women; he was not inclined that way.

LUCIO:

O, sir, you are deceived.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

'Tis not possible.

LUCIO:

Who, not the duke? yes, your beggar of fifty; and his use was to put a ducat in her clack-dish: the duke had crotchets in him. He would be drunk too; that let me inform you.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

You do him wrong, surely.

LUCIO:

Sir, I was an inward of his. A shy fellow was the duke: and I believe I know the cause of his withdrawing.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

What, I prithee, might be the cause?

LUCIO:

No, pardon; 'tis a secret must be locked within the teeth and the lips: but this I can let you understand, the greater file of the subject held the duke to be wise.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Wise! why, no question but he was.

LUCIO:

A very superficial, ignorant, unweighing fellow.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Either this is the envy in you, folly, or mistaking: the very stream of his life and the business he hath helmed must upon a warranted need give him a better proclamation. Let him be but testimonied in his own bringings-forth, and he shall appear to the envious a scholar, a statesman and a soldier. Therefore you speak unskilfully: or if your knowledge be more it is much darkened in your malice.

LUCIO:

Sir, I know him, and I love him.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with dearer love.

LUCIO:

Come, sir, I know what I know.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

I can hardly believe that, since you know not what you speak. But, if ever the duke return, as our prayers are he may, let me desire you to make your answer before him. If it be honest you have spoke, you have courage to maintain it: I am bound to call upon you; and, I pray you, your name?

LUCIO:

Sir, my name is Lucio; well known to the duke.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

He shall know you better, sir, if I may live to report you.

LUCIO:

I fear you not.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

O, you hope the duke will return no more; or you imagine me too unhurtful an opposite. But indeed I can do you little harm; you'll forswear this again.

LUCIO:

I'll be hanged first: thou art deceived in me, friar. But no more of this. Canst thou tell if Claudio die to-morrow or no?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Why should he die, sir?

LUCIO:

Why? For filling a bottle with a tundish. I would the duke we talk of were returned again: the ungenitured agent will unpeople the province with continency; sparrows must not build in his house-eaves, because they are lecherous. The duke yet would have dark deeds darkly answered; he would never bring them to light: would he were returned! Marry, this Claudio is condemned for untrussing. Farewell, good friar: I prithee, pray for me. The

duke, I say to thee again, would eat mutton on Fridays. He's not past it yet, and I say to thee, he would mouth with a beggar, though she smelt brown bread and garlic: say that I said so. Farewell.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

No might nor greatness in mortality  
Can censure 'scape; back-wounding calumny  
The whitest virtue strikes. What king so strong  
Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue?  
But who comes here?

ESCALUS:

Go; away with her to prison!

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

Good my lord, be good to me; your honour is accounted  
a merciful man; good my lord.

ESCALUS:

Double and treble admonition, and still forfeit in  
the same kind! This would make mercy swear and play  
the tyrant.

Provost:

A bawd of eleven years' continuance, may it please  
your honour.

MISTRESS OVERDONE:

My lord, this is one Lucio's information against me.  
Mistress Kate Keepdown was with child by him in the  
duke's time; he promised her marriage: his child  
is a year and a quarter old, come Philip and Jacob:  
I have kept it myself; and see how he goes about to abuse me!

ESCALUS:

That fellow is a fellow of much licence: let him be  
called before us. Away with her to prison! Go to;  
no more words.

Provost, my brother Angelo will not be altered;  
Claudio must die to-morrow: let him be furnished  
with divines, and have all charitable preparation.  
if my brother wrought by my pity, it should not be  
so with him.

Provost:

So please you, this friar hath been with him, and  
advised him for the entertainment of death.

ESCALUS:

Good even, good father.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Bliss and goodness on you!

ESCALUS:

Of whence are you?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Not of this country, though my chance is now  
To use it for my time: I am a brother  
Of gracious order, late come from the See  
In special business from his holiness.

ESCALUS:

What news abroad i' the world?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

None, but that there is so great a fever on  
goodness, that the dissolution of it must cure it:  
novelty is only in request; and it is as dangerous  
to be aged in any kind of course, as it is virtuous  
to be constant in any undertaking. There is scarce  
truth enough alive to make societies secure; but  
security enough to make fellowships accurst: much  
upon this riddle runs the wisdom of the world. This  
news is old enough, yet it is every day's news. I  
pray you, sir, of what disposition was the duke?

ESCALUS:

One that, above all other strifes, contended  
especially to know himself.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

What pleasure was he given to?

ESCALUS:

Rather rejoicing to see another merry, than merry at  
any thing which professed to make him rejoice: a  
gentleman of all temperance. But leave we him to  
his events, with a prayer they may prove prosperous;  
and let me desire to know how you find Claudio  
prepared. I am made to understand that you have  
lent him visitation.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

He professes to have received no sinister measure  
from his judge, but most willingly humbles himself  
to the determination of justice: yet had he framed  
to himself, by the instruction of his frailty, many



deceiving promises of life; which I by my good  
leisure have discredited to him, and now is he  
resolved to die.

ESCALUS:

You have paid the heavens your function, and the  
prisoner the very debt of your calling. I have  
laboured for the poor gentleman to the extremest  
shore of my modesty: but my brother justice have I  
found so severe, that he hath forced me to tell him  
he is indeed Justice.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

If his own life answer the straitness of his  
proceeding, it shall become him well; wherein if he  
chance to fail, he hath sentenced himself.

ESCALUS:

I am going to visit the prisoner. Fare you well.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Peace be with you!  
He who the sword of heaven will bear  
Should be as holy as severe;  
Pattern in himself to know,  
Grace to stand, and virtue go;  
More nor less to others paying  
Than by self-offences weighing.  
Shame to him whose cruel striking  
Kills for faults of his own liking!  
Twice treble shame on Angelo,  
To weed my vice and let his grow!  
O, what may man within him hide,  
Though angel on the outward side!  
How may likeness made in crimes,  
Making practise on the times,  
To draw with idle spiders' strings  
Most ponderous and substantial things!  
Craft against vice I must apply:  
With Angelo to-night shall lie  
His old betrothed but despised;  
So disguise shall, by the disguised,  
Pay with falsehood false exacting,  
And perform an old contracting.

MARIANA:

Break off thy song, and haste thee quick away:  
Here comes a man of comfort, whose advice  
Hath often still'd my brawling discontent.

I cry you mercy, sir; and well could wish  
You had not found me here so musical:  
Let me excuse me, and believe me so,  
My mirth it much displeased, but pleased my woe.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

'Tis good; though music oft hath such a charm  
To make bad good, and good provoke to harm.  
I pray, you, tell me, hath any body inquired  
for me here to-day? much upon this time have  
I promised here to meet.

MARIANA:

You have not been inquired after:  
I have sat here all day.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

I do constantly believe you. The time is come even  
now. I shall crave your forbearance a little: may  
be I will call upon you anon, for some advantage to yourself.

MARIANA:

I am always bound to you.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Very well met, and well come.  
What is the news from this good deputy?

ISABELLA:

He hath a garden circummured with brick,  
Whose western side is with a vineyard back'd;  
And to that vineyard is a planched gate,  
That makes his opening with this bigger key:  
This other doth command a little door  
Which from the vineyard to the garden leads;  
There have I made my promise  
Upon the heavy middle of the night  
To call upon him.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

But shall you on your knowledge find this way?

ISABELLA:

I have ta'en a due and wary note upon't:  
With whispering and most guilty diligence,  
In action all of precept, he did show me  
The way twice o'er.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Are there no other tokens

Between you 'greed concerning her observance?

ISABELLA:

No, none, but only a repair i' the dark;  
And that I have possess'd him my most stay  
Can be but brief; for I have made him know  
I have a servant comes with me along,  
That stays upon me, whose persuasion is  
I come about my brother.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

'Tis well borne up.  
I have not yet made known to Mariana  
A word of this. What, ho! within! come forth!  
I pray you, be acquainted with this maid;  
She comes to do you good.

ISABELLA:

I do desire the like.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Do you persuade yourself that I respect you?

MARIANA:

Good friar, I know you do, and have found it.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Take, then, this your companion by the hand,  
Who hath a story ready for your ear.  
I shall attend your leisure: but make haste;  
The vaporous night approaches.

MARIANA:

Will't please you walk aside?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

O place and greatness! millions of false eyes  
Are stuck upon thee: volumes of report  
Run with these false and most contrarious quests  
Upon thy doings: thousand escapes of wit  
Make thee the father of their idle dreams  
And rack thee in their fancies.  
Welcome, how agreed?

ISABELLA:

She'll take the enterprise upon her, father,  
If you advise it.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

It is not my consent,

But my entreaty too.

ISABELLA:

Little have you to say  
When you depart from him, but, soft and low,  
'Remember now my brother.'

MARIANA:

Fear me not.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Nor, gentle daughter, fear you not at all.  
He is your husband on a pre-contract:  
To bring you thus together, 'tis no sin,  
Sith that the justice of your title to him  
Doth flourish the deceit. Come, let us go:  
Our corn's to reap, for yet our tithe's to sow.

Provost:

Come hither, sirrah. Can you cut off a man's head?

POMPEY:

If the man be a bachelor, sir, I can; but if he be a  
married man, he's his wife's head, and I can never  
cut off a woman's head.

Provost:

Come, sir, leave me your snatches, and yield me a  
direct answer. To-morrow morning are to die Claudio  
and Barnardine. Here is in our prison a common  
executioner, who in his office lacks a helper: if  
you will take it on you to assist him, it shall  
redeem you from your gyves; if not, you shall have  
your full time of imprisonment and your deliverance  
with an unpitied whipping, for you have been a  
notorious bawd.

POMPEY:

Sir, I have been an unlawful bawd time out of mind;  
but yet I will be content to be a lawful hangman. I  
would be glad to receive some instruction from my  
fellow partner.

Provost:

What, ho! Abhorson! Where's Abhorson, there?

ABHORSON:

Do you call, sir?

Provost:

Sirrah, here's a fellow will help you to-morrow in your execution. If you think it meet, compound with him by the year, and let him abide here with you; if not, use him for the present and dismiss him. He cannot plead his estimation with you; he hath been a bawd.

ABHORSON:

A bawd, sir? fie upon him! he will discredit our mystery.

Provost:

Go to, sir; you weigh equally; a feather will turn the scale.

POMPEY:

Pray, sir, by your good favour,--for surely, sir, a good favour you have, but that you have a hanging look,--do you call, sir, your occupation a mystery?

ABHORSON:

Ay, sir; a mystery

POMPEY:

Painting, sir, I have heard say, is a mystery; and your whores, sir, being members of my occupation, using painting, do prove my occupation a mystery: but what mystery there should be in hanging, if I should be hanged, I cannot imagine.

ABHORSON:

Sir, it is a mystery.

POMPEY:

Proof?

ABHORSON:

Every true man's apparel fits your thief: if it be too little for your thief, your true man thinks it big enough; if it be too big for your thief, your thief thinks it little enough: so every true man's apparel fits your thief.

Provost:

Are you agreed?

POMPEY:

Sir, I will serve him; for I do find your hangman is a more penitent trade than your bawd; he doth oftener ask forgiveness.

Provost:

You, sirrah, provide your block and your axe  
to-morrow four o'clock.

ABHORSON:

Come on, bawd; I will instruct thee in my trade; follow.

POMPEY:

I do desire to learn, sir: and I hope, if you have  
occasion to use me for your own turn, you shall find  
me yare; for truly, sir, for your kindness I owe you  
a good turn.

Provost:

Call hither Barnardine and Claudio:

The one has my pity; not a jot the other,  
Being a murderer, though he were my brother.  
Look, here's the warrant, Claudio, for thy death:  
'Tis now dead midnight, and by eight to-morrow  
Thou must be made immortal. Where's Barnardine?

CLAUDIO:

As fast lock'd up in sleep as guiltless labour  
When it lies starkly in the traveller's bones:  
He will not wake.

Provost:

Who can do good on him?  
Well, go, prepare yourself.  
But, hark, what noise?  
Heaven give your spirits comfort!  
By and by.  
I hope it is some pardon or reprieve  
For the most gentle Claudio.  
Welcome father.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

The best and wholesomest spirits of the night  
Envelope you, good Provost! Who call'd here of late?

Provost:

None, since the curfew rung.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Not Isabel?

Provost:

No.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

They will, then, ere't be long.

Provost:  
What comfort is for Claudio?

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
There's some in hope.

Provost:  
It is a bitter deputy.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Not so, not so; his life is parallel'd  
Even with the stroke and line of his great justice:  
He doth with holy abstinence subdue  
That in himself which he spurs on his power  
To qualify in others: were he meal'd with that  
Which he corrects, then were he tyrannous;  
But this being so, he's just.  
Now are they come.  
This is a gentle provost: seldom when  
The steeled gaoler is the friend of men.  
How now! what noise? That spirit's possessed with haste  
That wounds the unsisting postern with these strokes.

Provost:  
There he must stay until the officer  
Arise to let him in: he is call'd up.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Have you no countermand for Claudio yet,  
But he must die to-morrow?

Provost:  
None, sir, none.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
As near the dawning, provost, as it is,  
You shall hear more ere morning.

Provost:  
Happily  
You something know; yet I believe there comes  
No countermand; no such example have we:  
Besides, upon the very siege of justice  
Lord Angelo hath to the public ear  
Profess'd the contrary.  
This is his lordship's man.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
And here comes Claudio's pardon.

Messenger:

Provost:

I shall obey him.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Provost:

I told you. Lord Angelo, belike thinking me remiss  
in mine office, awakens me with this unwonted  
putting-on; methinks strangely, for he hath not used it before.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Pray you, let's hear.

Provost:

DUKE VINCENTIO:

What is that Barnardine who is to be executed in the  
afternoon?

Provost:

A Bohemian born, but here nursed un and bred; one  
that is a prisoner nine years old.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

How came it that the absent duke had not either  
delivered him to his liberty or executed him? I  
have heard it was ever his manner to do so.

Provost:

His friends still wrought reprieves for him: and,  
indeed, his fact, till now in the government of Lord  
Angelo, came not to an undoubtful proof.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

It is now apparent?

Provost:

Most manifest, and not denied by himself.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Hath he born himself penitently in prison? how  
seems he to be touched?

Provost:

A man that apprehends death no more dreadfully but  
as a drunken sleep; careless, reckless, and fearless  
of what's past, present, or to come; insensible of



mortality, and desperately mortal.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
He wants advice.

Provost:  
He will hear none: he hath evermore had the liberty of the prison; give him leave to escape hence, he would not: drunk many times a day, if not many days entirely drunk. We have very oft awaked him, as if to carry him to execution, and showed him a seeming warrant for it: it hath not moved him at all.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
More of him anon. There is written in your brow, provost, honesty and constancy: if I read it not truly, my ancient skill beguiles me; but, in the boldness of my cunning, I will lay myself in hazard. Claudio, whom here you have warrant to execute, is no greater forfeit to the law than Angelo who hath sentenced him. To make you understand this in a manifested effect, I crave but four days' respite; for the which you are to do me both a present and a dangerous courtesy.

Provost:  
Pray, sir, in what?

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
In the delaying death.

Provost:  
A lack, how may I do it, having the hour limited, and an express command, under penalty, to deliver his head in the view of Angelo? I may make my case as Claudio's, to cross this in the smallest.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
By the vow of mine order I warrant you, if my instructions may be your guide. Let this Barnardine be this morning executed, and his head born to Angelo.

Provost:  
Angelo hath seen them both, and will discover the favour.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
O, death's a great disguiser; and you may add to it. Shave the head, and tie the beard; and say it was the desire of the penitent to be so bared before his death: you know the course is common. If any thing

fall to you upon this, more than thanks and good fortune, by the saint whom I profess, I will plead against it with my life.

Provost:

Pardon me, good father; it is against my oath.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Were you sworn to the duke, or to the deputy?

Provost:

To him, and to his substitutes.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

You will think you have made no offence, if the duke avouch the justice of your dealing?

Provost:

But what likelihood is in that?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Not a resemblance, but a certainty. Yet since I see you fearful, that neither my coat, integrity, nor persuasion can with ease attempt you, I will go further than I meant, to pluck all fears out of you. Look you, sir, here is the hand and seal of the duke: you know the character, I doubt not; and the signet is not strange to you.

Provost:

I know them both.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

The contents of this is the return of the duke: you shall anon over-read it at your pleasure; where you shall find, within these two days he will be here. This is a thing that Angelo knows not; for he this very day receives letters of strange tenor; perchance of the duke's death; perchance entering into some monastery; but, by chance, nothing of what is writ. Look, the unfolding star calls up the shepherd. Put not yourself into amazement how these things should be: all difficulties are but easy when they are known. Call your executioner, and off with Barnardine's head: I will give him a present shrift and advise him for a better place. Yet you are amazed; but this shall absolutely resolve you. Come away; it is almost clear dawn.

POMPEY:

I am as well acquainted here as I was in our house of profession: one would think it were Mistress Overdone's own house, for here be many of her old customers. First, here's young Master Rash; he's in for a commodity of brown paper and old ginger, ninescore and seventeen pounds; of which he made five marks, ready money: marry, then ginger was not much in request, for the old women were all dead. Then is there here one Master Caper, at the suit of Master Three-pile the mercer, for some four suits of peach-coloured satin, which now peaches him a beggar. Then have we here young Dizzy, and young Master Deep-vow, and Master Copperspur, and Master Starve-lackey the rapier and dagger man, and young Drop-heir that killed lusty Pudding, and Master Forthlight the tilter, and brave Master Shooty the great traveller, and wild Half-can that stabbed Pots, and, I think, forty more; all great doers in our trade, and are now 'for the Lord's sake.'

ABHORSON:

Sirrah, bring Barnardine hither.

POMPEY:

Master Barnardine! you must rise and be hanged.  
Master Barnardine!

ABHORSON:

What, ho, Barnardine!

BARNARDINE:

POMPEY:

Your friends, sir; the hangman. You must be so good, sir, to rise and be put to death.

BARNARDINE:

ABHORSON:

Tell him he must awake, and that quickly too.

POMPEY:

Pray, Master Barnardine, awake till you are executed, and sleep afterwards.

ABHORSON:

Go in to him, and fetch him out.

POMPEY:

He is coming, sir, he is coming; I hear his straw rustle.

ABHORSON:

Is the axe upon the block, sirrah?

POMPEY:

Very ready, sir.

BARNARDINE:

How now, Abhorson? what's the news with you?

ABHORSON:

Truly, sir, I would desire you to clap into your prayers; for, look you, the warrant's come.

BARNARDINE:

You rogue, I have been drinking all night; I am not fitted for 't.

POMPEY:

O, the better, sir; for he that drinks all night, and is hanged betimes in the morning, may sleep the sounder all the next day.

ABHORSON:

Look you, sir; here comes your ghostly father: do we jest now, think you?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Sir, induced by my charity, and hearing how hastily you are to depart, I am come to advise you, comfort you and pray with you.

BARNARDINE:

Friar, not I I have been drinking hard all night, and I will have more time to prepare me, or they shall beat out my brains with billets: I will not consent to die this day, that's certain.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

O, sir, you must: and therefore I beseech you Look forward on the journey you shall go.

BARNARDINE:

I swear I will not die to-day for any man's persuasion.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

But hear you.

BARNARDINE:

Not a word: if you have any thing to say to me,  
come to my ward; for thence will not I to-day.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Unfit to live or die: O gravel heart!  
After him, fellows; bring him to the block.

Provost:

Now, sir, how do you find the prisoner?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

A creature unprepared, unmeet for death;  
And to transport him in the mind he is  
Were damnable.

Provost:

Here in the prison, father,  
There died this morning of a cruel fever  
One Ragozine, a most notorious pirate,  
A man of Claudio's years; his beard and head  
Just of his colour. What if we do omit  
This reprobate till he were well inclined;  
And satisfy the deputy with the visage  
Of Ragozine, more like to Claudio?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

O, 'tis an accident that heaven provides!  
Dispatch it presently; the hour draws on  
Prefix'd by Angelo: see this be done,  
And sent according to command; whiles I  
Persuade this rude wretch willingly to die.

Provost:

This shall be done, good father, presently.  
But Barnardine must die this afternoon:  
And how shall we continue Claudio,  
To save me from the danger that might come  
If he were known alive?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Let this be done.  
Put them in secret holds, both Barnardine and Claudio:  
Ere twice the sun hath made his journal greeting  
To the under generation, you shall find  
Your safety manifested.

Provost:

I am your free dependant.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Quick, dispatch, and send the head to Angelo.  
Now will I write letters to Angelo,--  
The provost, he shall bear them, whose contents  
Shall witness to him I am near at home,  
And that, by great injunctions, I am bound  
To enter publicly: him I'll desire  
To meet me at the consecrated fount  
A league below the city; and from thence,  
By cold gradation and well-balanced form,  
We shall proceed with Angelo.

Provost:  
Here is the head; I'll carry it myself.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Convenient is it. Make a swift return;  
For I would commune with you of such things  
That want no ear but yours.

Provost:  
I'll make all speed.

ISABELLA:

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
The tongue of Isabel. She's come to know  
If yet her brother's pardon be come hither:  
But I will keep her ignorant of her good,  
To make her heavenly comforts of despair,  
When it is least expected.

ISABELLA:  
Ho, by your leave!

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Good morning to you, fair and gracious daughter.

ISABELLA:  
The better, given me by so holy a man.  
Hath yet the deputy sent my brother's pardon?

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
He hath released him, Isabel, from the world:  
His head is off and sent to Angelo.

ISABELLA:  
Nay, but it is not so.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
It is no other: show your wisdom, daughter,

In your close patience.

ISABELLA:

O, I will to him and pluck out his eyes!

DUKE VINCENTIO:

You shall not be admitted to his sight.

ISABELLA:

Unhappy Claudio! wretched Isabel!

Injurious world! most damned Angelo!

DUKE VINCENTIO:

This nor hurts him nor profits you a jot;

Forbear it therefore; give your cause to heaven.

Mark what I say, which you shall find

By every syllable a faithful verity:

The duke comes home to-morrow; nay, dry your eyes;

One of our convent, and his confessor,

Gives me this instance: already he hath carried

Notice to Escalus and Angelo,

Who do prepare to meet him at the gates,

There to give up their power. If you can, pace your wisdom

In that good path that I would wish it go,

And you shall have your bosom on this wretch,

Grace of the duke, revenges to your heart,

And general honour.

ISABELLA:

I am directed by you.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

This letter, then, to Friar Peter give;

'Tis that he sent me of the duke's return:

Say, by this token, I desire his company

At Mariana's house to-night. Her cause and yours

I'll perfect him withal, and he shall bring you

Before the duke, and to the head of Angelo

Accuse him home and home. For my poor self,

I am combined by a sacred vow

And shall be absent. Wend you with this letter:

Command these fretting waters from your eyes

With a light heart; trust not my holy order,

If I pervert your course. Who's here?

LUCIO:

Good even. Friar, where's the provost?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Not within, sir.

LUCIO:

O pretty Isabella, I am pale at mine heart to see  
thine eyes so red: thou must be patient. I am fain  
to dine and sup with water and bran; I dare not for  
my head fill my belly; one fruitful meal would set  
me to 't. But they say the duke will be here  
to-morrow. By my troth, Isabel, I loved thy brother:  
if the old fantastical duke of dark corners had been  
at home, he had lived.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Sir, the duke is marvellous little beholding to your  
reports; but the best is, he lives not in them.

LUCIO:

Friar, thou knowest not the duke so well as I do:  
he's a better woodman than thou takest him for.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Well, you'll answer this one day. Fare ye well.

LUCIO:

Nay, tarry; I'll go along with thee  
I can tell thee pretty tales of the duke.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

You have told me too many of him already, sir, if  
they be true; if not true, none were enough.

LUCIO:

I was once before him for getting a wench with child.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Did you such a thing?

LUCIO:

Yes, marry, did I but I was fain to forswear it;  
they would else have married me to the rotten medlar.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Sir, your company is fairer than honest. Rest you well.

LUCIO:

By my troth, I'll go with thee to the lane's end:  
if bawdy talk offend you, we'll have very little of  
it. Nay, friar, I am a kind of burr; I shall stick.

ESCALUS:

Every letter he hath writ hath disvouched other.



ANGELO:

In most uneven and distracted manner. His actions show much like to madness: pray heaven his wisdom be not tainted! And why meet him at the gates, and redeliver our authorities there

ESCALUS:

I guess not.

ANGELO:

And why should we proclaim it in an hour before his entering, that if any crave redress of injustice, they should exhibit their petitions in the street?

ESCALUS:

He shows his reason for that: to have a dispatch of complaints, and to deliver us from devices hereafter, which shall then have no power to stand against us.

ANGELO:

Well, I beseech you, let it be proclaimed betimes i' the morn; I'll call you at your house: give notice to such men of sort and suit as are to meet him.

ESCALUS:

I shall, sir. Fare you well.

ANGELO:

Good night.

This deed unshapes me quite, makes me unpregnant  
And dull to all proceedings. A deflower'd maid!  
And by an eminent body that enforced  
The law against it! But that her tender shame  
Will not proclaim against her maiden loss,  
How might she tongue me! Yet reason dares her no;  
For my authority bears of a credent bulk,  
That no particular scandal once can touch  
But it confounds the breather. He should have lived,  
Save that riotous youth, with dangerous sense,  
Might in the times to come have ta'en revenge,  
By so receiving a dishonour'd life  
With ransom of such shame. Would yet he had lived!  
A lack, when once our grace we have forgot,  
Nothing goes right: we would, and we would not.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

These letters at fit time deliver me

The provost knows our purpose and our plot.  
The matter being afoot, keep your instruction,  
And hold you ever to our special drift;  
Though sometimes you do blench from this to that,  
As cause doth minister. Go call at Flavius' house,  
And tell him where I stay: give the like notice  
To Valentinus, Rowland, and to Crassus,  
And bid them bring the trumpets to the gate;  
But send me Flavius first.

FRIAR PETER:  
It shall be speeded well.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
I thank thee, Varrius; thou hast made good haste:  
Come, we will walk. There's other of our friends  
Will greet us here anon, my gentle Varrius.

ISABELLA:  
To speak so indirectly I am loath:  
I would say the truth; but to accuse him so,  
That is your part: yet I am advised to do it;  
He says, to veil full purpose.

MARIANA:  
Be ruled by him.

ISABELLA:  
Besides, he tells me that, if peradventure  
He speak against me on the adverse side,  
I should not think it strange; for 'tis a physic  
That's bitter to sweet end.

MARIANA:  
I would Friar Peter--

ISABELLA:  
O, peace! the friar is come.

FRIAR PETER:  
Come, I have found you out a stand most fit,  
Where you may have such vantage on the duke,  
He shall not pass you. Twice have the trumpets sounded;  
The generous and gravest citizens  
Have hent the gates, and very near upon  
The duke is entering: therefore, hence, away!

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
My very worthy cousin, fairly met!  
Our old and faithful friend, we are glad to see you.

ANGELO:

Happy return be to your royal grace!

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Many and hearty thankings to you both.  
We have made inquiry of you; and we hear  
Such goodness of your justice, that our soul  
Cannot but yield you forth to public thanks,  
Forerunning more requital.

ANGELO:

You make my bonds still greater.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

O, your desert speaks loud; and I should wrong it,  
To lock it in the wards of covert bosom,  
When it deserves, with characters of brass,  
A fortified residence 'gainst the tooth of time  
And rasure of oblivion. Give me your hand,  
And let the subject see, to make them know  
That outward courtesies would fain proclaim  
Favours that keep within. Come, Escalus,  
You must walk by us on our other hand;  
And good supporters are you.

FRIAR PETER:

Now is your time: speak loud and kneel before him.

ISABELLA:

Justice, O royal duke! Vail your regard  
Upon a wrong'd, I would fain have said, a maid!  
O worthy prince, dishonour not your eye  
By throwing it on any other object  
Till you have heard me in my true complaint  
And given me justice, justice, justice, justice!

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Relate your wrongs; in what? by whom? be brief.  
Here is Lord Angelo shall give you justice:  
Reveal yourself to him.

ISABELLA:

O worthy duke,  
You bid me seek redemption of the devil:  
Hear me yourself; for that which I must speak  
Must either punish me, not being believed,  
Or wring redress from you. Hear me, O hear me, here!

ANGELO:

My lord, her wits, I fear me, are not firm:  
She hath been a suitor to me for her brother  
Cut off by course of justice,--

ISABELLA:  
By course of justice!

ANGELO:  
And she will speak most bitterly and strange.

ISABELLA:  
Most strange, but yet most truly, will I speak:  
That Angelo's forsworn; is it not strange?  
That Angelo's a murderer; is 't not strange?  
That Angelo is an adulterous thief,  
An hypocrite, a virgin-violator;  
Is it not strange and strange?

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Nay, it is ten times strange.

ISABELLA:  
It is not truer he is Angelo  
Than this is all as true as it is strange:  
Nay, it is ten times true; for truth is truth  
To the end of reckoning.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Away with her! Poor soul,  
She speaks this in the infirmity of sense.

ISABELLA:  
O prince, I conjure thee, as thou believest  
There is another comfort than this world,  
That thou neglect me not, with that opinion  
That I am touch'd with madness! Make not impossible  
That which but seems unlike: 'tis not impossible  
But one, the wicked'st caitiff on the ground,  
May seem as shy, as grave, as just, as absolute  
As Angelo; even so may Angelo,  
In all his dressings, characts, titles, forms,  
Be an arch-villain; believe it, royal prince:  
If he be less, he's nothing; but he's more,  
Had I more name for badness.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
By mine honesty,  
If she be mad,--as I believe no other,--  
Her madness hath the oddest frame of sense,  
Such a dependency of thing on thing,

As e'er I heard in madness.

ISABELLA:

O gracious duke,  
Harp not on that, nor do not banish reason  
For inequality; but let your reason serve  
To make the truth appear where it seems hid,  
And hide the false seems true.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Many that are not mad  
Have, sure, more lack of reason. What would you say?

ISABELLA:

I am the sister of one Claudio,  
Condemn'd upon the act of fornication  
To lose his head; condemn'd by Angelo:  
I, in probation of a sisterhood,  
Was sent to by my brother; one Lucio  
As then the messenger,--

LUCIO:

That's I, an't like your grace:  
I came to her from Claudio, and desired her  
To try her gracious fortune with Lord Angelo  
For her poor brother's pardon.

ISABELLA:

That's he indeed.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

You were not bid to speak.

LUCIO:

No, my good lord;  
Nor wish'd to hold my peace.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

I wish you now, then;  
Pray you, take note of it: and when you have  
A business for yourself, pray heaven you then  
Be perfect.

LUCIO:

I warrant your honour.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

The warrants for yourself; take heed to't.

ISABELLA:

This gentleman told somewhat of my tale,--

LUCIO:  
Right.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
It may be right; but you are i' the wrong  
To speak before your time. Proceed.

ISABELLA:  
I went  
To this pernicious caitiff deputy,--

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
That's somewhat madly spoken.

ISABELLA:  
Pardon it;  
The phrase is to the matter.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Mended again. The matter; proceed.

ISABELLA:  
In brief, to set the needless process by,  
How I persuaded, how I pray'd, and kneel'd,  
How he refell'd me, and how I replied,--  
For this was of much length,--the vile conclusion  
I now begin with grief and shame to utter:  
He would not, but by gift of my chaste body  
To his concupiscible intemperate lust,  
Release my brother; and, after much debatement,  
My sisterly remorse confutes mine honour,  
And I did yield to him: but the next morn betimes,  
His purpose surfeiting, he sends a warrant  
For my poor brother's head.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
This is most likely!

ISABELLA:  
O, that it were as like as it is true!

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
By heaven, fond wretch, thou knowist not what thou speak'st,  
Or else thou art suborn'd against his honour  
In hateful practise. First, his integrity  
Stands without blemish. Next, it imports no reason  
That with such vehemency he should pursue  
Faults proper to himself: if he had so offended,

He would have weigh'd thy brother by himself  
And not have cut him off. Some one hath set you on:  
Confess the truth, and say by whose advice  
Thou camest here to complain.

ISABELLA:

And is this all?  
Then, O you blessed ministers above,  
Keep me in patience, and with ripen'd time  
Unfold the evil which is here wrapt up  
In countenance! Heaven shield your grace from woe,  
As I, thus wrong'd, hence unbeliev'd go!

DUKE VINCENTIO:

I know you'd fain be gone. An officer!  
To prison with her! Shall we thus permit  
A blasting and a scandalous breath to fall  
On him so near us? This needs must be a practise.  
Who knew of Your intent and coming hither?

ISABELLA:

One that I would were here, Friar Lodowick.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

A ghostly father, belike. Who knows that Lodowick?

LUCIO:

My lord, I know him; 'tis a meddling friar;  
I do not like the man: had he been lay, my lord  
For certain words he spake against your grace  
In your retirement, I had swung him soundly.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Words against me? this is a good friar, belike!  
And to set on this wretched woman here  
Against our substitute! Let this friar be found.

LUCIO:

But yesternight, my lord, she and that friar,  
I saw them at the prison: a saucy friar,  
A very scurvy fellow.

FRIAR PETER:

Blessed be your royal grace!  
I have stood by, my lord, and I have heard  
Your royal ear abused. First, hath this woman  
Most wrongfully accused your substitute,  
Who is as free from touch or soil with her  
As she from one ungot.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

We did believe no less.

Know you that Friar Lodowick that she speaks of?

FRIAR PETER:

I know him for a man divine and holy;

Not scurvy, nor a temporary meddler,

As he's reported by this gentleman;

And, on my trust, a man that never yet

Did, as he vouches, misreport your grace.

LUCIO:

My lord, most villanously; believe it.

FRIAR PETER:

Well, he in time may come to clear himself;

But at this instant he is sick my lord,

Of a strange fever. Upon his mere request,

Being come to knowledge that there was complaint

Intended 'gainst Lord Angelo, came I hither,

To speak, as from his mouth, what he doth know

Is true and false; and what he with his oath

And all probation will make up full clear,

Whensoever he's convented. First, for this woman.

To justify this worthy nobleman,

So vulgarly and personally accused,

Her shall you hear disproved to her eyes,

Till she herself confess it.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Good friar, let's hear it.

Do you not smile at this, Lord Angelo?

O heaven, the vanity of wretched fools!

Give us some seats. Come, cousin Angelo;

In this I'll be impartial; be you judge

Of your own cause. Is this the witness, friar?

First, let her show her face, and after speak.

MARIANA:

Pardon, my lord; I will not show my face

Until my husband bid me.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

What, are you married?

MARIANA:

No, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Are you a maid?



MARIANA:  
No, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
A widow, then?

MARIANA:  
Neither, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Why, you are nothing then: neither maid, widow, nor wife?

LUCIO:  
My lord, she may be a punk; for many of them are  
neither maid, widow, nor wife.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Silence that fellow: I would he had some cause  
To prattle for himself.

LUCIO:  
Well, my lord.

MARIANA:  
My lord; I do confess I ne'er was married;  
And I confess besides I am no maid:  
I have known my husband; yet my husband  
Knows not that ever he knew me.

LUCIO:  
He was drunk then, my lord: it can be no better.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
For the benefit of silence, would thou wert so too!

LUCIO:  
Well, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
This is no witness for Lord Angelo.

MARIANA:  
Now I come to't my lord  
She that accuses him of fornication,  
In self-same manner doth accuse my husband,  
And charges him my lord, with such a time  
When I'll depose I had him in mine arms  
With all the effect of love.

ANGELO:  
Charges she more than me?

MARIANA:  
Not that I know.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
No? you say your husband.

MARIANA:  
Why, just, my lord, and that is Angelo,  
Who thinks he knows that he ne'er knew my body,  
But knows he thinks that he knows Isabel's.

ANGELO:  
This is a strange abuse. Let's see thy face.

MARIANA:  
My husband bids me; now I will unmask.  
This is that face, thou cruel Angelo,  
Which once thou sworest was worth the looking on;  
This is the hand which, with a vow'd contract,  
Was fast belock'd in thine; this is the body  
That took away the match from Isabel,  
And did supply thee at thy garden-house  
In her imagined person.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Know you this woman?

LUCIO:  
Carnally, she says.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Sirrah, no more!

LUCIO:  
Enough, my lord.

ANGELO:  
My lord, I must confess I know this woman:  
And five years since there was some speech of marriage  
Betwixt myself and her; which was broke off,  
Partly for that her promised proportions  
Came short of composition, but in chief  
For that her reputation was disvalued  
In levity: since which time of five years  
I never spake with her, saw her, nor heard from her,  
Upon my faith and honour.

MARIANA:

Noble prince,  
As there comes light from heaven and words from breath,  
As there is sense in truth and truth in virtue,  
I am affianced this man's wife as strongly  
As words could make up vows: and, my good lord,  
But Tuesday night last gone in's garden-house  
He knew me as a wife. As this is true,  
Let me in safety raise me from my knees  
Or else for ever be confixed here,  
A marble monument!

ANGELO:

I did but smile till now:  
Now, good my lord, give me the scope of justice  
My patience here is touch'd. I do perceive  
These poor informal women are no more  
But instruments of some more mightier member  
That sets them on: let me have way, my lord,  
To find this practise out.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Ay, with my heart  
And punish them to your height of pleasure.  
Thou foolish friar, and thou pernicious woman,  
Compact with her that's gone, think'st thou thy oaths,  
Though they would swear down each particular saint,  
Were testimonies against his worth and credit  
That's seal'd in approbation? You, Lord Escalus,  
Sit with my cousin; lend him your kind pains  
To find out this abuse, whence 'tis derived.  
There is another friar that set them on;  
Let him be sent for.

FRIAR PETER:

Would he were here, my lord! for he indeed  
Hath set the women on to this complaint:  
Your provost knows the place where he abides  
And he may fetch him.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Go do it instantly.  
And you, my noble and well-warranted cousin,  
Whom it concerns to hear this matter forth,  
Do with your injuries as seems you best,  
In any chastisement: I for a while will leave you;  
But stir not you till you have well determined  
Upon these slanderers.

ESCALUS:

My lord, we'll do it thoroughly.  
Signior Lucio, did not you say you knew that  
Friar Lodowick to be a dishonest person?

LUCIO:

'Cucullus non facit monachum:' honest in nothing  
but in his clothes; and one that hath spoke most  
villanous speeches of the duke.

ESCALUS:

We shall entreat you to abide here till he come and  
enforce them against him: we shall find this friar a  
notable fellow.

LUCIO:

As any in Vienna, on my word.

ESCALUS:

Call that same Isabel here once again; I would speak with her.  
Pray you, my lord, give me leave to question; you  
shall see how I'll handle her.

LUCIO:

Not better than he, by her own report.

ESCALUS:

Say you?

LUCIO:

Marry, sir, I think, if you handled her privately,  
she would sooner confess: perchance, publicly,  
she'll be ashamed.

ESCALUS:

I will go darkly to work with her.

LUCIO:

That's the way; for women are light at midnight.

ESCALUS:

Come on, mistress: here's a gentlewoman denies all  
that you have said.

LUCIO:

My lord, here comes the rascal I spoke of; here with  
the provost.

ESCALUS:

In very good time: speak not you to him till we  
call upon you.

LUCIO:

Mum.

ESCALUS:

Come, sir: did you set these women on to slander  
Lord Angelo? they have confessed you did.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

'Tis false.

ESCALUS:

How! know you where you are?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Respect to your great place! and let the devil  
Be sometime honour'd for his burning throne!  
Where is the duke? 'tis he should hear me speak.

ESCALUS:

The duke's in us; and we will hear you speak:  
Look you speak justly.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Boldly, at least. But, O, poor souls,  
Come you to seek the lamb here of the fox?  
Good night to your redress! Is the duke gone?  
Then is your cause gone too. The duke's unjust,  
Thus to retort your manifest appeal,  
And put your trial in the villain's mouth  
Which here you come to accuse.

LUCIO:

This is the rascal; this is he I spoke of.

ESCALUS:

Why, thou unreverend and unhallow'd friar,  
Is't not enough thou hast suborn'd these women  
To accuse this worthy man, but, in foul mouth  
And in the witness of his proper ear,  
To call him villain? and then to glance from him  
To the duke himself, to tax him with injustice?  
Take him hence; to the rack with him! We'll touse you  
Joint by joint, but we will know his purpose.  
What 'unjust'!

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Be not so hot; the duke  
Dare no more stretch this finger of mine than he  
Dare rack his own: his subject am I not,

Nor here provincial. My business in this state  
Made me a looker on here in Vienna,  
Where I have seen corruption boil and bubble  
Till it o'er-run the stew; laws for all faults,  
But faults so countenanced, that the strong statutes  
Stand like the forfeits in a barber's shop,  
As much in mock as mark.

ESCALUS:

Slander to the state! Away with him to prison!

ANGELO:

What can you vouch against him, Signior Lucio?  
Is this the man that you did tell us of?

LUCIO:

'Tis he, my lord. Come hither, goodman baldpate:  
do you know me?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

I remember you, sir, by the sound of your voice: I  
met you at the prison, in the absence of the duke.

LUCIO:

O, did you so? And do you remember what you said of the duke?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Most notedly, sir.

LUCIO:

Do you so, sir? And was the duke a fleshmonger, a  
fool, and a coward, as you then reported him to be?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

You must, sir, change persons with me, ere you make  
that my report: you, indeed, spoke so of him; and  
much more, much worse.

LUCIO:

O thou damnable fellow! Did not I pluck thee by the  
nose for thy speeches?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

I protest I love the duke as I love myself.

ANGELO:

Hark, how the villain would close now, after his  
treasonable abuses!

ESCALUS:

Such a fellow is not to be talked withal. Away with him to prison! Where is the provost? Away with him to prison! lay bolts enough upon him: let him speak no more. Away with those giglots too, and with the other confederate companion!

DUKE VINCENTIO:

ANGELO:

What, resists he? Help him, Lucio.

LUCIO:

Come, sir; come, sir; come, sir; foh, sir! Why, you bald-pated, lying rascal, you must be hooded, must you? Show your knave's visage, with a pox to you! show your sheep-biting face, and be hanged an hour! Will't not off?

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Thou art the first knave that e'er madest a duke. First, provost, let me bail these gentle three. Sneak not away, sir; for the friar and you must have a word anon. Lay hold on him.

LUCIO:

This may prove worse than hanging.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

ANGELO:

O my dread lord,  
I should be guiltier than my guiltiness,  
To think I can be undiscernible,  
When I perceive your grace, like power divine,  
Hath look'd upon my passes. Then, good prince,  
No longer session hold upon my shame,  
But let my trial be mine own confession:  
Immediate sentence then and sequent death  
Is all the grace I beg.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Come hither, Mariana.  
Say, wast thou e'er contracted to this woman?

ANGELO:

I was, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Go take her hence, and marry her instantly.  
Do you the office, friar; which consummate,

Return him here again. Go with him, provost.

ESCALUS:

My lord, I am more amazed at his dishonour  
Than at the strangeness of it.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Come hither, Isabel.  
Your friar is now your prince: as I was then  
Advertising and holy to your business,  
Not changing heart with habit, I am still  
Attorney'd at your service.

ISABELLA:

O, give me pardon,  
That I, your vassal, have employ'd and pain'd  
Your unknown sovereignty!

DUKE VINCENTIO:

You are pardon'd, Isabel:  
And now, dear maid, be you as free to us.  
Your brother's death, I know, sits at your heart;  
And you may marvel why I obscured myself,  
Labouring to save his life, and would not rather  
Make rash remonstrance of my hidden power  
Than let him so be lost. O most kind maid,  
It was the swift celerity of his death,  
Which I did think with slower foot came on,  
That brain'd my purpose. But, peace be with him!  
That life is better life, past fearing death,  
Than that which lives to fear: make it your comfort,  
So happy is your brother.

ISABELLA:

I do, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

For this new-married man approaching here,  
Whose salt imagination yet hath wrong'd  
Your well defended honour, you must pardon  
For Mariana's sake: but as he adjudged your brother,--  
Being criminal, in double violation  
Of sacred chastity and of promise-breach  
Thereon dependent, for your brother's life,--  
The very mercy of the law cries out  
Most audible, even from his proper tongue,  
'An Angelo for Claudio, death for death!'  
Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure;  
Like doth quit like, and MEASURE still FOR MEASURE.  
Then, Angelo, thy fault's thus manifested;



Which, though thou wouldst deny, denies thee vantage.  
We do condemn thee to the very block  
Where Claudio stoop'd to death, and with like haste.  
Away with him!

MARIANA:

O my most gracious lord,  
I hope you will not mock me with a husband.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

It is your husband mock'd you with a husband.  
Consenting to the safeguard of your honour,  
I thought your marriage fit; else imputation,  
For that he knew you, might reproach your life  
And choke your good to come; for his possessions,  
Although by confiscation they are ours,  
We do instate and widow you withal,  
To buy you a better husband.

MARIANA:

O my dear lord,  
I crave no other, nor no better man.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Never crave him; we are definitive.

MARIANA:

Gentle my liege,--

DUKE VINCENTIO:

You do but lose your labour.  
Away with him to death!  
Now, sir, to you.

MARIANA:

O my good lord! Sweet Isabel, take my part;  
Lend me your knees, and all my life to come  
I'll lend you all my life to do you service.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Against all sense you do importune her:  
Should she kneel down in mercy of this fact,  
Her brother's ghost his paved bed would break,  
And take her hence in horror.

MARIANA:

Isabel,  
Sweet Isabel, do yet but kneel by me;  
Hold up your hands, say nothing; I'll speak all.  
They say, best men are moulded out of faults;

And, for the most, become much more the better  
For being a little bad: so may my husband.  
O Isabel, will you not lend a knee?

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
He dies for Claudio's death.

ISABELLA:  
Most bounteous sir,  
Look, if it please you, on this man condemn'd,  
As if my brother lived: I partly think  
A due sincerity govern'd his deeds,  
Till he did look on me: since it is so,  
Let him not die. My brother had but justice,  
In that he did the thing for which he died:  
For Angelo,  
His act did not o'ertake his bad intent,  
And must be buried but as an intent  
That perish'd by the way: thoughts are no subjects;  
Intentions but merely thoughts.

MARIANA:  
Merely, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Your suit's unprofitable; stand up, I say.  
I have bethought me of another fault.  
Provost, how came it Claudio was beheaded  
At an unusual hour?

Provost:  
It was commanded so.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Had you a special warrant for the deed?

Provost:  
No, my good lord; it was by private message.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
For which I do discharge you of your office:  
Give up your keys.

Provost:  
Pardon me, noble lord:  
I thought it was a fault, but knew it not;  
Yet did repent me, after more advice;  
For testimony whereof, one in the prison,  
That should by private order else have died,  
I have reserved alive.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
What's he?

Provost:  
His name is Barnardine.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
I would thou hadst done so by Claudio.  
Go fetch him hither; let me look upon him.

ESCALUS:  
I am sorry, one so learned and so wise  
As you, Lord Angelo, have still appear'd,  
Should slip so grossly, both in the heat of blood.  
And lack of temper'd judgment afterward.

ANGELO:  
I am sorry that such sorrow I procure:  
And so deep sticks it in my penitent heart  
That I crave death more willingly than mercy;  
'Tis my deserving, and I do entreat it.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
Which is that Barnardine?

Provost:  
This, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO:  
There was a friar told me of this man.  
Sirrah, thou art said to have a stubborn soul.  
That apprehends no further than this world,  
And squarest thy life according. Thou'rt condemn'd:  
But, for those earthly faults, I quit them all;  
And pray thee take this mercy to provide  
For better times to come. Friar, advise him;  
I leave him to your hand. What muffled fellow's that?

Provost:  
This is another prisoner that I saved.  
Who should have died when Claudio lost his head;  
As like almost to Claudio as himself.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

LUCIO:  
'Faith, my lord. I spoke it but according to the  
trick. If you will hang me for it, you may; but I  
had rather it would please you I might be whipt.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Whipt first, sir, and hanged after.  
Proclaim it, provost, round about the city.  
Is any woman wrong'd by this lewd fellow,  
As I have heard him swear himself there's one  
Whom he begot with child, let her appear,  
And he shall marry her: the nuptial finish'd,  
Let him be whipt and hang'd.

LUCIO:

I beseech your highness, do not marry me to a whore.  
Your highness said even now, I made you a duke:  
good my lord, do not recompense me in making me a cuckold.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Upon mine honour, thou shalt marry her.  
Thy slanders I forgive; and therewithal  
Remit thy other forfeits. Take him to prison;  
And see our pleasure herein executed.

LUCIO:

Marrying a punk, my lord, is pressing to death,  
whipping, and hanging.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Slandering a prince deserves it.  
She, Claudio, that you wrong'd, look you restore.  
Joy to you, Mariana! Love her, Angelo:  
I have confess'd her and I know her virtue.  
Thanks, good friend Escalus, for thy much goodness:  
There's more behind that is more grate. . .  
Thanks, provost, for thy care and secrecy:  
We shall employ thee in a worthier place.  
Forgive him, Angelo, that brought you home  
The head of Ragozine for Claudio's:  
The offence pardons itself. Dear Isabel,  
I have a motion much imports your good;  
Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline,  
What's mine is yours and what is yours is mine.  
So, bring us to our palace; where we'll show  
What's yet behind, that's meet you all should know.

SLY:

I'll pheeze you, in faith.

Hostess:

A pair of stocks, you rogue!

SLY:

Ye are a baggage: the Slys are no rogues; look in  
the chronicles; we came in with Richard Conqueror.  
Therefore paucas pallabris; let the world slide: sessa!

Hostess:

You will not pay for the glasses you have burst?

SLY:

No, not a denier. Go by, Jeronimy: go to thy cold  
bed, and warm thee.

Hostess:

I know my remedy; I must go fetch the  
third--borough.

SLY:

Third, or fourth, or fifth borough, I'll answer him  
by law: I'll not budge an inch, boy: let him come,  
and kindly.

Lord:

Huntsman, I charge thee, tender well my hounds:  
Brach Merriman, the poor cur is emboss'd;  
And couple Clowder with the deep--mouth'd brach.  
Saw'st thou not, boy, how Silver made it good  
At the hedge-corner, in the coldest fault?  
I would not lose the dog for twenty pound.

First Huntsman:

Why, Belman is as good as he, my lord;  
He cried upon it at the merest loss  
And twice to-day pick'd out the dullest scent:  
Trust me, I take him for the better dog.

Lord:

Thou art a fool: if Echo were as fleet,  
I would esteem him worth a dozen such.  
But sup them well and look unto them all:  
To-morrow I intend to hunt again.

First Huntsman:

I will, my lord.

Lord:

What's here? one dead, or drunk? See, doth he breathe?

Second Huntsman:

He breathes, my lord. Were he not warm'd with ale,  
This were a bed but cold to sleep so soundly.

Lord:

O monstrous beast! how like a swine he lies!  
Grim death, how foul and loathsome is thine image!  
Sirs, I will practise on this drunken man.  
What think you, if he were convey'd to bed,  
Wrapp'd in sweet clothes, rings put upon his fingers,  
A most delicious banquet by his bed,  
And brave attendants near him when he wakes,  
Would not the beggar then forget himself?

First Huntsman:

Believe me, lord, I think he cannot choose.

Second Huntsman:

It would seem strange unto him when he waked.

Lord:

Even as a flattering dream or worthless fancy.  
Then take him up and manage well the jest:  
Carry him gently to my fairest chamber  
And hang it round with all my wanton pictures:  
Balm his foul head in warm distilled waters  
And burn sweet wood to make the lodging sweet:  
Procure me music ready when he wakes,  
To make a dulcet and a heavenly sound;  
And if he chance to speak, be ready straight  
And with a low submissive reverence  
Say 'What is it your honour will command?'  
Let one attend him with a silver basin  
Full of rose-water and bestrew'd with flowers,  
Another bear the ewer, the third a diaper,  
And say 'Will't please your lordship cool your hands?'  
Some one be ready with a costly suit  
And ask him what apparel he will wear;  
Another tell him of his hounds and horse,  
And that his lady mourns at his disease:  
Persuade him that he hath been lunatic;  
And when he says he is, say that he dreams,  
For he is nothing but a mighty lord.  
This do and do it kindly, gentle sirs:  
It will be pastime passing excellent,  
If it be husbanded with modesty.

First Huntsman:

My lord, I warrant you we will play our part,  
As he shall think by our true diligence  
He is no less than what we say he is.

Lord:

Take him up gently and to bed with him;

And each one to his office when he wakes.  
Sirrah, go see what trumpet 'tis that sounds:  
Belike, some noble gentleman that means,  
Travelling some journey, to repose him here.  
How now! who is it?

Servant:  
An't please your honour, players  
That offer service to your lordship.

Lord:  
Bid them come near.  
Now, fellows, you are welcome.

Players:  
We thank your honour.

Lord:  
Do you intend to stay with me tonight?

A Player:  
So please your lordship to accept our duty.

Lord:  
With all my heart. This fellow I remember,  
Since once he play'd a farmer's eldest son:  
'Twas where you woo'd the gentlewoman so well:  
I have forgot your name; but, sure, that part  
Was aptly fitted and naturally perform'd.

A Player:  
I think 'twas Soto that your honour means.

Lord:  
'Tis very true: thou didst it excellent.  
Well, you are come to me in a happy time;  
The rather for I have some sport in hand  
Wherein your cunning can assist me much.  
There is a lord will hear you play to-night:  
But I am doubtful of your modesties;  
Lest over-eyeing of his odd behavior,--  
For yet his honour never heard a play--  
You break into some merry passion  
And so offend him; for I tell you, sirs,  
If you should smile he grows impatient.

A Player:  
Fear not, my lord: we can contain ourselves,  
Were he the veriest antic in the world.

Lord:

Go, sirrah, take them to the buttery,  
And give them friendly welcome every one:  
Let them want nothing that my house affords.  
Sirrah, go you to Barthol'mew my page,  
And see him dress'd in all suits like a lady:  
That done, conduct him to the drunkard's chamber;  
And call him 'madam,' do him obeisance.  
Tell him from me, as he will win my love,  
He bear himself with honourable action,  
Such as he hath observed in noble ladies  
Unto their lords, by them accomplished:  
Such duty to the drunkard let him do  
With soft low tongue and lowly courtesy,  
And say 'What is't your honour will command,  
Wherein your lady and your humble wife  
May show her duty and make known her love?'  
And then with kind embracements, tempting kisses,  
And with declining head into his bosom,  
Bid him shed tears, as being overjoy'd  
To see her noble lord restored to health,  
Who for this seven years hath esteem'd him  
No better than a poor and loathsome beggar:  
And if the boy have not a woman's gift  
To rain a shower of commanded tears,  
An onion will do well for such a shift,  
Which in a napkin being close convey'd  
Shall in despite enforce a watery eye.  
See this dispatch'd with all the haste thou canst:  
Anon I'll give thee more instructions.  
I know the boy will well usurp the grace,  
Voice, gait and action of a gentlewoman:  
I long to hear him call the drunkard husband,  
And how my men will stay themselves from laughter  
When they do homage to this simple peasant.  
I'll in to counsel them; haply my presence  
May well abate the over-merry spleen  
Which otherwise would grow into extremes.

SLY:

For God's sake, a pot of small ale.

First Servant:

Will't please your lordship drink a cup of sack?

Second Servant:

Will't please your honour taste of these conserves?

Third Servant:

What raiment will your honour wear to-day?



SLY:

I am Christophero Sly; call not me 'honour' nor  
'lordship:' I ne'er drank sack in my life; and if  
you give me any conserves, give me conserves of  
beef: ne'er ask me what raiment I'll wear; for I  
have no more doublets than backs, no more stockings  
than legs, nor no more shoes than feet; nay,  
sometimes more feet than shoes, or such shoes as my  
toes look through the over-leather.

Lord:

Heaven cease this idle humour in your honour!  
O, that a mighty man of such descent,  
Of such possessions and so high esteem,  
Should be infused with so foul a spirit!

SLY:

What, would you make me mad? Am not I Christopher  
Sly, old Sly's son of Burtonheath, by birth a  
pedlar, by education a cardmaker, by transmutation a  
bear-herd, and now by present profession a tinker?  
Ask Marian Hacket, the fat ale-wife of Wincot, if  
she know me not: if she say I am not fourteen pence  
on the score for sheer ale, score me up for the  
lyingest knave in Christendom. What! I am not  
bestraught: here's--

Third Servant:

O, this it is that makes your lady mourn!

Second Servant:

O, this is it that makes your servants droop!

Lord:

Hence comes it that your kindred shuns your house,  
As beaten hence by your strange lunacy.  
O noble lord, bethink thee of thy birth,  
Call home thy ancient thoughts from banishment  
And banish hence these abject lowly dreams.  
Look how thy servants do attend on thee,  
Each in his office ready at thy beck.  
Wilt thou have music? hark! Apollo plays,  
And twenty caged nightingales do sing:  
Or wilt thou sleep? we'll have thee to a couch  
Softer and sweeter than the lustful bed  
On purpose trimm'd up for Semiramis.  
Say thou wilt walk; we will bestrew the ground:  
Or wilt thou ride? thy horses shall be trapp'd,  
Their harness studded all with gold and pearl.

Dost thou love hawking? thou hast hawks will soar  
Above the morning lark or wilt thou hunt?  
Thy hounds shall make the welkin answer them  
And fetch shrill echoes from the hollow earth.

First Servant:

Say thou wilt course; thy greyhounds are as swift  
As breathed stags, ay, fleeter than the roe.

Second Servant:

Dost thou love pictures? we will fetch thee straight  
Adonis painted by a running brook,  
And Cytherea all in sedges hid,  
Which seem to move and wanton with her breath,  
Even as the waving sedges play with wind.

Lord:

We'll show thee Io as she was a maid,  
And how she was beguiled and surprised,  
As lively painted as the deed was done.

Third Servant:

Or Daphne roaming through a thorny wood,  
Scratching her legs that one shall swear she bleeds,  
And at that sight shall sad Apollo weep,  
So workmanly the blood and tears are drawn.

Lord:

Thou art a lord, and nothing but a lord:  
Thou hast a lady far more beautiful  
Than any woman in this waning age.

First Servant:

And till the tears that she hath shed for thee  
Like envious floods o'er-run her lovely face,  
She was the fairest creature in the world;  
And yet she is inferior to none.

SLY:

Am I a lord? and have I such a lady?  
Or do I dream? or have I dream'd till now?  
I do not sleep: I see, I hear, I speak;  
I smell sweet savours and I feel soft things:  
Upon my life, I am a lord indeed  
And not a tinker nor Christophero Sly.  
Well, bring our lady hither to our sight;  
And once again, a pot o' the smallest ale.

Second Servant:

Will't please your mightiness to wash your hands?

O, how we joy to see your wit restored!  
O, that once more you knew but what you are!  
These fifteen years you have been in a dream;  
Or when you waked, so waked as if you slept.

SLY:

These fifteen years! by my fay, a goodly nap.  
But did I never speak of all that time?

First Servant:

O, yes, my lord, but very idle words:  
For though you lay here in this goodly chamber,  
Yet would you say ye were beaten out of door;  
And rail upon the hostess of the house;  
And say you would present her at the leet,  
Because she brought stone jugs and no seal'd quarts:  
Sometimes you would call out for Cicely Hacket.

SLY:

Ay, the woman's maid of the house.

Third Servant:

Why, sir, you know no house nor no such maid,  
Nor no such men as you have reckon'd up,  
As Stephen Sly and did John Naps of Greece  
And Peter Turph and Henry Pimpernell  
And twenty more such names and men as these  
Which never were nor no man ever saw.

SLY:

Now Lord be thanked for my good amends!

ALL:

Amen.

SLY:

I thank thee: thou shalt not lose by it.

Page:

How fares my noble lord?

SLY:

Marry, I fare well for here is cheer enough.  
Where is my wife?

Page:

Here, noble lord: what is thy will with her?

SLY:

Are you my wife and will not call me husband?

My men should call me 'lord:' I am your goodman.

Page:

My husband and my lord, my lord and husband;  
I am your wife in all obedience.

SLY:

I know it well. What must I call her?

Lord:

Madam.

SLY:

Al'ce madam, or Joan madam?

Lord:

'Madam,' and nothing else: so lords  
call ladies.

SLY:

Madam wife, they say that I have dream'd  
And slept above some fifteen year or more.

Page:

Ay, and the time seems thirty unto me,  
Being all this time abandon'd from your bed.

SLY:

'Tis much. Servants, leave me and her alone.  
Madam, undress you and come now to bed.

Page:

Thrice noble lord, let me entreat of you  
To pardon me yet for a night or two,  
Or, if not so, until the sun be set:  
For your physicians have expressly charged,  
In peril to incur your former malady,  
That I should yet absent me from your bed:  
I hope this reason stands for my excuse.

SLY:

Ay, it stands so that I may hardly  
tarry so long. But I would be loath to fall into  
my dreams again: I will therefore tarry in  
despite of the flesh and the blood.

Messenger:

Your honour's players, heating your amendment,  
Are come to play a pleasant comedy;  
For so your doctors hold it very meet,

Seeing too much sadness hath congeal'd your blood,  
And melancholy is the nurse of frenzy:  
Therefore they thought it good you hear a play  
And frame your mind to mirth and merriment,  
Which bars a thousand harms and lengthens life.

SLY:

Marry, I will, let them play it. Is not a  
comondy a Christmas gambold or a tumbling-trick?

Page:

No, my good lord; it is more pleasing stuff.

SLY:

What, household stuff?

Page:

It is a kind of history.

SLY:

Well, well see't. Come, madam wife, sit by my side  
and let the world slip: we shall ne'er be younger.

LUCENTIO:

Tranio, since for the great desire I had  
To see fair Padua, nursery of arts,  
I am arrived for fruitful Lombardy,  
The pleasant garden of great Italy;  
And by my father's love and leave am arm'd  
With his good will and thy good company,  
My trusty servant, well approved in all,  
Here let us breathe and haply institute  
A course of learning and ingenious studies.  
Pisa renown'd for grave citizens  
Gave me my being and my father first,  
A merchant of great traffic through the world,  
Vincetino come of Bentivolii.  
Vincetino's son brought up in Florence  
It shall become to serve all hopes conceived,  
To deck his fortune with his virtuous deeds:  
And therefore, Tranio, for the time I study,  
Virtue and that part of philosophy  
Will I apply that treats of happiness  
By virtue specially to be achieved.  
Tell me thy mind; for I have Pisa left  
And am to Padua come, as he that leaves  
A shallow plash to plunge him in the deep  
And with satiety seeks to quench his thirst.

TRANIO:

Mi perdonato, gentle master mine,  
I am in all affected as yourself;  
Glad that you thus continue your resolve  
To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.  
Only, good master, while we do admire  
This virtue and this moral discipline,  
Let's be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray;  
Or so devote to Aristotle's cheques  
As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured:  
Balk logic with acquaintance that you have  
And practise rhetoric in your common talk;  
Music and poesy use to quicken you;  
The mathematics and the metaphysics,  
Fall to them as you find your stomach serves you;  
No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en:  
In brief, sir, study what you most affect.

LUCENTIO:

Gramercies, Tranio, well dost thou advise.  
If, Biondello, thou wert come ashore,  
We could at once put us in readiness,  
And take a lodging fit to entertain  
Such friends as time in Padua shall beget.  
But stay a while: what company is this?

TRANIO:

Master, some show to welcome us to town.

BAPTISTA:

Gentlemen, importune me no farther,  
For how I firmly am resolved you know;  
That is, not bestow my youngest daughter  
Before I have a husband for the elder:  
If either of you both love Katharina,  
Because I know you well and love you well,  
Leave shall you have to court her at your pleasure.

GREMIO:

KATHARINA:

I pray you, sir, is it your will  
To make a stale of me amongst these mates?

HORTENSIO:

Mates, maid! how mean you that? no mates for you,  
Unless you were of gentler, milder mould.

KATHARINA:

I'faith, sir, you shall never need to fear:  
I wis it is not half way to her heart;

But if it were, doubt not her care should be  
To comb your noddle with a three-legg'd stool  
And paint your face and use you like a fool.

HORTENSIA:  
From all such devils, good Lord deliver us!

GREMIO:  
And me too, good Lord!

TRANIO:  
Hush, master! here's some good pastime toward:  
That wench is stark mad or wonderful froward.

LUCENTIO:  
But in the other's silence do I see  
Maid's mild behavior and sobriety.  
Peace, Tranio!

TRANIO:  
Well said, master; mum! and gaze your fill.

BAPTISTA:  
Gentlemen, that I may soon make good  
What I have said, Bianca, get you in:  
And let it not displease thee, good Bianca,  
For I will love thee ne'er the less, my girl.

KATHARINA:  
A pretty peat! it is best  
Put finger in the eye, an she knew why.

BIANCA:  
Sister, content you in my discontent.  
Sir, to your pleasure humbly I subscribe:  
My books and instruments shall be my company,  
On them to took and practise by myself.

LUCENTIO:  
Hark, Tranio! thou may'st hear Minerva speak.

HORTENSIO:  
Signior Baptista, will you be so strange?  
Sorry am I that our good will effects  
Bianca's grief.

GREMIO:  
Why will you mew her up,  
Signior Baptista, for this fiend of hell,  
And make her bear the penance of her tongue?

BAPTISTA:

Gentlemen, content ye; I am resolved:

Go in, Bianca:

And for I know she taketh most delight

In music, instruments and poetry,

Schoolmasters will I keep within my house,

Fit to instruct her youth. If you, Hortensio,

Or Signior Gremio, you, know any such,

Prefer them hither; for to cunning men

I will be very kind, and liberal

To mine own children in good bringing up:

And so farewell. Katharina, you may stay;

For I have more to commune with Bianca.

KATHARINA:

Why, and I trust I may go too, may I not? What,  
shall I be appointed hours; as though, belike, I  
knew not what to take and what to leave, ha?

GREMIO:

You may go to the devil's dam: your gifts are so  
good, here's none will hold you. Their love is not  
so great, Hortensio, but we may blow our nails  
together, and fast it fairly out: our cakes dough on  
both sides. Farewell: yet for the love I bear my  
sweet Bianca, if I can by any means light on a fit  
man to teach her that wherein she delights, I will  
wish him to her father.

HORTENSIO:

So will I, Signior Gremio: but a word, I pray.

Though the nature of our quarrel yet never brooked  
parle, know now, upon advice, it toucheth us both,  
that we may yet again have access to our fair  
mistress and be happy rivals in Bianco's love, to  
labour and effect one thing specially.

GREMIO:

What's that, I pray?

HORTENSIO:

Marry, sir, to get a husband for her sister.

GREMIO:

A husband! a devil.

HORTENSIO:

I say, a husband.



GREMIO:

I say, a devil. Thinkest thou, Hortensio, though her father be very rich, any man is so very a fool to be married to hell?

HORTENSIO:

Tush, Gremio, though it pass your patience and mine to endure her loud alarums, why, man, there be good fellows in the world, an a man could light on them, would take her with all faults, and money enough.

GREMIO:

I cannot tell; but I had as lief take her dowry with this condition, to be whipped at the high cross every morning.

HORTENSIO:

Faith, as you say, there's small choice in rotten apples. But come; since this bar in law makes us friends, it shall be so far forth friendly maintained all by helping Baptista's eldest daughter to a husband we set his youngest free for a husband, and then have to't a fresh. Sweet Bianca! Happy man be his dole! He that runs fastest gets the ring. How say you, Signior Gremio?

GREMIO:

I am agreed; and would I had given him the best horse in Padua to begin his wooing that would thoroughly woo her, wed her and bed her and rid the house of her! Come on.

TRANIO:

I pray, sir, tell me, is it possible  
That love should of a sudden take such hold?

LUCENTIO:

O Tranio, till I found it to be true,  
I never thought it possible or likely;  
But see, while idly I stood looking on,  
I found the effect of love in idleness:  
And now in plainness do confess to thee,  
That art to me as secret and as dear  
As Anna to the queen of Carthage was,  
Tranio, I burn, I pine, I perish, Tranio,  
If I achieve not this young modest girl.  
Counsel me, Tranio, for I know thou canst;  
Assist me, Tranio, for I know thou wilt.

TRANIO:

Master, it is no time to chide you now;  
Affection is not rated from the heart:  
If love have touch'd you, nought remains but so,  
'Redime te captum quam queas minimo.'

LUCENTIO:  
Gramercies, lad, go forward; this contents:  
The rest will comfort, for thy counsel's sound.

TRANIO:  
Master, you look'd so longly on the maid,  
Perhaps you mark'd not what's the pith of all.

LUCENTIO:  
O yes, I saw sweet beauty in her face,  
Such as the daughter of Agenor had,  
That made great Jove to humble him to her hand.  
When with his knees he kiss'd the Cretan strand.

TRANIO:  
Saw you no more? mark'd you not how her sister  
Began to scold and raise up such a storm  
That mortal ears might hardly endure the din?

LUCENTIO:  
Tranio, I saw her coral lips to move  
And with her breath she did perfume the air:  
Sacred and sweet was all I saw in her.

TRANIO:  
Nay, then, 'tis time to stir him from his trance.  
I pray, awake, sir: if you love the maid,  
Bend thoughts and wits to achieve her. Thus it stands:  
Her eldest sister is so curst and shrewd  
That till the father rid his hands of her,  
Master, your love must live a maid at home;  
And therefore has he closely mew'd her up,  
Because she will not be annoy'd with suitors.

LUCENTIO:  
Ah, Tranio, what a cruel father's he!  
But art thou not advised, he took some care  
To get her cunning schoolmasters to instruct her?

TRANIO:  
Ay, marry, am I, sir; and now 'tis plotted.

LUCENTIO:  
I have it, Tranio.

TRANIO:  
Master, for my hand,  
Both our inventions meet and jump in one.

LUCENTIO:  
Tell me thine first.

TRANIO:  
You will be schoolmaster  
And undertake the teaching of the maid:  
That's your device.

LUCENTIO:  
It is: may it be done?

TRANIO:  
Not possible; for who shall bear your part,  
And be in Padua here Vincentio's son,  
Keep house and ply his book, welcome his friends,  
Visit his countrymen and banquet them?

LUCENTIO:  
Basta; content thee, for I have it full.  
We have not yet been seen in any house,  
Nor can we lie distinguish'd by our faces  
For man or master; then it follows thus;  
Thou shalt be master, Tranio, in my stead,  
Keep house and port and servants as I should:  
I will some other be, some Florentine,  
Some Neapolitan, or meaner man of Pisa.  
'Tis hatch'd and shall be so: Tranio, at once  
Uncase thee; take my colour'd hat and cloak:  
When Biondello comes, he waits on thee;  
But I will charm him first to keep his tongue.

TRANIO:  
So had you need.  
In brief, sir, sith it your pleasure is,  
And I am tied to be obedient;  
For so your father charged me at our parting,  
'Be serviceable to my son,' quoth he,  
Although I think 'twas in another sense;  
I am content to be Lucentio,  
Because so well I love Lucentio.

LUCENTIO:  
Tranio, be so, because Lucentio loves:  
And let me be a slave, to achieve that maid  
Whose sudden sight hath thrall'd my wounded eye.  
Here comes the rogue.

Sirrah, where have you been?

BIONDELLO:

Where have I been! Nay, how now! where are you?  
Master, has my fellow Tranio stolen your clothes? Or  
you stolen his? or both? pray, what's the news?

LUCENTIO:

Sirrah, come hither: 'tis no time to jest,  
And therefore frame your manners to the time.  
Your fellow Tranio here, to save my life,  
Puts my apparel and my countenance on,  
And I for my escape have put on his;  
For in a quarrel since I came ashore  
I kill'd a man and fear I was descried:  
Wait you on him, I charge you, as becomes,  
While I make way from hence to save my life:  
You understand me?

BIONDELLO:

I, sir! ne'er a whit.

LUCENTIO:

And not a jot of Tranio in your mouth:  
Tranio is changed into Lucentio.

BIONDELLO:

The better for him: would I were so too!

TRANIO:

So could I, faith, boy, to have the next wish after,  
That Lucentio indeed had Baptista's youngest daughter.  
But, sirrah, not for my sake, but your master's, I advise  
You use your manners discreetly in all kind of companies:  
When I am alone, why, then I am Tranio;  
But in all places else your master Lucentio.

LUCENTIO:

Tranio, let's go: one thing more rests, that  
thysself execute, to make one among these wooers: if  
thou ask me why, sufficeth, my reasons are both good  
and weighty.

First Servant:

My lord, you nod; you do not mind the play.

SLY:

Yes, by Saint Anne, do I. A good matter, surely:  
comes there any more of it?

Page:

My lord, 'tis but begun.

SLY:

'Tis a very excellent piece of work, madam lady:  
would 'twere done!

PETRUCHIO:

Verona, for a while I take my leave,  
To see my friends in Padua, but of all  
My best beloved and approved friend,  
Hortensio; and I trow this is his house.  
Here, sirrah Grumio; knock, I say.

GRUMIO:

Knock, sir! whom should I knock? is there man has  
rebused your worship?

PETRUCHIO:

Villain, I say, knock me here soundly.

GRUMIO:

Knock you here, sir! why, sir, what am I, sir, that  
I should knock you here, sir?

PETRUCHIO:

Villain, I say, knock me at this gate  
And rap me well, or I'll knock your knave's pate.

GRUMIO:

My master is grown quarrelsome. I should knock  
you first,  
And then I know after who comes by the worst.

PETRUCHIO:

Will it not be?  
Faith, sirrah, an you'll not knock, I'll ring it;  
I'll try how you can sol, fa, and sing it.

GRUMIO:

Help, masters, help! my master is mad.

PETRUCHIO:

Now, knock when I bid you, sirrah villain!

HORTENSIO:

How now! what's the matter? My old friend Grumio!  
and my good friend Petruchio! How do you all at Verona?

PETRUCHIO:

Signior Hortensio, come you to part the fray?  
'Con tutto il cuore, ben trovato,' may I say.

HORTENSIO:

'Alla nostra casa ben venuto, molto honorato signor mio Petruchio.' Rise, Grumio, rise: we will compound this quarrel.

GRUMIO:

Nay, 'tis no matter, sir, what he 'leges in Latin. if this be not a lawful case for me to leave his service, look you, sir, he bid me knock him and rap him soundly, sir: well, was it fit for a servant to use his master so, being perhaps, for aught I see, two and thirty, a pip out? Whom would to God I had well knock'd at first, Then had not Grumio come by the worst.

PETRUCHIO:

A senseless villain! Good Hortensio,  
I bade the rascal knock upon your gate  
And could not get him for my heart to do it.

GRUMIO:

Knock at the gate! O heavens! Spake you not these words plain, 'Sirrah, knock me here, rap me here, knock me well, and knock me soundly'? And come you now with, 'knocking at the gate'?

PETRUCHIO:

Sirrah, be gone, or talk not, I advise you.

HORTENSIO:

Petruchio, patience; I am Grumio's pledge:  
Why, this's a heavy chance 'twixt him and you,  
Your ancient, trusty, pleasant servant Grumio.  
And tell me now, sweet friend, what happy gale  
Blows you to Padua here from old Verona?

PETRUCHIO:

Such wind as scatters young men through the world,  
To seek their fortunes farther than at home  
Where small experience grows. But in a few,  
Signior Hortensio, thus it stands with me:  
Antonio, my father, is deceased;  
And I have thrust myself into this maze,  
Haply to wive and thrive as best I may:  
Crowns in my purse I have and goods at home,  
And so am come abroad to see the world.

HORTENSIO:

Petruchio, shall I then come roundly to thee  
And wish thee to a shrewd ill-favour'd wife?  
Thou'ldst thank me but a little for my counsel:  
And yet I'll promise thee she shall be rich  
And very rich: but thou'rt too much my friend,  
And I'll not wish thee to her.

PETRUCHIO:

Signior Hortensio, 'twixt such friends as we  
Few words suffice; and therefore, if thou know  
One rich enough to be Petruchio's wife,  
As wealth is burden of my wooing dance,  
Be she as foul as was Florentius' love,  
As old as Sibyl and as curst and shrewd  
As Socrates' Xanthippe, or a worse,  
She moves me not, or not removes, at least,  
Affection's edge in me, were she as rough  
As are the swelling Adriatic seas:  
I come to wive it wealthily in Padua;  
If wealthily, then happily in Padua.

GRUMIO:

Nay, look you, sir, he tells you flatly what his  
mind is: Why give him gold enough and marry him to  
a puppet or an aglet-baby; or an old trot with ne'er  
a tooth in her head, though she have as many diseases  
as two and fifty horses: why, nothing comes amiss,  
so money comes withal.

HORTENSIO:

Petruchio, since we are stepp'd thus far in,  
I will continue that I broach'd in jest.  
I can, Petruchio, help thee to a wife  
With wealth enough and young and beauteous,  
Brought up as best becomes a gentlewoman:  
Her only fault, and that is faults enough,  
Is that she is intolerable curst  
And shrewd and froward, so beyond all measure  
That, were my state far worser than it is,  
I would not wed her for a mine of gold.

PETRUCHIO:

Hortensio, peace! thou know'st not gold's effect:  
Tell me her father's name and 'tis enough;  
For I will board her, though she chide as loud  
As thunder when the clouds in autumn crack.

HORTENSIO:

Her father is Baptista Minola,  
An affable and courteous gentleman:

Her name is Katharina Minola,  
Renown'd in Padua for her scolding tongue.

PETRUCHIO:

I know her father, though I know not her;  
And he knew my deceased father well.  
I will not sleep, Hortensio, till I see her;  
And therefore let me be thus bold with you  
To give you over at this first encounter,  
Unless you will accompany me thither.

GRUMIO:

I pray you, sir, let him go while the humour lasts.  
O' my word, an she knew him as well as I do, she  
would think scolding would do little good upon him:  
she may perhaps call him half a score knaves or so:  
why, that's nothing; an he begin once, he'll rail in  
his rope-tricks. I'll tell you what sir, an she  
stand him but a little, he will throw a figure in  
her face and so disfigure her with it that she  
shall have no more eyes to see withal than a cat.  
You know him not, sir.

HORTENSIO:

Tarry, Petruchio, I must go with thee,  
For in Baptista's keep my treasure is:  
He hath the jewel of my life in hold,  
His youngest daughter, beautiful Bianca,  
And her withholds from me and other more,  
Suitors to her and rivals in my love,  
Supposing it a thing impossible,  
For those defects I have before rehearsed,  
That ever Katharina will be woo'd;  
Therefore this order hath Baptista ta'en,  
That none shall have access unto Bianca  
Till Katharina the curst have got a husband.

GRUMIO:

Katharina the curst!  
A title for a maid of all titles the worst.

HORTENSIO:

Now shall my friend Petruchio do me grace,  
And offer me disguised in sober robes  
To old Baptista as a schoolmaster  
Well seen in music, to instruct Bianca;  
That so I may, by this device, at least  
Have leave and leisure to make love to her  
And unsuspected court her by herself.



GRUMIO:

Here's no knavery! See, to beguile the old folks,  
how the young folks lay their heads together!  
Master, master, look about you: who goes there, ha?

HORTENSIO:

Peace, Grumio! it is the rival of my love.  
Petruchio, stand by a while.

GRUMIO:

A proper stripling and an amorous!

GREMIO:

O, very well; I have perused the note.  
Hark you, sir: I'll have them very fairly bound:  
All books of love, see that at any hand;  
And see you read no other lectures to her:  
You understand me: over and beside  
Signior Baptista's liberality,  
I'll mend it with a largess. Take your paper too,  
And let me have them very well perfumed  
For she is sweeter than perfume itself  
To whom they go to. What will you read to her?

LUCENTIO:

Whate'er I read to her, I'll plead for you  
As for my patron, stand you so assured,  
As firmly as yourself were still in place:  
Yea, and perhaps with more successful words  
Than you, unless you were a scholar, sir.

GREMIO:

O this learning, what a thing it is!

GRUMIO:

O this woodcock, what an ass it is!

PETRUCHIO:

Peace, sirrah!

HORTENSIO:

Grumio, mum! God save you, Signior Gremio.

GREMIO:

And you are well met, Signior Hortensio.  
Trow you whither I am going? To Baptista Minola.  
I promised to inquire carefully  
About a schoolmaster for the fair Bianca:  
And by good fortune I have lighted well  
On this young man, for learning and behavior

Fit for her turn, well read in poetry  
And other books, good ones, I warrant ye.

HORTENSIO:

'Tis well; and I have met a gentleman  
Hath promised me to help me to another,  
A fine musician to instruct our mistress;  
So shall I no whit be behind in duty  
To fair Bianca, so beloved of me.

GREMIO:

Beloved of me; and that my deeds shall prove.

GRUMIO:

And that his bags shall prove.

HORTENSIO:

Gremio, 'tis now no time to vent our love:  
Listen to me, and if you speak me fair,  
I'll tell you news indifferent good for either.  
Here is a gentleman whom by chance I met,  
Upon agreement from us to his liking,  
Will undertake to woo curst Katharina,  
Yea, and to marry her, if her dowry please.

GREMIO:

So said, so done, is well.  
Hortensio, have you told him all her faults?

PETRUCHIO:

I know she is an irksome brawling scold:  
If that be all, masters, I hear no harm.

GREMIO:

No, say'st me so, friend? What countryman?

PETRUCHIO:

Born in Verona, old Antonio's son:  
My father dead, my fortune lives for me;  
And I do hope good days and long to see.

GREMIO:

O sir, such a life, with such a wife, were strange!  
But if you have a stomach, to't i' God's name:  
You shall have me assisting you in all.  
But will you woo this wild-cat?

PETRUCHIO:

Will I live?

GRUMIO:

Will he woo her? ay, or I'll hang her.

PETRUCHIO:

Why came I hither but to that intent?  
Think you a little din can daunt mine ears?  
Have I not in my time heard lions roar?  
Have I not heard the sea puff'd up with winds  
Rage like an angry boar chafed with sweat?  
Have I not heard great ordnance in the field,  
And heaven's artillery thunder in the skies?  
Have I not in a pitched battle heard  
Loud 'larums, neighing steeds, and trumpets' clang?  
And do you tell me of a woman's tongue,  
That gives not half so great a blow to hear  
As will a chestnut in a farmer's fire?  
Tush, tush! fear boys with bugs.

GRUMIO:

For he fears none.

GREMIO:

Hortensio, hark:  
This gentleman is happily arrived,  
My mind presumes, for his own good and ours.

HORTENSIO:

I promised we would be contributors  
And bear his charging of wooing, whatsoe'er.

GREMIO:

And so we will, provided that he win her.

GRUMIO:

I would I were as sure of a good dinner.

TRANIO:

Gentlemen, God save you. If I may be bold,  
Tell me, I beseech you, which is the readiest way  
To the house of Signior Baptista Minola?

BIONDELLO:

He that has the two fair daughters: is't he you mean?

TRANIO:

Even he, Biondello.

GREMIO:

Hark you, sir; you mean not her to--

TRANIO:  
Perhaps, him and her, sir: what have you to do?

PETRUCHIO:  
Not her that chides, sir, at any hand, I pray.

TRANIO:  
I love no chiders, sir. Biondello, let's away.

LUCENTIO:  
Well begun, Tranio.

HORTENSIO:  
Sir, a word ere you go;  
Are you a suitor to the maid you talk of, yea or no?

TRANIO:  
And if I be, sir, is it any offence?

GREMIO:  
No; if without more words you will get you hence.

TRANIO:  
Why, sir, I pray, are not the streets as free  
For me as for you?

GREMIO:  
But so is not she.

TRANIO:  
For what reason, I beseech you?

GREMIO:  
For this reason, if you'll know,  
That she's the choice love of Signior Gremio.

HORTENSIO:  
That she's the chosen of Signior Hortensio.

TRANIO:  
Softly, my masters! if you be gentlemen,  
Do me this right; hear me with patience.  
Baptista is a noble gentleman,  
To whom my father is not all unknown;  
And were his daughter fairer than she is,  
She may more suitors have and me for one.  
Fair Leda's daughter had a thousand wooers;  
Then well one more may fair Bianca have:  
And so she shall; Lucentio shall make one,  
Though Paris came in hope to speed alone.

GREMIO:

What! this gentleman will out-talk us all.

LUCENTIO:

Sir, give him head: I know he'll prove a jade.

PETRUCHIO:

Hortensio, to what end are all these words?

HORTENSIO:

Sir, let me be so bold as ask you,  
Did you yet ever see Baptista's daughter?

TRANIO:

No, sir; but hear I do that he hath two,  
The one as famous for a scolding tongue  
As is the other for beauteous modesty.

PETRUCHIO:

Sir, sir, the first's for me; let her go by.

GREMIO:

Yea, leave that labour to great Hercules;  
And let it be more than Alcides' twelve.

PETRUCHIO:

Sir, understand you this of me in sooth:  
The youngest daughter whom you hearken for  
Her father keeps from all access of suitors,  
And will not promise her to any man  
Until the elder sister first be wed:  
The younger then is free and not before.

TRANIO:

If it be so, sir, that you are the man  
Must stead us all and me amongst the rest,  
And if you break the ice and do this feat,  
Achieve the elder, set the younger free  
For our access, whose hap shall be to have her  
Will not so graceless be to be ingrate.

HORTENSIO:

Sir, you say well and well you do conceive;  
And since you do profess to be a suitor,  
You must, as we do, gratify this gentleman,  
To whom we all rest generally beholding.

TRANIO:

Sir, I shall not be slack: in sign whereof,

Please ye we may contrive this afternoon,  
And quaff carouses to our mistress' health,  
And do as adversaries do in law,  
Strive mightily, but eat and drink as friends.

GRUMIO:  
O excellent motion! Fellows, let's be gone.

HORTENSIO:  
The motion's good indeed and be it so,  
Petruchio, I shall be your ben venuto.

BIANCA:  
Good sister, wrong me not, nor wrong yourself,  
To make a bondmaid and a slave of me;  
That I disdain: but for these other gawds,  
Unbind my hands, I'll pull them off myself,  
Yea, all my raiment, to my petticoat;  
Or what you will command me will I do,  
So well I know my duty to my elders.

KATHARINA:  
Of all thy suitors, here I charge thee, tell  
Whom thou lovest best: see thou dissemble not.

BIANCA:  
Believe me, sister, of all the men alive  
I never yet beheld that special face  
Which I could fancy more than any other.

KATHARINA:  
Minion, thou liest. Is't not Hortensio?

BIANCA:  
If you affect him, sister, here I swear  
I'll plead for you myself, but you shall have  
him.

KATHARINA:  
O then, belike, you fancy riches more:  
You will have Gremio to keep you fair.

BIANCA:  
Is it for him you do envy me so?  
Nay then you jest, and now I well perceive  
You have but jested with me all this while:  
I prithee, sister Kate, untie my hands.

KATHARINA:  
If that be jest, then all the rest was so.

BAPTISTA:

Why, how now, dame! whence grows this insolence?  
Bianca, stand aside. Poor girl! she weeps.  
Go ply thy needle; meddle not with her.  
For shame, thou holding of a devilish spirit,  
Why dost thou wrong her that did ne'er wrong thee?  
When did she cross thee with a bitter word?

KATHARINA:

Her silence flouts me, and I'll be revenged.

BAPTISTA:

What, in my sight? Bianca, get thee in.

KATHARINA:

What, will you not suffer me? Nay, now I see  
She is your treasure, she must have a husband;  
I must dance bare-foot on her wedding day  
And for your love to her lead apes in hell.  
Talk not to me: I will go sit and weep  
Till I can find occasion of revenge.

BAPTISTA:

Was ever gentleman thus grieved as I?  
But who comes here?

GREMIO:

Good morrow, neighbour Baptista.

BAPTISTA:

Good morrow, neighbour Gremio.  
God save you, gentlemen!

PETRUCHIO:

And you, good sir! Pray, have you not a daughter  
Call'd Katharina, fair and virtuous?

BAPTISTA:

I have a daughter, sir, called Katharina.

GREMIO:

You are too blunt: go to it orderly.

PETRUCHIO:

You wrong me, Signior Gremio: give me leave.  
I am a gentleman of Verona, sir,  
That, hearing of her beauty and her wit,  
Her affability and bashful modesty,  
Her wondrous qualities and mild behavior,

Am bold to show myself a forward guest  
Within your house, to make mine eye the witness  
Of that report which I so oft have heard.  
And, for an entrance to my entertainment,  
I do present you with a man of mine,  
Cunning in music and the mathematics,  
To instruct her fully in those sciences,  
Whereof I know she is not ignorant:  
Accept of him, or else you do me wrong:  
His name is Licio, born in Mantua.

BAPTISTA:

You're welcome, sir; and he, for your good sake.  
But for my daughter Katharina, this I know,  
She is not for your turn, the more my grief.

PETRUCHIO:

I see you do not mean to part with her,  
Or else you like not of my company.

BAPTISTA:

Mistake me not; I speak but as I find.  
Whence are you, sir? what may I call your name?

PETRUCHIO:

Petruchio is my name; Antonio's son,  
A man well known throughout all Italy.

BAPTISTA:

I know him well: you are welcome for his sake.

GREMIO:

Saving your tale, Petruchio, I pray,  
Let us, that are poor petitioners, speak too:  
Baccare! you are marvellous forward.

PETRUCHIO:

O, pardon me, Signior Gremio; I would fain be doing.

GREMIO:

I doubt it not, sir; but you will curse your  
wooing. Neighbour, this is a gift very grateful, I am  
sure of it. To express the like kindness, myself,  
that have been more kindly beholding to you than  
any, freely give unto you this young scholar,  
that hath been long studying at Rheims; as cunning  
in Greek, Latin, and other languages, as the other  
in music and mathematics: his name is Cambio; pray,  
accept his service.



BAPTISTA:

A thousand thanks, Signior Gremio.

Welcome, good Cambio.

But, gentle sir, methinks you walk like a stranger:  
may I be so bold to know the cause of your coming?

TRANIO:

Pardon me, sir, the boldness is mine own,  
That, being a stranger in this city here,  
Do make myself a suitor to your daughter,  
Unto Bianca, fair and virtuous.

Nor is your firm resolve unknown to me,  
In the preferment of the eldest sister.

This liberty is all that I request,  
That, upon knowledge of my parentage,  
I may have welcome 'mongst the rest that woo  
And free access and favour as the rest:  
And, toward the education of your daughters,  
I here bestow a simple instrument,  
And this small packet of Greek and Latin books:  
If you accept them, then their worth is great.

BAPTISTA:

Lucentio is your name; of whence, I pray?

TRANIO:

Of Pisa, sir; son to Vincentio.

BAPTISTA:

A mighty man of Pisa; by report

I know him well: you are very welcome, sir,  
Take you the lute, and you the set of books;  
You shall go see your pupils presently.

Holla, within!

Sirrah, lead these gentlemen

To my daughters; and tell them both,

These are their tutors: bid them use them well.

We will go walk a little in the orchard,  
And then to dinner. You are passing welcome,  
And so I pray you all to think yourselves.

PETRUCHIO:

Signior Baptista, my business asketh haste,  
And every day I cannot come to woo.

You knew my father well, and in him me,  
Left solely heir to all his lands and goods,  
Which I have better'd rather than decreased:  
Then tell me, if I get your daughter's love,  
What dowry shall I have with her to wife?

BAPTISTA:

After my death the one half of my lands,  
And in possession twenty thousand crowns.

PETRUCHIO:

And, for that dowry, I'll assure her of  
Her widowhood, be it that she survive me,  
In all my lands and leases whatsoever:  
Let specialties be therefore drawn between us,  
That covenants may be kept on either hand.

BAPTISTA:

Ay, when the special thing is well obtain'd,  
That is, her love; for that is all in all.

PETRUCHIO:

Why, that is nothing: for I tell you, father,  
I am as peremptory as she proud-minded;  
And where two raging fires meet together  
They do consume the thing that feeds their fury:  
Though little fire grows great with little wind,  
Yet extreme gusts will blow out fire and all:  
So I to her and so she yields to me;  
For I am rough and woo not like a babe.

BAPTISTA:

Well mayst thou woo, and happy be thy speed!  
But be thou arm'd for some unhappy words.

PETRUCHIO:

Ay, to the proof; as mountains are for winds,  
That shake not, though they blow perpetually.

BAPTISTA:

How now, my friend! why dost thou look so pale?

HORTENSIO:

For fear, I promise you, if I look pale.

BAPTISTA:

What, will my daughter prove a good musician?

HORTENSIO:

I think she'll sooner prove a soldier  
Iron may hold with her, but never lutes.

BAPTISTA:

Why, then thou canst not break her to the lute?

HORTENSIO:

Why, no; for she hath broke the lute to me.  
I did but tell her she mistook her frets,  
And bow'd her hand to teach her fingering;  
When, with a most impatient devilish spirit,  
'Frets, call you these?' quoth she; 'I'll fume  
with them:'  
And, with that word, she struck me on the head,  
And through the instrument my pate made way;  
And there I stood amazed for a while,  
As on a pillory, looking through the lute;  
While she did call me rascal fiddler  
And twangling Jack; with twenty such vile terms,  
As had she studied to misuse me so.

PETRUCHIO:

Now, by the world, it is a lusty wench;  
I love her ten times more than e'er I did:  
O, how I long to have some chat with her!

BAPTISTA:

Well, go with me and be not so discomfited:  
Proceed in practise with my younger daughter;  
She's apt to learn and thankful for good turns.  
Signior Petruchio, will you go with us,  
Or shall I send my daughter Kate to you?

PETRUCHIO:

I pray you do.  
I will attend her here,  
And woo her with some spirit when she comes.  
Say that she rail; why then I'll tell her plain  
She sings as sweetly as a nightingale:  
Say that she frown, I'll say she looks as clear  
As morning roses newly wash'd with dew:  
Say she be mute and will not speak a word;  
Then I'll commend her volubility,  
And say she uttereth piercing eloquence:  
If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks,  
As though she bid me stay by her a week:  
If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day  
When I shall ask the banns and when be married.  
But here she comes; and now, Petruchio, speak.  
Good morrow, Kate; for that's your name, I hear.

KATHARINA:

Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing:  
They call me Katharina that do talk of me.

PETRUCHIO:

You lie, in faith; for you are call'd plain Kate,

And bonny Kate and sometimes Kate the curst;  
But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom  
Kate of Kate Hall, my super-dainty Kate,  
For dainties are all Kates, and therefore, Kate,  
Take this of me, Kate of my consolation;  
Hearing thy mildness praised in every town,  
Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded,  
Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs,  
Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.

KATHARINA:  
Moved! in good time: let him that moved you hither  
Remove you hence: I knew you at the first  
You were a moveable.

PETRUCHIO:  
Why, what's a moveable?

KATHARINA:  
A join'd-stool.

PETRUCHIO:  
Thou hast hit it: come, sit on me.

KATHARINA:  
Asses are made to bear, and so are you.

PETRUCHIO:  
Women are made to bear, and so are you.

KATHARINA:  
No such jade as you, if me you mean.

PETRUCHIO:  
Alas! good Kate, I will not burden thee;  
For, knowing thee to be but young and light--

KATHARINA:  
Too light for such a swain as you to catch;  
And yet as heavy as my weight should be.

PETRUCHIO:  
Should be! should--buzz!

KATHARINA:  
Well ta'en, and like a buzzard.

PETRUCHIO:  
O slow-wing'd turtle! shall a buzzard take thee?

KATHARINA:

Ay, for a turtle, as he takes a buzzard.

PETRUCHIO:

Come, come, you wasp; i' faith, you are too angry.

KATHARINA:

If I be waspish, best beware my sting.

PETRUCHIO:

My remedy is then, to pluck it out.

KATHARINA:

Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies,

PETRUCHIO:

Who knows not where a wasp does  
wear his sting? In his tail.

KATHARINA:

In his tongue.

PETRUCHIO:

Whose tongue?

KATHARINA:

Yours, if you talk of tails: and so farewell.

PETRUCHIO:

What, with my tongue in your tail? nay, come again,  
Good Kate; I am a gentleman.

KATHARINA:

That I'll try.

PETRUCHIO:

I swear I'll cuff you, if you strike again.

KATHARINA:

So may you lose your arms:  
If you strike me, you are no gentleman;  
And if no gentleman, why then no arms.

PETRUCHIO:

A herald, Kate? O, put me in thy books!

KATHARINA:

What is your crest? a coxcomb?

PETRUCHIO:

A combless cock, so Kate will be my hen.

KATHARINA:

No cock of mine; you crow too like a craven.

PETRUCHIO:

Nay, come, Kate, come; you must not look so sour.

KATHARINA:

It is my fashion, when I see a crab.

PETRUCHIO:

Why, here's no crab; and therefore look not sour.

KATHARINA:

There is, there is.

PETRUCHIO:

Then show it me.

KATHARINA:

Had I a glass, I would.

PETRUCHIO:

What, you mean my face?

KATHARINA:

Well aim'd of such a young one.

PETRUCHIO:

Now, by Saint George, I am too young for you.

KATHARINA:

Yet you are wither'd.

PETRUCHIO:

'Tis with cares.

KATHARINA:

I care not.

PETRUCHIO:

Nay, hear you, Kate: in sooth you scape not so.

KATHARINA:

I chafe you, if I tarry: let me go.

PETRUCHIO:

No, not a whit: I find you passing gentle.

'Twas told me you were rough and coy and sullen,

And now I find report a very liar;  
For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous,  
But slow in speech, yet sweet as spring-time flowers:  
Thou canst not frown, thou canst not look askance,  
Nor bite the lip, as angry wenches will,  
Nor hast thou pleasure to be cross in talk,  
But thou with mildness entertain'st thy wooers,  
With gentle conference, soft and affable.  
Why does the world report that Kate doth limp?  
O slanderous world! Kate like the hazel-twigg  
Is straight and slender and as brown in hue  
As hazel nuts and sweeter than the kernels.  
O, let me see thee walk: thou dost not halt.

KATHARINA:

Go, fool, and whom thou keep'st command.

PETRUCHIO:

Did ever Dian so become a grove  
As Kate this chamber with her princely gait?  
O, be thou Dian, and let her be Kate;  
And then let Kate be chaste and Dian sportful!

KATHARINA:

Where did you study all this goodly speech?

PETRUCHIO:

It is extempore, from my mother-wit.

KATHARINA:

A witty mother! witless else her son.

PETRUCHIO:

Am I not wise?

KATHARINA:

Yes; keep you warm.

PETRUCHIO:

Marry, so I mean, sweet Katharina, in thy bed:  
And therefore, setting all this chat aside,  
Thus in plain terms: your father hath consented  
That you shall be my wife; your dowry 'greed on;  
And, Will you, nill you, I will marry you.  
Now, Kate, I am a husband for your turn;  
For, by this light, whereby I see thy beauty,  
Thy beauty, that doth make me like thee well,  
Thou must be married to no man but me;  
For I am he am born to tame you Kate,  
And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate

Conformable as other household Kates.  
Here comes your father: never make denial;  
I must and will have Katharina to my wife.

BAPTISTA:

Now, Signior Petruchio, how speed you with my daughter?

PETRUCHIO:

How but well, sir? how but well?  
It were impossible I should speed amiss.

BAPTISTA:

Why, how now, daughter Katharina! in your dumps?

KATHARINA:

Call you me daughter? now, I promise you  
You have show'd a tender fatherly regard,  
To wish me wed to one half lunatic;  
A mad-cup ruffian and a swearing Jack,  
That thinks with oaths to face the matter out.

PETRUCHIO:

Father, 'tis thus: yourself and all the world,  
That talk'd of her, have talk'd amiss of her:  
If she be curst, it is for policy,  
For she's not froward, but modest as the dove;  
She is not hot, but temperate as the morn;  
For patience she will prove a second Grissel,  
And Roman Lucrece for her chastity:  
And to conclude, we have 'greed so well together,  
That upon Sunday is the wedding-day.

KATHARINA:

I'll see thee hang'd on Sunday first.

GREMIO:

Hark, Petruchio; she says she'll see thee  
hang'd first.

TRANIO:

Is this your speeding? nay, then, good night our part!

PETRUCHIO:

Be patient, gentlemen; I choose her for myself:  
If she and I be pleased, what's that to you?  
'Tis bargain'd 'twixt us twain, being alone,  
That she shall still be curst in company.  
I tell you, 'tis incredible to believe  
How much she loves me: O, the kindest Kate!  
She hung about my neck; and kiss on kiss



She vied so fast, protesting oath on oath,  
That in a twink she won me to her love.  
O, you are novices! 'tis a world to see,  
How tame, when men and women are alone,  
A meacock wretch can make the curstest shrew.  
Give me thy hand, Kate: I will unto Venice,  
To buy apparel 'gainst the wedding-day.  
Provide the feast, father, and bid the guests;  
I will be sure my Katharina shall be fine.

BAPTISTA:

I know not what to say: but give me your hands;  
God send you joy, Petruchio! 'tis a match.

GREMIO:

Amen, say we: we will be witnesses.

PETRUCHIO:

Father, and wife, and gentlemen, adieu;  
I will to Venice; Sunday comes apace:  
We will have rings and things and fine array;  
And kiss me, Kate, we will be married o'Sunday.

GREMIO:

Was ever match clapp'd up so suddenly?

BAPTISTA:

Faith, gentlemen, now I play a merchant's part,  
And venture madly on a desperate mart.

TRANIO:

'Twas a commodity lay fretting by you:  
'Twill bring you gain, or perish on the seas.

BAPTISTA:

The gain I seek is, quiet in the match.

GREMIO:

No doubt but he hath got a quiet catch.  
But now, Baptists, to your younger daughter:  
Now is the day we long have looked for:  
I am your neighbour, and was suitor first.

TRANIO:

And I am one that love Bianca more  
Than words can witness, or your thoughts can guess.

GREMIO:

Youngling, thou canst not love so dear as I.

TRANIO:

Graybeard, thy love doth freeze.

GREMIO:

But thine doth fry.

Skipper, stand back: 'tis age that nourisheth.

TRANIO:

But youth in ladies' eyes that flourisheth.

BAPTISTA:

Content you, gentlemen: I will compound this strife:

'Tis deeds must win the prize; and he of both

That can assure my daughter greatest dower

Shall have my Bianca's love.

Say, Signior Gremio, What can you assure her?

GREMIO:

First, as you know, my house within the city

Is richly furnished with plate and gold;

Basins and ewers to lave her dainty hands;

My hangings all of Tyrian tapestry;

In ivory coffers I have stuff'd my crowns;

In cypress chests my arras counterpoints,

Costly apparel, tents, and canopies,

Fine linen, Turkey cushions boss'd with pearl,

Valance of Venice gold in needlework,

Pewter and brass and all things that belong

To house or housekeeping: then, at my farm

I have a hundred milch-kine to the pail,

Sixscore fat oxen standing in my stalls,

And all things answerable to this portion.

Myself am struck in years, I must confess;

And if I die to-morrow, this is hers,

If whilst I live she will be only mine.

TRANIO:

That 'only' came well in. Sir, list to me:

I am my father's heir and only son:

If I may have your daughter to my wife,

I'll leave her houses three or four as good,

Within rich Pisa walls, as any one

Old Signior Gremio has in Padua;

Besides two thousand ducats by the year

Of fruitful land, all which shall be her jointure.

What, have I pinch'd you, Signior Gremio?

GREMIO:

Two thousand ducats by the year of land!

My land amounts not to so much in all:

That she shall have; besides an argosy  
That now is lying in Marseilles' road.  
What, have I choked you with an argosy?

TRANIO:  
Gremio, 'tis known my father hath no less  
Than three great argosies; besides two galliases,  
And twelve tight galleys: these I will assure her,  
And twice as much, whate'er thou offer'st next.

GREMIO:  
Nay, I have offer'd all, I have no more;  
And she can have no more than all I have:  
If you like me, she shall have me and mine.

TRANIO:  
Why, then the maid is mine from all the world,  
By your firm promise: Gremio is out-vied.

BAPTISTA:  
I must confess your offer is the best;  
And, let your father make her the assurance,  
She is your own; else, you must pardon me,  
if you should die before him, where's her dower?

TRANIO:  
That's but a cavil: he is old, I young.

GREMIO:  
And may not young men die, as well as old?

BAPTISTA:  
Well, gentlemen,  
I am thus resolved: on Sunday next you know  
My daughter Katharina is to be married:  
Now, on the Sunday following, shall Bianca  
Be bride to you, if you this assurance;  
If not, Signior Gremio:  
And so, I take my leave, and thank you both.

GREMIO:  
Adieu, good neighbour.  
Now I fear thee not:  
Sirrah young gamester, your father were a fool  
To give thee all, and in his waning age  
Set foot under thy table: tut, a toy!  
An old Italian fox is not so kind, my boy.

TRANIO:  
A vengeance on your crafty wither'd hide!

Yet I have faced it with a card of ten.  
'Tis in my head to do my master good:  
I see no reason but supposed Lucentio  
Must get a father, call'd 'supposed Vincentio;'  
And that's a wonder: fathers commonly  
Do get their children; but in this case of wooing,  
A child shall get a sire, if I fail not of my cunning.

LUCENTIO:  
Fiddler, forbear; you grow too forward, sir:  
Have you so soon forgot the entertainment  
Her sister Katharina welcomed you withal?

HORTENSIO:  
But, wrangling pedant, this is  
The patroness of heavenly harmony:  
Then give me leave to have prerogative;  
And when in music we have spent an hour,  
Your lecture shall have leisure for as much.

LUCENTIO:  
Preposterous ass, that never read so far  
To know the cause why music was ordain'd!  
Was it not to refresh the mind of man  
After his studies or his usual pain?  
Then give me leave to read philosophy,  
And while I pause, serve in your harmony.

HORTENSIO:  
Sirrah, I will not bear these braves of thine.

BIANCA:  
Why, gentlemen, you do me double wrong,  
To strive for that which resteth in my choice:  
I am no breeching scholar in the schools;  
I'll not be tied to hours nor 'pointed times,  
But learn my lessons as I please myself.  
And, to cut off all strife, here sit we down:  
Take you your instrument, play you the whiles;  
His lecture will be done ere you have tuned.

HORTENSIO:  
You'll leave his lecture when I am in tune?

LUCENTIO:  
That will be never: tune your instrument.

BIANCA:  
Where left we last?

LUCENTIO:

Here, madam:

'Hic ibat Simois; hic est Sigeia tellus;  
Hic steterat Priami regia celsa senis.'

BIANCA:

Construe them.

LUCENTIO:

'Hic ibat,' as I told you before, 'Simois,' I am  
Lucentio, 'hic est,' son unto Vincentio of Pisa,  
'Sigeia tellus,' disguised thus to get your love;  
'Hic steterat,' and that Lucentio that comes  
a-wooing, 'Priami,' is my man Tranio, 'regia,'  
bearing my port, 'celsa senis,' that we might  
beguile the old pantaloon.

HORTENSIO:

Madam, my instrument's in tune.

BIANCA:

Let's hear. O fie! the treble jars.

LUCENTIO:

Spit in the hole, man, and tune again.

BIANCA:

Now let me see if I can construe it: 'Hic ibat  
Simois,' I know you not, 'hic est Sigeia tellus,' I  
trust you not; 'Hic steterat Priami,' take heed  
he hear us not, 'regia,' presume not, 'celsa senis,'  
despair not.

HORTENSIO:

Madam, 'tis now in tune.

LUCENTIO:

All but the base.

HORTENSIO:

The base is right; 'tis the base knave that jars.  
How fiery and forward our pedant is!  
Now, for my life, the knave doth court my love:  
Pedasculè, I'll watch you better yet.

BIANCA:

In time I may believe, yet I mistrust.

LUCENTIO:

Mistrust it not: for, sure, AEacides

Was Ajax, call'd so from his grandfather.

BIANCA:

I must believe my master; else, I promise you,  
I should be arguing still upon that doubt:  
But let it rest. Now, Licio, to you:  
Good masters, take it not unkindly, pray,  
That I have been thus pleasant with you both.

HORTENSIO:

You may go walk, and give me leave a while:  
My lessons make no music in three parts.

LUCENTIO:

Are you so formal, sir? well, I must wait,  
And watch withal; for, but I be deceived,  
Our fine musician groweth amorous.

HORTENSIO:

Madam, before you touch the instrument,  
To learn the order of my fingering,  
I must begin with rudiments of art;  
To teach you gamut in a briefer sort,  
More pleasant, pithy and effectual,  
Than hath been taught by any of my trade:  
And there it is in writing, fairly drawn.

BIANCA:

Why, I am past my gamut long ago.

HORTENSIO:

Yet read the gamut of Hortensio.

BIANCA:

Servant:

Mistress, your father prays you leave your books  
And help to dress your sister's chamber up:  
You know to-morrow is the wedding-day.

BIANCA:

Farewell, sweet masters both; I must be gone.

LUCENTIO:

Faith, mistress, then I have no cause to stay.

HORTENSIO:

But I have cause to pry into this pedant:  
Methinks he looks as though he were in love:  
Yet if thy thoughts, Bianca, be so humble

To cast thy wandering eyes on every stale,  
Seize thee that list: if once I find thee ranging,  
Hortensio will be quit with thee by changing.

BAPTISTA:

KATHARINA:

No shame but mine: I must, forsooth, be forced  
To give my hand opposed against my heart  
Unto a mad-brain rudesby full of spleen;  
Who woo'd in haste and means to wed at leisure.  
I told you, I, he was a frantic fool,  
Hiding his bitter jests in blunt behavior:  
And, to be noted for a merry man,  
He'll woo a thousand, 'point the day of marriage,  
Make feasts, invite friends, and proclaim the banns;  
Yet never means to wed where he hath woo'd.  
Now must the world point at poor Katharina,  
And say, 'Lo, there is mad Petruchio's wife,  
If it would please him come and marry her!'

TRANIO:

Patience, good Katharina, and Baptista too.  
Upon my life, Petruchio means but well,  
Whatever fortune stays him from his word:  
Though he be blunt, I know him passing wise;  
Though he be merry, yet withal he's honest.

KATHARINA:

Would Katharina had never seen him though!

BAPTISTA:

Go, girl; I cannot blame thee now to weep;  
For such an injury would vex a very saint,  
Much more a shrew of thy impatient humour.

BIONDELLO:

Master, master! news, old news, and such news as  
you never heard of!

BAPTISTA:

Is it new and old too? how may that be?

BIONDELLO:

Why, is it not news, to hear of Petruchio's coming?

BAPTISTA:

Is he come?

BIONDELLO:

Why, no, sir.

BAPTISTA:  
What then?

BIONDELLO:  
He is coming.

BAPTISTA:  
When will he be here?

BIONDELLO:  
When he stands where I am and sees you there.

TRANIO:  
But say, what to thine old news?

BIONDELLO:  
Why, Petruchio is coming in a new hat and an old jerkin, a pair of old breeches thrice turned, a pair of boots that have been candle-cases, one buckled, another laced, an old rusty sword ta'en out of the town-armory, with a broken hilt, and chapeless; with two broken points: his horse hipped with an old mothy saddle and stirrups of no kindred; besides, possessed with the glanders and like to mose in the chine; troubled with the lampass, infected with the fashions, full of wingdalls, sped with spavins, rayed with yellows, past cure of the fives, stark spoiled with the staggers, begnawn with the bots, swayed in the back and shoulder-shotten; near-legged before and with, a half-chequed bit and a head-stall of sheeps leather which, being restrained to keep him from stumbling, hath been often burst and now repaired with knots; one girth six time pieced and a woman's crupper of velure, which hath two letters for her name fairly set down in studs, and here and there pieced with packthread.

BAPTISTA:  
Who comes with him?

BIONDELLO:  
O, sir, his lackey, for all the world caparisoned like the horse; with a linen stock on one leg and a kersey boot-hose on the other, gartered with a red and blue list; an old hat and 'the humour of forty fancies' pricked in't for a feather: a monster, a very monster in apparel, and not like a Christian footboy or a gentleman's lackey.



TRANIO:

'Tis some odd humour pricks him to this fashion;  
Yet oftentimes he goes but mean-apparell'd.

BAPTISTA:

I am glad he's come, howsoe'er he comes.

BIONDELLO:

Why, sir, he comes not.

BAPTISTA:

Didst thou not say he comes?

BIONDELLO:

Who? that Petruchio came?

BAPTISTA:

Ay, that Petruchio came.

BIONDELLO:

No, sir, I say his horse comes, with him on his back.

BAPTISTA:

Why, that's all one.

BIONDELLO:

Nay, by Saint Jamy,  
I hold you a penny,  
A horse and a man  
Is more than one,  
And yet not many.

PETRUCHIO:

Come, where be these gallants? who's at home?

BAPTISTA:

You are welcome, sir.

PETRUCHIO:

And yet I come not well.

BAPTISTA:

And yet you halt not.

TRANIO:

Not so well apparell'd  
As I wish you were.

PETRUCHIO:

Were it better, I should rush in thus.  
But where is Kate? where is my lovely bride?  
How does my father? Gentles, methinks you frown:  
And wherefore gaze this goodly company,  
As if they saw some wondrous monument,  
Some comet or unusual prodigy?

BAPTISTA:

Why, sir, you know this is your wedding-day:  
First were we sad, fearing you would not come;  
Now sadder, that you come so unprovided.  
Fie, doff this habit, shame to your estate,  
An eye-sore to our solemn festival!

TRANIO:

And tells us, what occasion of import  
Hath all so long detain'd you from your wife,  
And sent you hither so unlike yourself?

PETRUCHIO:

Tedious it were to tell, and harsh to hear:  
Sufficeth I am come to keep my word,  
Though in some part enforced to digress;  
Which, at more leisure, I will so excuse  
As you shall well be satisfied withal.  
But where is Kate? I stay too long from her:  
The morning wears, 'tis time we were at church.

TRANIO:

See not your bride in these unreverent robes:  
Go to my chamber; Put on clothes of mine.

PETRUCHIO:

Not I, believe me: thus I'll visit her.

BAPTISTA:

But thus, I trust, you will not marry her.

PETRUCHIO:

Good sooth, even thus; therefore ha' done with words:  
To me she's married, not unto my clothes:  
Could I repair what she will wear in me,  
As I can change these poor accoutrements,  
'Twere well for Kate and better for myself.  
But what a fool am I to chat with you,  
When I should bid good morrow to my bride,  
And seal the title with a lovely kiss!

TRANIO:

He hath some meaning in his mad attire:

We will persuade him, be it possible,  
To put on better ere he go to church.

BAPTISTA:

I'll after him, and see the event of this.

TRANIO:

But to her love concerneth us to add  
Her father's liking: which to bring to pass,  
As I before unparted to your worship,  
I am to get a man,--whate'er he be,  
It skills not much. we'll fit him to our turn,--  
And he shall be Vincentio of Pisa;  
And make assurance here in Padua  
Of greater sums than I have promised.  
So shall you quietly enjoy your hope,  
And marry sweet Bianca with consent.

LUCENTIO:

Were it not that my fellow-school-master  
Doth watch Bianca's steps so narrowly,  
'Twere good, methinks, to steal our marriage;  
Which once perform'd, let all the world say no,  
I'll keep mine own, despite of all the world.

TRANIO:

That by degrees we mean to look into,  
And watch our vantage in this business:  
We'll over-reach the greybeard, Gremio,  
The narrow-prying father, Minola,  
The quaint musician, amorous Licio;  
All for my master's sake, Lucentio.  
Signior Gremio, came you from the church?

GREMIO:

As willingly as e'er I came from school.

TRANIO:

And is the bride and bridegroom coming home?

GREMIO:

A bridegroom say you? 'tis a groom indeed,  
A grumbling groom, and that the girl shall find.

TRANIO:

Curster than she? why, 'tis impossible.

GREMIO:

Why he's a devil, a devil, a very fiend.

TRANIO:

Why, she's a devil, a devil, the devil's dam.

GREMIO:

Tut, she's a lamb, a dove, a fool to him!  
I'll tell you, Sir Lucentio: when the priest  
Should ask, if Katharina should be his wife,  
'Ay, by gogs-wouns,' quoth he; and swore so loud,  
That, all-amazed, the priest let fall the book;  
And, as he stoop'd again to take it up,  
The mad-brain'd bridegroom took him such a cuff  
That down fell priest and book and book and priest:  
'Now take them up,' quoth he, 'if any list.'

TRANIO:

What said the wench when he rose again?

GREMIO:

Trembled and shook; for why, he stamp'd and swore,  
As if the vicar meant to cozen him.  
But after many ceremonies done,  
He calls for wine: 'A health!' quoth he, as if  
He had been aboard, carousing to his mates  
After a storm; quaff'd off the muscadel  
And threw the sops all in the sexton's face;  
Having no other reason  
But that his beard grew thin and hungerly  
And seem'd to ask him sops as he was drinking.  
This done, he took the bride about the neck  
And kiss'd her lips with such a clamorous smack  
That at the parting all the church did echo:  
And I seeing this came thence for very shame;  
And after me, I know, the rout is coming.  
Such a mad marriage never was before:  
Hark, hark! I hear the minstrels play.

PETRUCHIO:

Gentlemen and friends, I thank you for your pains:  
I know you think to dine with me to-day,  
And have prepared great store of wedding cheer;  
But so it is, my haste doth call me hence,  
And therefore here I mean to take my leave.

BAPTISTA:

Is't possible you will away to-night?

PETRUCHIO:

I must away to-day, before night come:  
Make it no wonder; if you knew my business,  
You would entreat me rather go than stay.

And, honest company, I thank you all,  
That have beheld me give away myself  
To this most patient, sweet and virtuous wife:  
Dine with my father, drink a health to me;  
For I must hence; and farewell to you all.

TRANIO:  
Let us entreat you stay till after dinner.

PETRUCHIO:  
It may not be.

GREMIO:  
Let me entreat you.

PETRUCHIO:  
It cannot be.

KATHARINA:  
Let me entreat you.

PETRUCHIO:  
I am content.

KATHARINA:  
Are you content to stay?

PETRUCHIO:  
I am content you shall entreat me stay;  
But yet not stay, entreat me how you can.

KATHARINA:  
Now, if you love me, stay.

PETRUCHIO:  
Grumio, my horse.

GRUMIO:  
Ay, sir, they be ready: the oats have eaten the horses.

KATHARINA:  
Nay, then,  
Do what thou canst, I will not go to-day;  
No, nor to-morrow, not till I please myself.  
The door is open, sir; there lies your way;  
You may be jogging whiles your boots are green;  
For me, I'll not be gone till I please myself:  
'Tis like you'll prove a jolly surly groom,  
That take it on you at the first so roundly.

PETRUCHIO:

O Kate, content thee; prithee, be not angry.

KATHARINA:

I will be angry: what hast thou to do?  
Father, be quiet; he shall stay my leisure.

GREMIO:

Ay, marry, sir, now it begins to work.

KATARINA:

Gentlemen, forward to the bridal dinner:  
I see a woman may be made a fool,  
If she had not a spirit to resist.

PETRUCHIO:

They shall go forward, Kate, at thy command.  
Obey the bride, you that attend on her;  
Go to the feast, revel and domineer,  
Carouse full measure to her maidenhead,  
Be mad and merry, or go hang yourselves:  
But for my bonny Kate, she must with me.  
Nay, look not big, nor stamp, nor stare, nor fret;  
I will be master of what is mine own:  
She is my goods, my chattels; she is my house,  
My household stuff, my field, my barn,  
My horse, my ox, my ass, my any thing;  
And here she stands, touch her whoever dare;  
I'll bring mine action on the proudest he  
That stops my way in Padua. Grumio,  
Draw forth thy weapon, we are beset with thieves;  
Rescue thy mistress, if thou be a man.  
Fear not, sweet wench, they shall not touch  
thee, Kate:  
I'll buckler thee against a million.

BAPTISTA:

Nay, let them go, a couple of quiet ones.

GREMIO:

Went they not quickly, I should die with laughing.

TRANIO:

Of all mad matches never was the like.

LUCENTIO:

Mistress, what's your opinion of your sister?

BIANCA:

That, being mad herself, she's madly mated.

GREMIO:

I warrant him, Petruchio is Kated.

BAPTISTA:

Neighbours and friends, though bride and  
bridegroom wants

For to supply the places at the table,  
You know there wants no junkets at the feast.  
Lucentio, you shall supply the bridegroom's place:  
And let Bianca take her sister's room.

TRANIO:

Shall sweet Bianca practise how to bride it?

BAPTISTA:

She shall, Lucentio. Come, gentlemen, let's go.

GRUMIO:

Fie, fie on all tired jades, on all mad masters, and  
all foul ways! Was ever man so beaten? was ever  
man so rayed? was ever man so weary? I am sent  
before to make a fire, and they are coming after to  
warm them. Now, were not I a little pot and soon  
hot, my very lips might freeze to my teeth, my  
tongue to the roof of my mouth, my heart in my  
belly, ere I should come by a fire to thaw me: but  
I, with blowing the fire, shall warm myself; for,  
considering the weather, a taller man than I will  
take cold. Holla, ho! Curtis.

CURTIS:

Who is that calls so coldly?

GRUMIO:

A piece of ice: if thou doubt it, thou mayst slide  
from my shoulder to my heel with no greater a run  
but my head and my neck. A fire good Curtis.

CURTIS:

Is my master and his wife coming, Grumio?

GRUMIO:

O, ay, Curtis, ay: and therefore fire, fire; cast  
on no water.

CURTIS:

Is she so hot a shrew as she's reported?

GRUMIO:

She was, good Curtis, before this frost: but, thou knowest, winter tames man, woman and beast; for it hath tamed my old master and my new mistress and myself, fellow Curtis.

CURTIS:

Away, you three-inch fool! I am no beast.

GRUMIO:

Am I but three inches? why, thy horn is a foot; and so long am I at the least. But wilt thou make a fire, or shall I complain on thee to our mistress, whose hand, she being now at hand, thou shalt soon feel, to thy cold comfort, for being slow in thy hot office?

CURTIS:

I prithee, good Grumio, tell me, how goes the world?

GRUMIO:

A cold world, Curtis, in every office but thine; and therefore fire: do thy duty, and have thy duty; for my master and mistress are almost frozen to death.

CURTIS:

There's fire ready; and therefore, good Grumio, the news.

GRUMIO:

Why, 'Jack, boy! ho! boy!' and as much news as will thaw.

CURTIS:

Come, you are so full of cony-catching!

GRUMIO:

Why, therefore fire; for I have caught extreme cold. Where's the cook? is supper ready, the house trimmed, rushes strewed, cobwebs swept; the serving-men in their new fustian, their white stockings, and every officer his wedding-garment on? Be the jacks fair within, the jills fair without, the carpets laid, and every thing in order?

CURTIS:

All ready; and therefore, I pray thee, news.

GRUMIO:

First, know, my horse is tired; my master and mistress fallen out.

CURTIS:



How?

GRUMIO:  
Out of their saddles into the dirt; and thereby  
hangs a tale.

CURTIS:  
Let's ha't, good Grumio.

GRUMIO:  
Lend thine ear.

CURTIS:  
Here.

GRUMIO:  
There.

CURTIS:  
This is to feel a tale, not to hear a tale.

GRUMIO:  
And therefore 'tis called a sensible tale: and this  
cuff was but to knock at your ear, and beseech  
listening. Now I begin: Imprimis, we came down a  
foul hill, my master riding behind my mistress,--

CURTIS:  
Both of one horse?

GRUMIO:  
What's that to thee?

CURTIS:  
Why, a horse.

GRUMIO:  
Tell thou the tale: but hadst thou not crossed me,  
thou shouldst have heard how her horse fell and she  
under her horse; thou shouldst have heard in how  
miry a place, how she was bemoiled, how he left her  
with the horse upon her, how he beat me because  
her horse stumbled, how she waded through the dirt  
to pluck him off me, how he swore, how she prayed,  
that never prayed before, how I cried, how the  
horses ran away, how her bridle was burst, how I  
lost my crupper, with many things of worthy memory,  
which now shall die in oblivion and thou return  
unexperienced to thy grave.

CURTIS:

By this reckoning he is more shrew than she.

GRUMIO:

Ay; and that thou and the proudest of you all shall find when he comes home. But what talk I of this? Call forth Nathaniel, Joseph, Nicholas, Philip, Walter, Sugarsop and the rest: let their heads be sleekly combed their blue coats brushed and their garters of an indifferent knit: let them curtsy with their left legs and not presume to touch a hair of my master's horse-tail till they kiss their hands. Are they all ready?

CURTIS:

They are.

GRUMIO:

Call them forth.

CURTIS:

Do you hear, ho? you must meet my master to countenance my mistress.

GRUMIO:

Why, she hath a face of her own.

CURTIS:

Who knows not that?

GRUMIO:

Thou, it seems, that calls for company to countenance her.

CURTIS:

I call them forth to credit her.

GRUMIO:

Why, she comes to borrow nothing of them.

NATHANIEL:

Welcome home, Grumio!

PHILIP:

How now, Grumio!

JOSEPH:

What, Grumio!

NICHOLAS:

Fellow Grumio!

NATHANIEL:

How now, old lad?

GRUMIO:

Welcome, you;--how now, you;-- what, you;--fellow, you;--and thus much for greeting. Now, my spruce companions, is all ready, and all things neat?

NATHANIEL:

All things is ready. How near is our master?

GRUMIO:

E'en at hand, alighted by this; and therefore be not--Cock's passion, silence! I hear my master.

PETRUCHIO:

Where be these knaves? What, no man at door  
To hold my stirrup nor to take my horse!  
Where is Nathaniel, Gregory, Philip?

ALL SERVING-MEN:

Here, here, sir; here, sir.

PETRUCHIO:

Here, sir! here, sir! here, sir! here, sir!  
You logger-headed and unpolish'd grooms!  
What, no attendance? no regard? no duty?  
Where is the foolish knave I sent before?

GRUMIO:

Here, sir; as foolish as I was before.

PETRUCHIO:

You peasant swain! you whoreson malt-horse drudge!  
Did I not bid thee meet me in the park,  
And bring along these rascal knaves with thee?

GRUMIO:

Nathaniel's coat, sir, was not fully made,  
And Gabriel's pumps were all unpink'd i' the heel;  
There was no link to colour Peter's hat,  
And Walter's dagger was not come from sheathing:  
There were none fine but Adam, Ralph, and Gregory;  
The rest were ragged, old, and beggarly;  
Yet, as they are, here are they come to meet you.

PETRUCHIO:

Go, rascals, go, and fetch my supper in.

Where is the life that late I led--  
Where are those--Sit down, Kate, and welcome.--  
Sound, sound, sound, sound!  
Why, when, I say? Nay, good sweet Kate, be merry.  
Off with my boots, you rogues! you villains, when?  
It was the friar of orders grey,  
As he forth walked on his way:--  
Out, you rogue! you pluck my foot awry:  
Take that, and mend the plucking off the other.  
Be merry, Kate. Some water, here; what, ho!  
Where's my spaniel Troilus? Sirrah, get you hence,  
And bid my cousin Ferdinand come hither:  
One, Kate, that you must kiss, and be acquainted with.  
Where are my slippers? Shall I have some water?  
Come, Kate, and wash, and welcome heartily.  
You whoreson villain! will you let it fall?

KATHARINA:

Patience, I pray you; 'twas a fault unwilling.

PETRUCHIO:

A whoreson beetle-headed, flap-ear'd knave!  
Come, Kate, sit down; I know you have a stomach.  
Will you give thanks, sweet Kate; or else shall I?  
What's this? mutton?

First Servant:

Ay.

PETRUCHIO:

Who brought it?

PETER:

I.

PETRUCHIO:

'Tis burnt; and so is all the meat.  
What dogs are these! Where is the rascal cook?  
How durst you, villains, bring it from the dresser,  
And serve it thus to me that love it not?  
Theretake it to you, trenchers, cups, and all;  
You heedless joltheads and unmanner'd slaves!  
What, do you grumble? I'll be with you straight.

KATHARINA:

I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet:  
The meat was well, if you were so contented.

PETRUCHIO:

I tell thee, Kate, 'twas burnt and dried away;

And I expressly am forbid to touch it,  
For it engenders choler, planteth anger;  
And better 'twere that both of us did fast,  
Since, of ourselves, ourselves are choleric,  
Than feed it with such over-roasted flesh.  
Be patient; to-morrow 't shall be mended,  
And, for this night, we'll fast for company:  
Come, I will bring thee to thy bridal chamber.

NATHANIEL:

Peter, didst ever see the like?

PETER:

He kills her in her own humour.

GRUMIO:

Where is he?

CURTIS:

In her chamber, making a sermon of continency to her;  
And rails, and swears, and rates, that she, poor soul,  
Knows not which way to stand, to look, to speak,  
And sits as one new-risen from a dream.  
Away, away! for he is coming hither.

PETRUCHIO:

Thus have I politicly begun my reign,  
And 'tis my hope to end successfully.  
My falcon now is sharp and passing empty;  
And till she stoop she must not be full-gorged,  
For then she never looks upon her lure.  
Another way I have to man my haggard,  
To make her come and know her keeper's call,  
That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites  
That bate and beat and will not be obedient.  
She eat no meat to-day, nor none shall eat;  
Last night she slept not, nor to-night she shall not;  
As with the meat, some undeserved fault  
I'll find about the making of the bed;  
And here I'll fling the pillow, there the bolster,  
This way the coverlet, another way the sheets:  
Ay, and amid this hurly I intend  
That all is done in reverend care of her;  
And in conclusion she shall watch all night:  
And if she chance to nod I'll rail and brawl  
And with the clamour keep her still awake.  
This is a way to kill a wife with kindness;  
And thus I'll curb her mad and headstrong humour.  
He that knows better how to tame a shrew,  
Now let him speak: 'tis charity to show.

TRANIO:

Is't possible, friend Licio, that Mistress Bianca  
Doth fancy any other but Lucentio?

I tell you, sir, she bears me fair in hand.

HORTENSIO:

Sir, to satisfy you in what I have said,  
Stand by and mark the manner of his teaching.

LUCENTIO:

Now, mistress, profit you in what you read?

BIANCA:

What, master, read you? first resolve me that.

LUCENTIO:

I read that I profess, the Art to Love.

BIANCA:

And may you prove, sir, master of your art!

LUCENTIO:

While you, sweet dear, prove mistress of my heart!

HORTENSIO:

Quick proceeders, marry! Now, tell me, I pray,  
You that durst swear at your mistress Bianca  
Loved none in the world so well as Lucentio.

TRANIO:

O despiteful love! unconstant womankind!

I tell thee, Licio, this is wonderful.

HORTENSIO:

Mistake no more: I am not Licio,  
Nor a musician, as I seem to be;  
But one that scorn to live in this disguise,  
For such a one as leaves a gentleman,  
And makes a god of such a cullion:  
Know, sir, that I am call'd Hortensio.

TRANIO:

Signior Hortensio, I have often heard  
Of your entire affection to Bianca;  
And since mine eyes are witness of her lightness,  
I will with you, if you be so contented,  
Forswear Bianca and her love for ever.

HORTENSIO:

See, how they kiss and court! Signior Lucentio,  
Here is my hand, and here I firmly vow  
Never to woo her no more, but do forswear her,  
As one unworthy all the former favours  
That I have fondly flatter'd her withal.

TRANIO:  
And here I take the unfeigned oath,  
Never to marry with her though she would entreat:  
Fie on her! see, how beastly she doth court him!

HORTENSIO:  
Would all the world but he had quite forsworn!  
For me, that I may surely keep mine oath,  
I will be married to a wealthy widow,  
Ere three days pass, which hath as long loved me  
As I have loved this proud disdainful haggard.  
And so farewell, Signior Lucentio.  
Kindness in women, not their beauteous looks,  
Shall win my love: and so I take my leave,  
In resolution as I swore before.

TRANIO:  
Mistress Bianca, bless you with such grace  
As 'longeth to a lover's blessed case!  
Nay, I have ta'en you napping, gentle love,  
And have forsworn you with Hortensio.

BIANCA:  
Tranio, you jest: but have you both forsworn me?

TRANIO:  
Mistress, we have.

LUCENTIO:  
Then we are rid of Licio.

TRANIO:  
I' faith, he'll have a lusty widow now,  
That shall be wood and wedded in a day.

BIANCA:  
God give him joy!

TRANIO:  
Ay, and he'll tame her.

BIANCA:  
He says so, Tranio.

TRANIO:  
Faith, he is gone unto the taming-school.

BIANCA:  
The taming-school! what, is there such a place?

TRANIO:  
Ay, mistress, and Petruchio is the master;  
That teacheth tricks eleven and twenty long,  
To tame a shrew and charm her chattering tongue.

BIONDELLO:  
O master, master, I have watch'd so long  
That I am dog-weary: but at last I spied  
An ancient angel coming down the hill,  
Will serve the turn.

TRANIO:  
What is he, Biondello?

BIONDELLO:  
Master, a mercatante, or a pedant,  
I know not what; but format in apparel,  
In gait and countenance surely like a father.

LUCENTIO:  
And what of him, Tranio?

TRANIO:  
If he be credulous and trust my tale,  
I'll make him glad to seem Vincentio,  
And give assurance to Baptista Minola,  
As if he were the right Vincentio  
Take in your love, and then let me alone.

Pedant:  
God save you, sir!

TRANIO:  
And you, sir! you are welcome.  
Travel you far on, or are you at the farthest?

Pedant:  
Sir, at the farthest for a week or two:  
But then up farther, and as for as Rome;  
And so to Tripoli, if God lend me life.

TRANIO:  
What countryman, I pray?



Pedant:  
Of Mantua.

TRANIO:  
Of Mantua, sir? marry, God forbid!  
And come to Padua, careless of your life?

Pedant:  
My life, sir! how, I pray? for that goes hard.

TRANIO:  
'Tis death for any one in Mantua  
To come to Padua. Know you not the cause?  
Your ships are stay'd at Venice, and the duke,  
For private quarrel 'twixt your duke and him,  
Hath publish'd and proclaim'd it openly:  
'Tis, marvel, but that you are but newly come,  
You might have heard it else proclaim'd about.

Pedant:  
Alas! sir, it is worse for me than so;  
For I have bills for money by exchange  
From Florence and must here deliver them.

TRANIO:  
Well, sir, to do you courtesy,  
This will I do, and this I will advise you:  
First, tell me, have you ever been at Pisa?

Pedant:  
Ay, sir, in Pisa have I often been,  
Pisa renowned for grave citizens.

TRANIO:  
Among them know you one Vincentio?

Pedant:  
I know him not, but I have heard of him;  
A merchant of incomparable wealth.

TRANIO:  
He is my father, sir; and, sooth to say,  
In countenance somewhat doth resemble you.

BIONDELLO:

TRANIO:  
To save your life in this extremity,  
This favour will I do you for his sake;  
And think it not the worst of an your fortunes

That you are like to Sir Vincentio.  
His name and credit shall you undertake,  
And in my house you shall be friendly lodged:  
Look that you take upon you as you should;  
You understand me, sir: so shall you stay  
Till you have done your business in the city:  
If this be courtesy, sir, accept of it.

Pedant:  
O sir, I do; and will repute you ever  
The patron of my life and liberty.

TRANIO:  
Then go with me to make the matter good.  
This, by the way, I let you understand;  
my father is here look'd for every day,  
To pass assurance of a dower in marriage  
'Twixt me and one Baptista's daughter here:  
In all these circumstances I'll instruct you:  
Go with me to clothe you as becomes you.

GRUMIO:  
No, no, forsooth; I dare not for my life.

KATHARINA:  
The more my wrong, the more his spite appears:  
What, did he marry me to famish me?  
Beggars, that come unto my father's door,  
Upon entreaty have a present aims;  
If not, elsewhere they meet with charity:  
But I, who never knew how to entreat,  
Nor never needed that I should entreat,  
Am starved for meat, giddy for lack of sleep,  
With oath kept waking and with brawling fed:  
And that which spites me more than all these wants,  
He does it under name of perfect love;  
As who should say, if I should sleep or eat,  
'Twere deadly sickness or else present death.  
I prithee go and get me some repast;  
I care not what, so it be wholesome food.

GRUMIO:  
What say you to a neat's foot?

KATHARINA:  
'Tis passing good: I prithee let me have it.

GRUMIO:  
I fear it is too choleric a meat.  
How say you to a fat tripe finely broil'd?

KATHARINA:

I like it well: good Grumio, fetch it me.

GRUMIO:

I cannot tell; I fear 'tis choleric.

What say you to a piece of beef and mustard?

KATHARINA:

A dish that I do love to feed upon.

GRUMIO:

Ay, but the mustard is too hot a little.

KATHARINA:

Why then, the beef, and let the mustard rest.

GRUMIO:

Nay then, I will not: you shall have the mustard,  
Or else you get no beef of Grumio.

KATHARINA:

Then both, or one, or any thing thou wilt.

GRUMIO:

Why then, the mustard without the beef.

KATHARINA:

Go, get thee gone, thou false deluding slave,  
That feed'st me with the very name of meat:  
Sorrow on thee and all the pack of you,  
That triumph thus upon my misery!  
Go, get thee gone, I say.

PETRUCHIO:

How fares my Kate? What, sweeting, all amok?

HORTENSIO:

Mistress, what cheer?

KATHARINA:

Faith, as cold as can be.

PETRUCHIO:

Pluck up thy spirits; look cheerfully upon me.  
Here love; thou see'st how diligent I am  
To dress thy meat myself and bring it thee:  
I am sure, sweet Kate, this kindness merits thanks.  
What, not a word? Nay, then thou lovest it not;  
And all my pains is sorted to no proof.

Here, take away this dish.

KATHARINA:

I pray you, let it stand.

PETRUCHIO:

The poorest service is repaid with thanks;  
And so shall mine, before you touch the meat.

KATHARINA:

I thank you, sir.

HORTENSIO:

Signior Petruchio, fie! you are to blame.  
Come, mistress Kate, I'll bear you company.

PETRUCHIO:

Haberdasher:

Here is the cap your worship did bespeak.

PETRUCHIO:

Why, this was moulded on a porringer;  
A velvet dish: fie, fie! 'tis lewd and filthy:  
Why, 'tis a cockle or a walnut-shell,  
A knack, a toy, a trick, a baby's cap:  
Away with it! come, let me have a bigger.

KATHARINA:

I'll have no bigger: this doth fit the time,  
And gentlewomen wear such caps as these

PETRUCHIO:

When you are gentle, you shall have one too,  
And not till then.

HORTENSIO:

KATHARINA:

Why, sir, I trust I may have leave to speak;  
And speak I will; I am no child, no babe:  
Your betters have endured me say my mind,  
And if you cannot, best you stop your ears.  
My tongue will tell the anger of my heart,  
Or else my heart concealing it will break,  
And rather than it shall, I will be free  
Even to the uttermost, as I please, in words.

PETRUCHIO:

Why, thou say'st true; it is a paltry cap,

A custard-coffin, a bauble, a silken pie:  
I love thee well, in that thou likest it not.

KATHARINA:

Love me or love me not, I like the cap;  
And it I will have, or I will have none.

PETRUCHIO:

Thy gown? why, ay: come, tailor, let us see't.  
O mercy, God! what masquing stuff is here?  
What's this? a sleeve? 'tis like a demi-cannon:  
What, up and down, carved like an apple-tart?  
Here's snip and nip and cut and slish and slash,  
Like to a censer in a barber's shop:  
Why, what, i' devil's name, tailor, call'st thou this?

HORTENSIO:

Tailor:

You bid me make it orderly and well,  
According to the fashion and the time.

PETRUCHIO:

Marry, and did; but if you be remember'd,  
I did not bid you mar it to the time.  
Go, hop me over every kennel home,  
For you shall hop without my custom, sir:  
I'll none of it: hence! make your best of it.

KATHARINA:

I never saw a better-fashion'd gown,  
More quaint, more pleasing, nor more commendable:  
Belike you mean to make a puppet of me.

PETRUCHIO:

Why, true; he means to make a puppet of thee.

Tailor:

She says your worship means to make  
a puppet of her.

PETRUCHIO:

O monstrous arrogance! Thou liest, thou thread,  
thou thimble,  
Thou yard, three-quarters, half-yard, quarter, nail!  
Thou flea, thou nit, thou winter-cricket thou!  
Braved in mine own house with a skein of thread?  
Away, thou rag, thou quantity, thou remnant;  
Or I shall so be-mete thee with thy yard  
As thou shalt think on prating whilst thou livest!

I tell thee, I, that thou hast marr'd her gown.

Tailor:

Your worship is deceived; the gown is made  
Just as my master had direction:  
Grumio gave order how it should be done.

GRUMIO:

I gave him no order; I gave him the stuff.

Tailor:

But how did you desire it should be made?

GRUMIO:

Marry, sir, with needle and thread.

Tailor:

But did you not request to have it cut?

GRUMIO:

Thou hast faced many things.

Tailor:

I have.

GRUMIO:

Face not me: thou hast braved many men; brave not  
me; I will neither be faced nor braved. I say unto  
thee, I bid thy master cut out the gown; but I did  
not bid him cut it to pieces: ergo, thou liest.

Tailor:

Why, here is the note of the fashion to testify

PETRUCHIO:

Read it.

GRUMIO:

The note lies in's throat, if he say I said so.

Tailor:

GRUMIO:

Master, if ever I said loose-bodied gown, sew me in  
the skirts of it, and beat me to death with a bottom  
of brown thread: I said a gown.

PETRUCHIO:

Proceed.

Tailor:

GRUMIO:  
I confess the cape.

Tailor:

GRUMIO:  
I confess two sleeves.

Tailor:

PETRUCHIO:  
Ay, there's the villany.

GRUMIO:  
Error i' the bill, sir; error i' the bill.  
I commanded the sleeves should be cut out and  
sewed up again; and that I'll prove upon thee,  
though thy little finger be armed in a thimble.

Tailor:  
This is true that I say: an I had thee  
in place where, thou shouldst know it.

GRUMIO:  
I am for thee straight: take thou the  
bill, give me thy mete-yard, and spare not me.

HORTENSIO:  
God-a-mercy, Grumio! then he shall have no odds.

PETRUCHIO:  
Well, sir, in brief, the gown is not for me.

GRUMIO:  
You are i' the right, sir: 'tis for my mistress.

PETRUCHIO:  
Go, take it up unto thy master's use.

GRUMIO:  
Villain, not for thy life: take up my mistress'  
gown for thy master's use!

PETRUCHIO:  
Why, sir, what's your conceit in that?

GRUMIO:  
O, sir, the conceit is deeper than you think for:

Take up my mistress' gown to his master's use!  
O, fie, fie, fie!

PETRUCHIO:

HORTENSIO:

Tailor, I'll pay thee for thy gown tomorrow:  
Take no unkindness of his hasty words:  
Away! I say; commend me to thy master.

PETRUCHIO:

Well, come, my Kate; we will unto your father's  
Even in these honest mean habiliments:  
Our purses shall be proud, our garments poor;  
For 'tis the mind that makes the body rich;  
And as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,  
So honour peereth in the meanest habit.  
What is the jay more precious than the lark,  
Because his fathers are more beautiful?  
Or is the adder better than the eel,  
Because his painted skin contents the eye?  
O, no, good Kate; neither art thou the worse  
For this poor furniture and mean array.  
if thou account'st it shame. lay it on me;  
And therefore frolic: we will hence forthwith,  
To feast and sport us at thy father's house.  
Go, call my men, and let us straight to him;  
And bring our horses unto Long-lane end;  
There will we mount, and thither walk on foot  
Let's see; I think 'tis now some seven o'clock,  
And well we may come there by dinner-time.

KATHARINA:

I dare assure you, sir, 'tis almost two;  
And 'twill be supper-time ere you come there.

PETRUCHIO:

It shall be seven ere I go to horse:  
Look, what I speak, or do, or think to do,  
You are still crossing it. Sirs, let't alone:  
I will not go to-day; and ere I do,  
It shall be what o'clock I say it is.

HORTENSIO:

TRANIO:

Sir, this is the house: please it you that I call?

Pedant:

Ay, what else? and but I be deceived



Signior Baptista may remember me,  
Near twenty years ago, in Genoa,  
Where we were lodgers at the Pegasus.

TRANIO:  
'Tis well; and hold your own, in any case,  
With such austerity as 'longeth to a father.

Pedant:  
I warrant you.  
But, sir, here comes your boy;  
'Twere good he were school'd.

TRANIO:  
Fear you not him. Sirrah Biondello,  
Now do your duty thoroughly, I advise you:  
Imagine 'twere the right Vincentio.

BIONDELLO:  
Tut, fear not me.

TRANIO:  
But hast thou done thy errand to Baptista?

BIONDELLO:  
I told him that your father was at Venice,  
And that you look'd for him this day in Padua.

TRANIO:  
Thou'rt a tall fellow: hold thee that to drink.  
Here comes Baptista: set your countenance, sir.  
Signior Baptista, you are happily met.  
Sir, this is the gentleman I told you of:  
I pray you stand good father to me now,  
Give me Bianca for my patrimony.

Pedant:  
Soft son!  
Sir, by your leave: having come to Padua  
To gather in some debts, my son Lucentio  
Made me acquainted with a weighty cause  
Of love between your daughter and himself:  
And, for the good report I hear of you  
And for the love he beareth to your daughter  
And she to him, to stay him not too long,  
I am content, in a good father's care,  
To have him match'd; and if you please to like  
No worse than I, upon some agreement  
Me shall you find ready and willing  
With one consent to have her so bestow'd;

For curious I cannot be with you,  
Signior Baptista, of whom I hear so well.

BAPTISTA:

Sir, pardon me in what I have to say:  
Your plainness and your shortness please me well.  
Right true it is, your son Lucentio here  
Doth love my daughter and she loveth him,  
Or both dissemble deeply their affections:  
And therefore, if you say no more than this,  
That like a father you will deal with him  
And pass my daughter a sufficient dower,  
The match is made, and all is done:  
Your son shall have my daughter with consent.

TRANIO:

I thank you, sir. Where then do you know best  
We be affied and such assurance ta'en  
As shall with either part's agreement stand?

BAPTISTA:

Not in my house, Lucentio; for, you know,  
Pitchers have ears, and I have many servants:  
Besides, old Gremio is hearkening still;  
And happily we might be interrupted.

TRANIO:

Then at my lodging, an it like you:  
There doth my father lie; and there, this night,  
We'll pass the business privately and well.  
Send for your daughter by your servant here:  
My boy shall fetch the scrivener presently.  
The worst is this, that, at so slender warning,  
You are like to have a thin and slender pittance.

BAPTISTA:

It likes me well. Biondello, hie you home,  
And bid Bianca make her ready straight;  
And, if you will, tell what hath happened,  
Lucentio's father is arrived in Padua,  
And how she's like to be Lucentio's wife.

BIONDELLO:

I pray the gods she may with all my heart!

TRANIO:

Dally not with the gods, but get thee gone.  
Signior Baptista, shall I lead the way?  
Welcome! one mess is like to be your cheer:  
Come, sir; we will better it in Pisa.

BAPTISTA:  
I follow you.

BIONDELLO:  
Cambio!

LUCENTIO:  
What sayest thou, Biondello?

BIONDELLO:  
You saw my master wink and laugh upon you?

LUCENTIO:  
Biondello, what of that?

BIONDELLO:  
Faith, nothing; but has left me here behind, to  
expound the meaning or moral of his signs and tokens.

LUCENTIO:  
I pray thee, moralize them.

BIONDELLO:  
Then thus. Baptista is safe, talking with the  
deceiving father of a deceitful son.

LUCENTIO:  
And what of him?

BIONDELLO:  
His daughter is to be brought by you to the supper.

LUCENTIO:  
And then?

BIONDELLO:  
The old priest of Saint Luke's church is at your  
command at all hours.

LUCENTIO:  
And what of all this?

BIONDELLO:  
I cannot tell; expect they are busied about a  
counterfeit assurance: take you assurance of her,  
'cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum:' to the  
church; take the priest, clerk, and some sufficient  
honest witnesses: If this be not that you look for,  
I have no more to say, But bid Bianca farewell for

ever and a day.

LUCENTIO:

Hearest thou, Biondello?

BIONDELLO:

I cannot tarry: I knew a wench married in an afternoon as she went to the garden for parsley to stuff a rabbit; and so may you, sir: and so, adieu, sir. My master hath appointed me to go to Saint Luke's, to bid the priest be ready to come against you come with your appendix.

LUCENTIO:

I may, and will, if she be so contented:  
She will be pleased; then wherefore should I doubt?  
Hap what hap may, I'll roundly go about her:  
It shall go hard if Cambio go without her.

PETRUCHIO:

Come on, i' God's name; once more toward our father's.  
Good Lord, how bright and goodly shines the moon!

KATHARINA:

The moon! the sun: it is not moonlight now.

PETRUCHIO:

I say it is the moon that shines so bright.

KATHARINA:

I know it is the sun that shines so bright.

PETRUCHIO:

Now, by my mother's son, and that's myself,  
It shall be moon, or star, or what I list,  
Or ere I journey to your father's house.  
Go on, and fetch our horses back again.  
Evermore cross'd and cross'd; nothing but cross'd!

HORTENSIO:

Say as he says, or we shall never go.

KATHARINA:

Forward, I pray, since we have come so far,  
And be it moon, or sun, or what you please:  
An if you please to call it a rush-candle,  
Henceforth I vow it shall be so for me.

PETRUCHIO:

I say it is the moon.

KATHARINA:

I know it is the moon.

PETRUCHIO:

Nay, then you lie: it is the blessed sun.

KATHARINA:

Then, God be bless'd, it is the blessed sun:  
But sun it is not, when you say it is not;  
And the moon changes even as your mind.  
What you will have it named, even that it is;  
And so it shall be so for Katharina.

HORTENSIO:

Petruchio, go thy ways; the field is won.

PETRUCHIO:

Well, forward, forward! thus the bowl should run,  
And not unluckily against the bias.  
But, soft! company is coming here.  
Good morrow, gentle mistress: where away?  
Tell me, sweet Kate, and tell me truly too,  
Hast thou beheld a fresher gentlewoman?  
Such war of white and red within her cheeks!  
What stars do spangle heaven with such beauty,  
As those two eyes become that heavenly face?  
Fair lovely maid, once more good day to thee.  
Sweet Kate, embrace her for her beauty's sake.

HORTENSIO:

A' will make the man mad, to make a woman of him.

KATHARINA:

Young budding virgin, fair and fresh and sweet,  
Whither away, or where is thy abode?  
Happy the parents of so fair a child;  
Happier the man, whom favourable stars  
Allot thee for his lovely bed-fellow!

PETRUCHIO:

Why, how now, Kate! I hope thou art not mad:  
This is a man, old, wrinkled, faded, wither'd,  
And not a maiden, as thou say'st he is.

KATHARINA:

Pardon, old father, my mistaking eyes,  
That have been so bedazzled with the sun  
That everything I look on seemeth green:  
Now I perceive thou art a reverend father;

Pardon, I pray thee, for my mad mistaking.

PETRUCHIO:

Do, good old grandsire; and withal make known  
Which way thou travellest: if along with us,  
We shall be joyful of thy company.

VINCENTIO:

Fair sir, and you my merry mistress,  
That with your strange encounter much amazed me,  
My name is call'd Vincentio; my dwelling Pisa;  
And bound I am to Padua; there to visit  
A son of mine, which long I have not seen.

PETRUCHIO:

What is his name?

VINCENTIO:

Lucentio, gentle sir.

PETRUCHIO:

Happily we met; the happier for thy son.  
And now by law, as well as reverend age,  
I may entitle thee my loving father:  
The sister to my wife, this gentlewoman,  
Thy son by this hath married. Wonder not,  
Nor be grieved: she is of good esteem,  
Her dowery wealthy, and of worthy birth;  
Beside, so qualified as may beseem  
The spouse of any noble gentleman.  
Let me embrace with old Vincentio,  
And wander we to see thy honest son,  
Who will of thy arrival be full joyous.

VINCENTIO:

But is it true? or else is it your pleasure,  
Like pleasant travellers, to break a jest  
Upon the company you overtake?

HORTENSIO:

I do assure thee, father, so it is.

PETRUCHIO:

Come, go along, and see the truth hereof;  
For our first merriment hath made thee jealous.

HORTENSIO:

Well, Petruchio, this has put me in heart.  
Have to my widow! and if she be froward,  
Then hast thou taught Hortensio to be untoward.

BIONDELLO:

Softly and swiftly, sir; for the priest is ready.

LUCENTIO:

I fly, Biondello: but they may chance to need thee at home; therefore leave us.

BIONDELLO:

Nay, faith, I'll see the church o' your back; and then come back to my master's as soon as I can.

GREMIO:

I marvel Cambio comes not all this while.

PETRUCHIO:

Sir, here's the door, this is Lucentio's house: My father's bears more toward the market-place; Thither must I, and here I leave you, sir.

VINCENTIO:

You shall not choose but drink before you go: I think I shall command your welcome here, And, by all likelihood, some cheer is toward.

GREMIO:

They're busy within; you were best knock louder.

Pedant:

What's he that knocks as he would beat down the gate?

VINCENTIO:

Is Signior Lucentio within, sir?

Pedant:

He's within, sir, but not to be spoken withal.

VINCENTIO:

What if a man bring him a hundred pound or two, to make merry withal?

Pedant:

Keep your hundred pounds to yourself: he shall need none, so long as I live.

PETRUCHIO:

Nay, I told you your son was well beloved in Padua. Do you hear, sir? To leave frivolous circumstances, I pray you, tell Signior Lucentio that his father is come from Pisa, and is here at the door to speak with him.

Pedant:

Thou liest: his father is come from Padua and here looking out at the window.

VINCENTIO:

Art thou his father?

Pedant:

Ay, sir; so his mother says, if I may believe her.

PETRUCHIO:

Pedant:

Lay hands on the villain: I believe a' means to cozen somebody in this city under my countenance.

BIONDELLO:

I have seen them in the church together: God send 'em good shipping! But who is here? mine old master Vincentio! now we are undone and brought to nothing.

VINCENTIO:

BIONDELLO:

Hope I may choose, sir.

VINCENTIO:

Come hither, you rogue. What, have you forgot me?

BIONDELLO:

Forgot you! no, sir: I could not forget you, for I never saw you before in all my life.

VINCENTIO:

What, you notorious villain, didst thou never see thy master's father, Vincentio?

BIONDELLO:

What, my old worshipful old master? yes, marry, sir: see where he looks out of the window.

VINCENTIO:

Is't so, indeed.

BIONDELLO:

Help, help, help! here's a madman will murder me.

Pedant:

Help, son! help, Signior Baptista!



PETRUCHIO:

Prithee, Kate, let's stand aside and see the end of this controversy.

TRANIO:

Sir, what are you that offer to beat my servant?

VINCENTIO:

What am I, sir! nay, what are you, sir? O immortal gods! O fine villain! A silken doublet! a velvet hose! a scarlet cloak! and a copatain hat! O, I am undone! I am undone! while I play the good husband at home, my son and my servant spend all at the university.

TRANIO:

How now! what's the matter?

BAPTISTA:

What, is the man lunatic?

TRANIO:

Sir, you seem a sober ancient gentleman by your habit, but your words show you a madman. Why, sir, what 'cerns it you if I wear pearl and gold? I thank my good father, I am able to maintain it.

VINCENTIO:

Thy father! O villain! he is a sailmaker in Bergamo.

BAPTISTA:

You mistake, sir, you mistake, sir. Pray, what do you think is his name?

VINCENTIO:

His name! as if I knew not his name: I have brought him up ever since he was three years old, and his name is Tranio.

Pedant:

Away, away, mad ass! his name is Lucentio and he is mine only son, and heir to the lands of me, Signior Vincentio.

VINCENTIO:

Lucentio! O, he hath murdered his master! Lay hold on him, I charge you, in the duke's name. O, my son, my son! Tell me, thou villain, where is my son Lucentio?

TRANIO:

Call forth an officer.  
Carry this mad knave to the gaol. Father Baptista,  
I charge you see that he be forthcoming.

VINCENTIO:  
Carry me to the gaol!

GREMIO:  
Stay, officer: he shall not go to prison.

BAPTISTA:  
Talk not, Signior Gremio: I say he shall go to prison.

GREMIO:  
Take heed, Signior Baptista, lest you be  
cony-catched in this business: I dare swear this  
is the right Vincentio.

Pedant:  
Swear, if thou darest.

GREMIO:  
Nay, I dare not swear it.

TRANIO:  
Then thou wert best say that I am not Lucentio.

GREMIO:  
Yes, I know thee to be Signior Lucentio.

BAPTISTA:  
Away with the dotard! to the gaol with him!

VINCENTIO:  
Thus strangers may be hailed and abused: O  
monstrous villain!

BIONDELLO:  
O! we are spoiled and--yonder he is: deny him,  
forswear him, or else we are all undone.

LUCENTIO:

VINCENTIO:  
Lives my sweet son?

BIANCA:  
Pardon, dear father.

BAPTISTA:

How hast thou offended?  
Where is Lucentio?

LUCENTIO:  
Here's Lucentio,  
Right son to the right Vincentio;  
That have by marriage made thy daughter mine,  
While counterfeit supposes bleared thine eyne.

GREMIO:  
Here's packing, with a witness to deceive us all!

VINCENTIO:  
Where is that damned villain Tranio,  
That faced and braved me in this matter so?

BAPTISTA:  
Why, tell me, is not this my Cambio?

BIANCA:  
Cambio is changed into Lucentio.

LUCENTIO:  
Love wrought these miracles. Bianca's love  
Made me exchange my state with Tranio,  
While he did bear my countenance in the town;  
And happily I have arrived at the last  
Unto the wished haven of my bliss.  
What Tranio did, myself enforced him to;  
Then pardon him, sweet father, for my sake.

VINCENTIO:  
I'll slit the villain's nose, that would have sent  
me to the gaol.

BAPTISTA:  
But do you hear, sir? have you married my daughter  
without asking my good will?

VINCENTIO:  
Fear not, Baptista; we will content you, go to: but  
I will in, to be revenged for this villany.

BAPTISTA:  
And I, to sound the depth of this knavery.

LUCENTIO:  
Look not pale, Bianca; thy father will not frown.

GREMIO:

My cake is dough; but I'll in among the rest,  
Out of hope of all, but my share of the feast.

KATHARINA:  
Husband, let's follow, to see the end of this ado.

PETRUCHIO:  
First kiss me, Kate, and we will.

KATHARINA:  
What, in the midst of the street?

PETRUCHIO:  
What, art thou ashamed of me?

KATHARINA:  
No, sir, God forbid; but ashamed to kiss.

PETRUCHIO:  
Why, then let's home again. Come, sirrah, let's away.

KATHARINA:  
Nay, I will give thee a kiss: now pray thee, love, stay.

PETRUCHIO:  
Is not this well? Come, my sweet Kate:  
Better once than never, for never too late.

LUCENTIO:  
At last, though long, our jarring notes agree:  
And time it is, when raging war is done,  
To smile at scapes and perils overblown.  
My fair Bianca, bid my father welcome,  
While I with self-same kindness welcome thine.  
Brother Petruchio, sister Katharina,  
And thou, Hortensio, with thy loving widow,  
Feast with the best, and welcome to my house:  
My banquet is to close our stomachs up,  
After our great good cheer. Pray you, sit down;  
For now we sit to chat as well as eat.

PETRUCHIO:  
Nothing but sit and sit, and eat and eat!

BAPTISTA:  
Padua affords this kindness, son Petruchio.

PETRUCHIO:  
Padua affords nothing but what is kind.

HORTENSIO:

For both our sakes, I would that word were true.

PETRUCHIO:

Now, for my life, Hortensio fears his widow.

Widow:

Then never trust me, if I be afeard.

PETRUCHIO:

You are very sensible, and yet you miss my sense:  
I mean, Hortensio is afeard of you.

Widow:

He that is giddy thinks the world turns round.

PETRUCHIO:

Roundly replied.

KATHARINA:

Mistress, how mean you that?

Widow:

Thus I conceive by him.

PETRUCHIO:

Conceives by me! How likes Hortensio that?

HORTENSIO:

My widow says, thus she conceives her tale.

PETRUCHIO:

Very well mended. Kiss him for that, good widow.

KATHARINA:

'He that is giddy thinks the world turns round:'  
I pray you, tell me what you meant by that.

Widow:

Your husband, being troubled with a shrew,  
Measures my husband's sorrow by his woe:  
And now you know my meaning,

KATHARINA:

A very mean meaning.

Widow:

Right, I mean you.

KATHARINA:

And I am mean indeed, respecting you.

PETRUCHIO:  
To her, Kate!

HORTENSIO:  
To her, widow!

PETRUCHIO:  
A hundred marks, my Kate does put her down.

HORTENSIO:  
That's my office.

PETRUCHIO:  
Spoke like an officer; ha' to thee, lad!

BAPTISTA:  
How likes Gremio these quick-witted folks?

GREMIO:  
Believe me, sir, they butt together well.

BIANCA:  
Head, and butt! an hasty-witted body  
Would say your head and butt were head and horn.

VINCENTIO:  
Ay, mistress bride, hath that awaken'd you?

BIANCA:  
Ay, but not frightened me; therefore I'll sleep again.

PETRUCHIO:  
Nay, that you shall not: since you have begun,  
Have at you for a bitter jest or two!

BIANCA:  
Am I your bird? I mean to shift my bush;  
And then pursue me as you draw your bow.  
You are welcome all.

PETRUCHIO:  
She hath prevented me. Here, Signior Tranio.  
This bird you aim'd at, though you hit her not;  
Therefore a health to all that shot and miss'd.

TRANIO:  
O, sir, Lucentio slipp'd me like his greyhound,  
Which runs himself and catches for his master.

PETRUCHIO:

A good swift simile, but something currish.

TRANIO:

'Tis well, sir, that you hunted for yourself:

'Tis thought your deer does hold you at a bay.

BAPTISTA:

O ho, Petruchio! Tranio hits you now.

LUCENTIO:

I thank thee for that gird, good Tranio.

HORTENSIO:

Confess, confess, hath he not hit you here?

PETRUCHIO:

A' has a little gall'd me, I confess;

And, as the jest did glance away from me,

'Tis ten to one it maim'd you two outright.

BAPTISTA:

Now, in good sadness, son Petruchio,

I think thou hast the veriest shrew of all.

PETRUCHIO:

Well, I say no: and therefore for assurance

Let's each one send unto his wife;

And he whose wife is most obedient

To come at first when he doth send for her,

Shall win the wager which we will propose.

HORTENSIO:

Content. What is the wager?

LUCENTIO:

Twenty crowns.

PETRUCHIO:

Twenty crowns!

I'll venture so much of my hawk or hound,

But twenty times so much upon my wife.

LUCENTIO:

A hundred then.

HORTENSIO:

Content.

PETRUCHIO:  
A match! 'tis done.

HORTENSIO:  
Who shall begin?

LUCENTIO:  
That will I.  
Go, Biondello, bid your mistress come to me.

BIONDELLO:  
I go.

BAPTISTA:  
Son, I'll be your half, Bianca comes.

LUCENTIO:  
I'll have no halves; I'll bear it all myself.  
How now! what news?

BIONDELLO:  
Sir, my mistress sends you word  
That she is busy and she cannot come.

PETRUCHIO:  
How! she is busy and she cannot come!  
Is that an answer?

GREMIO:  
Ay, and a kind one too:  
Pray God, sir, your wife send you not a worse.

PETRUCHIO:  
I hope better.

HORTENSIO:  
Sirrah Biondello, go and entreat my wife  
To come to me forthwith.

PETRUCHIO:  
O, ho! entreat her!  
Nay, then she must needs come.

HORTENSIO:  
I am afraid, sir,  
Do what you can, yours will not be entreated.  
Now, where's my wife?

BIONDELLO:  
She says you have some goodly jest in hand:



She will not come: she bids you come to her.

PETRUCHIO:

Worse and worse; she will not come! O vile,  
Intolerable, not to be endured!  
Sirrah Grumio, go to your mistress;  
Say, I command her to come to me.

HORTENSIO:

I know her answer.

PETRUCHIO:

What?

HORTENSIO:

She will not.

PETRUCHIO:

The fouler fortune mine, and there an end.

BAPTISTA:

Now, by my holidame, here comes Katharina!

KATHARINA:

What is your will, sir, that you send for me?

PETRUCHIO:

Where is your sister, and Hortensio's wife?

KATHARINA:

They sit conferring by the parlor fire.

PETRUCHIO:

Go fetch them hither: if they deny to come.  
Swinge me them soundly forth unto their husbands:  
Away, I say, and bring them hither straight.

LUCENTIO:

Here is a wonder, if you talk of a wonder.

HORTENSIO:

And so it is: I wonder what it bodes.

PETRUCHIO:

Marry, peace it bodes, and love and quiet life,  
And awful rule and right supremacy;  
And, to be short, what not, that's sweet and happy?

BAPTISTA:

Now, fair befall thee, good Petruchio!

The wager thou hast won; and I will add  
Unto their losses twenty thousand crowns;  
Another dowry to another daughter,  
For she is changed, as she had never been.

PETRUCHIO:

Nay, I will win my wager better yet  
And show more sign of her obedience,  
Her new-built virtue and obedience.  
See where she comes and brings your froward wives  
As prisoners to her womanly persuasion.  
Katharina, that cap of yours becomes you not:  
Off with that bauble, throw it under-foot.

Widow:

Lord, let me never have a cause to sigh,  
Till I be brought to such a silly pass!

BIANCA:

Fie! what a foolish duty call you this?

LUCENTIO:

I would your duty were as foolish too:  
The wisdom of your duty, fair Bianca,  
Hath cost me an hundred crowns since supper-time.

BIANCA:

The more fool you, for laying on my duty.

PETRUCHIO:

Katharina, I charge thee, tell these headstrong women  
What duty they do owe their lords and husbands.

Widow:

Come, come, you're mocking: we will have no telling.

PETRUCHIO:

Come on, I say; and first begin with her.

Widow:

She shall not.

PETRUCHIO:

I say she shall: and first begin with her.

KATHARINA:

Fie, fie! unknit that threatening unkind brow,  
And dart not scornful glances from those eyes,  
To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor:  
It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,

Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,  
And in no sense is meet or amiable.  
A woman moved is like a fountain troubled,  
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty;  
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty  
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.  
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,  
Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,  
And for thy maintenance commits his body  
To painful labour both by sea and land,  
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,  
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe;  
And craves no other tribute at thy hands  
But love, fair looks and true obedience;  
Too little payment for so great a debt.  
Such duty as the subject owes the prince  
Even such a woman oweth to her husband;  
And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,  
And not obedient to his honest will,  
What is she but a foul contending rebel  
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?  
I am ashamed that women are so simple  
To offer war where they should kneel for peace;  
Or seek for rule, supremacy and sway,  
When they are bound to serve, love and obey.  
Why are our bodies soft and weak and smooth,  
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,  
But that our soft conditions and our hearts  
Should well agree with our external parts?  
Come, come, you froward and unable worms!  
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,  
My heart as great, my reason haply more,  
To bandy word for word and frown for frown;  
But now I see our lances are but straws,  
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,  
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.  
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,  
And place your hands below your husband's foot:  
In token of which duty, if he please,  
My hand is ready; may it do him ease.

PETRUCHIO:

Why, there's a wench! Come on, and kiss me, Kate.

LUCENTIO:

Well, go thy ways, old lad; for thou shalt ha't.

VINCENTIO:

'Tis a good hearing when children are toward.

LUCENTIO:

But a harsh hearing when women are froward.

PETRUCHIO:

Come, Kate, we'll to bed.

We three are married, but you two are sped.

'Twas I won the wager, though you hit the white;

And, being a winner, God give you good night!

HORTENSIO:

Now, go thy ways; thou hast tamed a curst shrew.

LUCENTIO:

'Tis a wonder, by your leave, she will be tamed so.

Master:

Boatswain!

Boatswain:

Here, master: what cheer?

Master:

Good, speak to the mariners: fall to't, yarely,  
or we run ourselves aground: bestir, bestir.

Boatswain:

Heigh, my hearts! cheerly, cheerly, my hearts!  
yare, yare! Take in the topsail. Tend to the  
master's whistle. Blow, till thou burst thy wind,  
if room enough!

ALONSO:

Good boatswain, have care. Where's the master?  
Play the men.

Boatswain:

I pray now, keep below.

ANTONIO:

Where is the master, boatswain?

Boatswain:

Do you not hear him? You mar our labour: keep your  
cabins: you do assist the storm.

GONZALO:

Nay, good, be patient.

Boatswain:

When the sea is. Hence! What cares these roarers

for the name of king? To cabin: silence! trouble us not.

GONZALO:

Good, yet remember whom thou hast aboard.

Boatswain:

None that I more love than myself. You are a counsellor; if you can command these elements to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more; use your authority: if you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long, and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour, if it so hap. Cheerly, good hearts! Out of our way, I say.

GONZALO:

I have great comfort from this fellow: methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him; his complexion is perfect gallows. Stand fast, good Fate, to his hanging: make the rope of his destiny our cable, for our own doth little advantage. If he be not born to be hanged, our case is miserable.

Boatswain:

Down with the topmast! yare! lower, lower! Bring her to try with main-course.

A plague upon this howling! they are louder than the weather or our office.

Yet again! what do you here? Shall we give o'er and drown? Have you a mind to sink?

SEBASTIAN:

A pox o' your throat, you bawling, blasphemous, incharitable dog!

Boatswain:

Work you then.

ANTONIO:

Hang, cur! hang, you whoreson, insolent noisemaker! We are less afraid to be drowned than thou art.

GONZALO:

I'll warrant him for drowning; though the ship were no stronger than a nutshell and as leaky as an unstanch'd wench.

Boatswain:

Lay her a-hold, a-hold! set her two courses off to sea again; lay her off.

Mariners:

All lost! to prayers, to prayers! all lost!

Boatswain:

What, must our mouths be cold?

GONZALO:

The king and prince at prayers! let's assist them,  
For our case is as theirs.

SEBASTIAN:

I'm out of patience.

ANTONIO:

We are merely cheated of our lives by drunkards:  
This wide-chapp'd rascal--would thou mightst lie drowning  
The washing of ten tides!

GONZALO:

He'll be hang'd yet,  
Though every drop of water swear against it  
And gape at widest to glut him.

ANTONIO:

Let's all sink with the king.

SEBASTIAN:

Let's take leave of him.

GONZALO:

Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an  
acre of barren ground, long heath, brown furze, any  
thing. The wills above be done! but I would fain  
die a dry death.

MIRANDA:

If by your art, my dearest father, you have  
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.  
The sky, it seems, would pour down stinking pitch,  
But that the sea, mounting to the welkin's cheek,  
Dashes the fire out. O, I have suffered  
With those that I saw suffer: a brave vessel,  
Who had, no doubt, some noble creature in her,  
Dash'd all to pieces. O, the cry did knock  
Against my very heart. Poor souls, they perish'd.  
Had I been any god of power, I would  
Have sunk the sea within the earth or ere  
It should the good ship so have swallow'd and  
The fraughting souls within her.

PROSPERO:

Be collected:

No more amazement: tell your piteous heart  
There's no harm done.

MIRANDA:

O, woe the day!

PROSPERO:

No harm.

I have done nothing but in care of thee,  
Of thee, my dear one, thee, my daughter, who  
Art ignorant of what thou art, nought knowing  
Of whence I am, nor that I am more better  
Than Prospero, master of a full poor cell,  
And thy no greater father.

MIRANDA:

More to know

Did never meddle with my thoughts.

PROSPERO:

'Tis time

I should inform thee farther. Lend thy hand,  
And pluck my magic garment from me. So:  
Lie there, my art. Wipe thou thine eyes; have comfort.  
The direful spectacle of the wreck, which touch'd  
The very virtue of compassion in thee,  
I have with such provision in mine art  
So safely ordered that there is no soul--  
No, not so much perdition as an hair  
Betid to any creature in the vessel  
Which thou heard'st cry, which thou saw'st sink. Sit down;  
For thou must now know farther.

MIRANDA:

You have often

Begun to tell me what I am, but stopp'd  
And left me to a bootless inquisition,  
Concluding 'Stay: not yet.'

PROSPERO:

The hour's now come;

The very minute bids thee ope thine ear;  
Obey and be attentive. Canst thou remember  
A time before we came unto this cell?  
I do not think thou canst, for then thou wast not  
Out three years old.

MIRANDA:  
Certainly, sir, I can.

PROSPERO:  
By what? by any other house or person?  
Of any thing the image tell me that  
Hath kept with thy remembrance.

MIRANDA:  
'Tis far off  
And rather like a dream than an assurance  
That my remembrance warrants. Had I not  
Four or five women once that tended me?

PROSPERO:  
Thou hadst, and more, Miranda. But how is it  
That this lives in thy mind? What seest thou else  
In the dark backward and abysm of time?  
If thou remember'st aught ere thou camest here,  
How thou camest here thou mayst.

MIRANDA:  
But that I do not.

PROSPERO:  
Twelve year since, Miranda, twelve year since,  
Thy father was the Duke of Milan and  
A prince of power.

MIRANDA:  
Sir, are not you my father?

PROSPERO:  
Thy mother was a piece of virtue, and  
She said thou wast my daughter; and thy father  
Was Duke of Milan; and thou his only heir  
And princess no worse issued.

MIRANDA:  
O the heavens!  
What foul play had we, that we came from thence?  
Or blessed was't we did?

PROSPERO:  
Both, both, my girl:  
By foul play, as thou say'st, were we heaved thence,  
But blessedly help hither.

MIRANDA:  
O, my heart bleeds



To think o' the teen that I have turn'd you to,  
Which is from my remembrance! Please you, farther.

PROSPERO:

My brother and thy uncle, call'd Antonio--  
I pray thee, mark me--that a brother should  
Be so perfidious!--he whom next thyself  
Of all the world I loved and to him put  
The manage of my state; as at that time  
Through all the signories it was the first  
And Prospero the prime duke, being so reputed  
In dignity, and for the liberal arts  
Without a parallel; those being all my study,  
The government I cast upon my brother  
And to my state grew stranger, being transported  
And rapt in secret studies. Thy false uncle--  
Dost thou attend me?

MIRANDA:

Sir, most heedfully.

PROSPERO:

Being once perfected how to grant suits,  
How to deny them, who to advance and who  
To trash for over-topping, new created  
The creatures that were mine, I say, or changed 'em,  
Or else new form'd 'em; having both the key  
Of officer and office, set all hearts i' the state  
To what tune pleased his ear; that now he was  
The ivy which had hid my princely trunk,  
And suck'd my verdure out on't. Thou attend'st not.

MIRANDA:

O, good sir, I do.

PROSPERO:

I pray thee, mark me.  
I, thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated  
To closeness and the bettering of my mind  
With that which, but by being so retired,  
O'er-prized all popular rate, in my false brother  
Awaked an evil nature; and my trust,  
Like a good parent, did beget of him  
A falsehood in its contrary as great  
As my trust was; which had indeed no limit,  
A confidence sans bound. He being thus lorded,  
Not only with what my revenue yielded,  
But what my power might else exact, like one  
Who having into truth, by telling of it,  
Made such a sinner of his memory,

To credit his own lie, he did believe  
He was indeed the duke; out o' the substitution  
And executing the outward face of royalty,  
With all prerogative: hence his ambition growing--  
Dost thou hear?

MIRANDA:  
Your tale, sir, would cure deafness.

PROSPERO:  
To have no screen between this part he play'd  
And him he play'd it for, he needs will be  
Absolute Milan. Me, poor man, my library  
Was dukedom large enough: of temporal royalties  
He thinks me now incapable; confederates--  
So dry he was for sway--wi' the King of Naples  
To give him annual tribute, do him homage,  
Subject his coronet to his crown and bend  
The dukedom yet unbow'd--alas, poor Milan!--  
To most ignoble stooping.

MIRANDA:  
O the heavens!

PROSPERO:  
Mark his condition and the event; then tell me  
If this might be a brother.

MIRANDA:  
I should sin  
To think but nobly of my grandmother:  
Good wombs have borne bad sons.

PROSPERO:  
Now the condition.  
The King of Naples, being an enemy  
To me inveterate, hearkens my brother's suit;  
Which was, that he, in lieu o' the premises  
Of homage and I know not how much tribute,  
Should presently extirpate me and mine  
Out of the dukedom and confer fair Milan  
With all the honours on my brother: whereon,  
A treacherous army levied, one midnight  
Fated to the purpose did Antonio open  
The gates of Milan, and, i' the dead of darkness,  
The ministers for the purpose hurried thence  
Me and thy crying self.

MIRANDA:  
Alack, for pity!

I, not remembering how I cried out then,  
Will cry it o'er again: it is a hint  
That wrings mine eyes to't.

PROSPERO:

Hear a little further  
And then I'll bring thee to the present business  
Which now's upon's; without the which this story  
Were most impertinent.

MIRANDA:

Wherefore did they not  
That hour destroy us?

PROSPERO:

Well demanded, wench:  
My tale provokes that question. Dear, they durst not,  
So dear the love my people bore me, nor set  
A mark so bloody on the business, but  
With colours fairer painted their foul ends.  
In few, they hurried us aboard a bark,  
Bore us some leagues to sea; where they prepared  
A rotten carcass of a boat, not rigg'd,  
Nor tackle, sail, nor mast; the very rats  
Instinctively had quit it: there they hoist us,  
To cry to the sea that roar'd to us, to sigh  
To the winds whose pity, sighing back again,  
Did us but loving wrong.

MIRANDA:

Alack, what trouble  
Was I then to you!

PROSPERO:

O, a cherubim  
Thou wast that did preserve me. Thou didst smile.  
Infused with a fortitude from heaven,  
When I have deck'd the sea with drops full salt,  
Under my burthen groan'd; which raised in me  
An undergoing stomach, to bear up  
Against what should ensue.

MIRANDA:

How came we ashore?

PROSPERO:

By Providence divine.  
Some food we had and some fresh water that  
A noble Neapolitan, Gonzalo,  
Out of his charity, being then appointed

Master of this design, did give us, with  
Rich garments, linens, stuffs and necessities,  
Which since have steaded much; so, of his gentleness,  
Knowing I loved my books, he furnish'd me  
From mine own library with volumes that  
I prize above my dukedom.

MIRANDA:  
Would I might  
But ever see that man!

PROSPERO:  
Now I arise:  
Sit still, and hear the last of our sea-sorrow.  
Here in this island we arrived; and here  
Have I, thy schoolmaster, made thee more profit  
Than other princesses can that have more time  
For vainer hours and tutors not so careful.

MIRANDA:  
Heavens thank you for't! And now, I pray you, sir,  
For still 'tis beating in my mind, your reason  
For raising this sea-storm?

PROSPERO:  
Know thus far forth.  
By accident most strange, bountiful Fortune,  
Now my dear lady, hath mine enemies  
Brought to this shore; and by my prescience  
I find my zenith doth depend upon  
A most auspicious star, whose influence  
If now I court not but omit, my fortunes  
Will ever after droop. Here cease more questions:  
Thou art inclined to sleep; 'tis a good dulness,  
And give it way: I know thou canst not choose.  
Come away, servant, come. I am ready now.  
Approach, my Ariel, come.

ARIEL:  
All hail, great master! grave sir, hail! I come  
To answer thy best pleasure; be't to fly,  
To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride  
On the curl'd clouds, to thy strong bidding task  
Ariel and all his quality.

PROSPERO:  
Hast thou, spirit,  
Perform'd to point the tempest that I bade thee?

ARIEL:

To every article.

I boarded the king's ship; now on the beak,  
Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin,  
I flamed amazement: sometime I'd divide,  
And burn in many places; on the topmast,  
The yards and bowsprit, would I flame distinctly,  
Then meet and join. Jove's lightnings, the precursors  
O' the dreadful thunder-claps, more momentary  
And sight-outrunning were not; the fire and cracks  
Of sulphurous roaring the most mighty Neptune  
Seem to besiege and make his bold waves tremble,  
Yea, his dread trident shake.

PROSPERO:

My brave spirit!  
Who was so firm, so constant, that this coil  
Would not infect his reason?

ARIEL:

Not a soul  
But felt a fever of the mad and play'd  
Some tricks of desperation. All but mariners  
Plunged in the foaming brine and quit the vessel,  
Then all afire with me: the king's son, Ferdinand,  
With hair up-staring,--then like reeds, not hair,--  
Was the first man that leap'd; cried, 'Hell is empty  
And all the devils are here.'

PROSPERO:

Why that's my spirit!  
But was not this high shore?

ARIEL:

Close by, my master.

PROSPERO:

But are they, Ariel, safe?

ARIEL:

Not a hair perish'd;  
On their sustaining garments not a blemish,  
But fresher than before: and, as thou badest me,  
In troops I have dispersed them 'bout the isle.  
The king's son have I landed by himself;  
Whom I left cooling of the air with sighs  
In an odd angle of the isle and sitting,  
His arms in this sad knot.

PROSPERO:

Of the king's ship

The mariners say how thou hast disposed  
And all the rest o' the fleet.

ARIEL:

Safely in harbour  
Is the king's ship; in the deep nook, where once  
Thou call'dst me up at midnight to fetch dew  
From the still-vex'd Bermoothes, there she's hid:  
The mariners all under hatches stow'd;  
Who, with a charm join'd to their suffer'd labour,  
I have left asleep; and for the rest o' the fleet  
Which I dispersed, they all have met again  
And are upon the Mediterranean flote,  
Bound sadly home for Naples,  
Supposing that they saw the king's ship wreck'd  
And his great person perish.

PROSPERO:

Ariel, thy charge  
Exactly is perform'd: but there's more work.  
What is the time o' the day?

ARIEL:

Past the mid season.

PROSPERO:

At least two glasses. The time 'twixt six and now  
Must by us both be spent most precious.

ARIEL:

Is there more toil? Since thou dost give me pains,  
Let me remember thee what thou hast promised,  
Which is not yet perform'd me.

PROSPERO:

How now? moody?  
What is't thou canst demand?

ARIEL:

My liberty.

PROSPERO:

Before the time be out? no more!

ARIEL:

I prithee,  
Remember I have done thee worthy service;  
Told thee no lies, made thee no mistakings, served  
Without or grudge or grumblings: thou didst promise  
To bate me a full year.

PROSPERO:

Dost thou forget  
From what a torment I did free thee?

ARIEL:

No.

PROSPERO:

Thou dost, and think'st it much to tread the ooze  
Of the salt deep,  
To run upon the sharp wind of the north,  
To do me business in the veins o' the earth  
When it is baked with frost.

ARIEL:

I do not, sir.

PROSPERO:

Thou liest, malignant thing! Hast thou forgot  
The foul witch Sycorax, who with age and envy  
Was grown into a hoop? hast thou forgot her?

ARIEL:

No, sir.

PROSPERO:

Thou hast. Where was she born? speak; tell me.

ARIEL:

Sir, in Argier.

PROSPERO:

O, was she so? I must  
Once in a month recount what thou hast been,  
Which thou forget'st. This damn'd witch Sycorax,  
For mischiefs manifold and sorceries terrible  
To enter human hearing, from Argier,  
Thou know'st, was banish'd: for one thing she did  
They would not take her life. Is not this true?

ARIEL:

Ay, sir.

PROSPERO:

This blue-eyed hag was hither brought with child  
And here was left by the sailors. Thou, my slave,  
As thou report'st thyself, wast then her servant;  
And, for thou wast a spirit too delicate  
To act her earthy and abhorr'd commands,

Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee,  
By help of her more potent ministers  
And in her most unmitigable rage,  
Into a cloven pine; within which rift  
Imprison'd thou didst painfully remain  
A dozen years; within which space she died  
And left thee there; where thou didst vent thy groans  
As fast as mill-wheels strike. Then was this island--  
Save for the son that she did litter here,  
A freckled whelp hag-born--not honour'd with  
A human shape.

ARIEL:  
Yes, Caliban her son.

PROSPERO:  
Dull thing, I say so; he, that Caliban  
Whom now I keep in service. Thou best know'st  
What torment I did find thee in; thy groans  
Did make wolves howl and penetrate the breasts  
Of ever angry bears: it was a torment  
To lay upon the damn'd, which Sycorax  
Could not again undo: it was mine art,  
When I arrived and heard thee, that made gape  
The pine and let thee out.

ARIEL:  
I thank thee, master.

PROSPERO:  
If thou more murmur'st, I will rend an oak  
And peg thee in his knotty entrails till  
Thou hast howl'd away twelve winters.

ARIEL:  
Pardon, master;  
I will be correspondent to command  
And do my spiriting gently.

PROSPERO:  
Do so, and after two days  
I will discharge thee.

ARIEL:  
That's my noble master!  
What shall I do? say what; what shall I do?

PROSPERO:  
Go make thyself like a nymph o' the sea: be subject  
To no sight but thine and mine, invisible



To every eyeball else. Go take this shape  
And hither come in't: go, hence with diligence!  
Awake, dear heart, awake! thou hast slept well; Awake!

MIRANDA:  
The strangeness of your story put  
Heaviness in me.

PROSPERO:  
Shake it off. Come on;  
We'll visit Caliban my slave, who never  
Yields us kind answer.

MIRANDA:  
'Tis a villain, sir,  
I do not love to look on.

PROSPERO:  
But, as 'tis,  
We cannot miss him: he does make our fire,  
Fetch in our wood and serves in offices  
That profit us. What, ho! slave! Caliban!  
Thou earth, thou! speak.

CALIBAN:

PROSPERO:  
Come forth, I say! there's other business for thee:  
Come, thou tortoise! when?  
Fine apparition! My quaint Ariel,  
Hark in thine ear.

ARIEL:  
My lord it shall be done.

PROSPERO:  
Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil himself  
Upon thy wicked dam, come forth!

CALIBAN:  
As wicked dew as e'er my mother brush'd  
With raven's feather from unwholesome fen  
Drop on you both! a south-west blow on ye  
And blister you all o'er!

PROSPERO:  
For this, be sure, to-night thou shalt have cramps,  
Side-stitches that shall pen thy breath up; urchins  
Shall, for that vast of night that they may work,  
All exercise on thee; thou shalt be pinch'd

As thick as honeycomb, each pinch more stinging  
Than bees that made 'em.

CALIBAN:

I must eat my dinner.  
This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,  
Which thou takest from me. When thou camest first,  
Thou strokedst me and madest much of me, wouldst give me  
Water with berries in't, and teach me how  
To name the bigger light, and how the less,  
That burn by day and night: and then I loved thee  
And show'd thee all the qualities o' the isle,  
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile:  
Cursed be I that did so! All the charms  
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!  
For I am all the subjects that you have,  
Which first was mine own king: and here you sty me  
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me  
The rest o' the island.

PROSPERO:

Thou most lying slave,  
Whom stripes may move, not kindness! I have used thee,  
Filth as thou art, with human care, and lodged thee  
In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate  
The honour of my child.

CALIBAN:

O ho, O ho! would't had been done!  
Thou didst prevent me; I had peopled else  
This isle with Calibans.

PROSPERO:

Abhorred slave,  
Which any print of goodness wilt not take,  
Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,  
Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour  
One thing or other: when thou didst not, savage,  
Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like  
A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes  
With words that made them known. But thy vile race,  
Though thou didst learn, had that in't which  
good natures  
Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou  
Deservedly confined into this rock,  
Who hadst deserved more than a prison.

CALIBAN:

You taught me language; and my profit on't  
Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you

For learning me your language!

PROSPERO:

Hag-seed, hence!

Fetch us in fuel; and be quick, thou'rt best,  
To answer other business. Shrug'st thou, malice?  
If thou neglect'st or dost unwillingly  
What I command, I'll rack thee with old cramps,  
Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar  
That beasts shall tremble at thy din.

CALIBAN:

No, pray thee.

I must obey: his art is of such power,  
It would control my dam's god, Setebos,  
and make a vassal of him.

PROSPERO:

So, slave; hence!

Come unto these yellow sands,  
And then take hands:  
Courtsied when you have and kiss'd  
The wild waves whist,  
Foot it featly here and there;  
And, sweet sprites, the burthen bear.  
Hark, hark!

FERDINAND:

Where should this music be? i' the air or the earth?  
It sounds no more: and sure, it waits upon  
Some god o' the island. Sitting on a bank,  
Weeping again the king my father's wreck,  
This music crept by me upon the waters,  
Allaying both their fury and my passion  
With its sweet air: thence I have follow'd it,  
Or it hath drawn me rather. But 'tis gone.  
No, it begins again.  
Full fathom five thy father lies;  
Of his bones are coral made;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes:  
Nothing of him that doth fade  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.  
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell  
Hark! now I hear them,--Ding-dong, bell.

FERDINAND:

The ditty does remember my drown'd father.  
This is no mortal business, nor no sound  
That the earth owes. I hear it now above me.

PROSPERO:

The fringed curtains of thine eye advance  
And say what thou seest yond.

MIRANDA:

What is't? a spirit?  
Lord, how it looks about! Believe me, sir,  
It carries a brave form. But 'tis a spirit.

PROSPERO:

No, wench; it eats and sleeps and hath such senses  
As we have, such. This gallant which thou seest  
Was in the wreck; and, but he's something stain'd  
With grief that's beauty's canker, thou mightst call him  
A goodly person: he hath lost his fellows  
And strays about to find 'em.

MIRANDA:

I might call him  
A thing divine, for nothing natural  
I ever saw so noble.

PROSPERO:

FERDINAND:

Most sure, the goddess  
On whom these airs attend! Vouchsafe my prayer  
May know if you remain upon this island;  
And that you will some good instruction give  
How I may bear me here: my prime request,  
Which I do last pronounce, is, O you wonder!  
If you be maid or no?

MIRANDA:

No wonder, sir;  
But certainly a maid.

FERDINAND:

My language! heavens!  
I am the best of them that speak this speech,  
Were I but where 'tis spoken.

PROSPERO:

How? the best?  
What wert thou, if the King of Naples heard thee?

FERDINAND:

A single thing, as I am now, that wonders  
To hear thee speak of Naples. He does hear me;

And that he does I weep: myself am Naples,  
Who with mine eyes, never since at ebb, beheld  
The king my father wreck'd.

MIRANDA:  
Alack, for mercy!

FERDINAND:  
Yes, faith, and all his lords; the Duke of Milan  
And his brave son being twain.

PROSPERO:

MIRANDA:  
Why speaks my father so ungently? This  
Is the third man that e'er I saw, the first  
That e'er I sigh'd for: pity move my father  
To be inclined my way!

FERDINAND:  
O, if a virgin,  
And your affection not gone forth, I'll make you  
The queen of Naples.

PROSPERO:  
Soft, sir! one word more.  
They are both in either's powers; but this swift business  
I must uneasy make, lest too light winning  
Make the prize light.  
One word more; I charge thee  
That thou attend me: thou dost here usurp  
The name thou owest not; and hast put thyself  
Upon this island as a spy, to win it  
From me, the lord on't.

FERDINAND:  
No, as I am a man.

MIRANDA:  
There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple:  
If the ill spirit have so fair a house,  
Good things will strive to dwell with't.

PROSPERO:  
Follow me.  
Speak not you for him; he's a traitor. Come;  
I'll manacle thy neck and feet together:  
Sea-water shalt thou drink; thy food shall be  
The fresh-brook muscles, wither'd roots and husks  
Wherein the acorn cradled. Follow.

FERDINAND:

No;

I will resist such entertainment till  
Mine enemy has more power.

MIRANDA:

O dear father,  
Make not too rash a trial of him, for  
He's gentle and not fearful.

PROSPERO:

What? I say,  
My foot my tutor? Put thy sword up, traitor;  
Who makest a show but darest not strike, thy conscience  
Is so possess'd with guilt: come from thy ward,  
For I can here disarm thee with this stick  
And make thy weapon drop.

MIRANDA:

Beseech you, father.

PROSPERO:

Hence! hang not on my garments.

MIRANDA:

Sir, have pity;  
I'll be his surety.

PROSPERO:

Silence! one word more  
Shall make me chide thee, if not hate thee. What!  
An advocate for an imposter! hush!  
Thou think'st there is no more such shapes as he,  
Having seen but him and Caliban: foolish wench!  
To the most of men this is a Caliban  
And they to him are angels.

MIRANDA:

My affections  
Are then most humble; I have no ambition  
To see a goodlier man.

PROSPERO:

Come on; obey:  
Thy nerves are in their infancy again  
And have no vigour in them.

FERDINAND:

So they are;

My spirits, as in a dream, are all bound up.  
My father's loss, the weakness which I feel,  
The wreck of all my friends, nor this man's threats,  
To whom I am subdued, are but light to me,  
Might I but through my prison once a day  
Behold this maid: all corners else o' the earth  
Let liberty make use of; space enough  
Have I in such a prison.

PROSPERO:

MIRANDA:

Be of comfort;  
My father's of a better nature, sir,  
Than he appears by speech: this is unwonted  
Which now came from him.

PROSPERO:

Thou shalt be free  
As mountain winds: but then exactly do  
All points of my command.

ARIEL:

To the syllable.

PROSPERO:

Come, follow. Speak not for him.

GONZALO:

Beseech you, sir, be merry; you have cause,  
So have we all, of joy; for our escape  
Is much beyond our loss. Our hint of woe  
Is common; every day some sailor's wife,  
The masters of some merchant and the merchant  
Have just our theme of woe; but for the miracle,  
I mean our preservation, few in millions  
Can speak like us: then wisely, good sir, weigh  
Our sorrow with our comfort.

ALONSO:

Prithee, peace.

SEBASTIAN:

He receives comfort like cold porridge.

ANTONIO:

The visitor will not give him o'er so.

SEBASTIAN:

Look he's winding up the watch of his wit;

by and by it will strike.

GONZALO:  
Sir,--

SEBASTIAN:  
One: tell.

GONZALO:  
When every grief is entertain'd that's offer'd,  
Comes to the entertainer--

SEBASTIAN:  
A dollar.

GONZALO:  
Dolour comes to him, indeed: you  
have spoken truer than you purposed.

SEBASTIAN:  
You have taken it wiselier than I meant you should.

GONZALO:  
Therefore, my lord,--

ANTONIO:  
Fie, what a spendthrift is he of his tongue!

ALONSO:  
I prithee, spare.

GONZALO:  
Well, I have done: but yet,--

SEBASTIAN:  
He will be talking.

ANTONIO:  
Which, of he or Adrian, for a good  
wager, first begins to crow?

SEBASTIAN:  
The old cock.

ANTONIO:  
The cockerel.

SEBASTIAN:  
Done. The wager?



ANTONIO:  
A laughter.

SEBASTIAN:  
A match!

ADRIAN:  
Though this island seem to be desert,--

SEBASTIAN:  
Ha, ha, ha! So, you're paid.

ADRIAN:  
Uninhabitable and almost inaccessible,--

SEBASTIAN:  
Yet,--

ADRIAN:  
Yet,--

ANTONIO:  
He could not miss't.

ADRIAN:  
It must needs be of subtle, tender and delicate  
temperance.

ANTONIO:  
Temperance was a delicate wench.

SEBASTIAN:  
Ay, and a subtle; as he most learnedly delivered.

ADRIAN:  
The air breathes upon us here most sweetly.

SEBASTIAN:  
As if it had lungs and rotten ones.

ANTONIO:  
Or as 'twere perfumed by a fen.

GONZALO:  
Here is everything advantageous to life.

ANTONIO:  
True; save means to live.

SEBASTIAN:

Of that there's none, or little.

GONZALO:

How lush and lusty the grass looks! how green!

ANTONIO:

The ground indeed is tawny.

SEBASTIAN:

With an eye of green in't.

ANTONIO:

He misses not much.

SEBASTIAN:

No; he doth but mistake the truth totally.

GONZALO:

But the rarity of it is,--which is indeed almost beyond credit,--

SEBASTIAN:

As many vouched rarities are.

GONZALO:

That our garments, being, as they were, drenched in the sea, hold notwithstanding their freshness and glosses, being rather new-dyed than stained with salt water.

ANTONIO:

If but one of his pockets could speak, would it not say he lies?

SEBASTIAN:

Ay, or very falsely pocket up his report

GONZALO:

Methinks our garments are now as fresh as when we put them on first in Afric, at the marriage of the king's fair daughter Claribel to the King of Tunis.

SEBASTIAN:

'Twas a sweet marriage, and we prosper well in our return.

ADRIAN:

Tunis was never graced before with such a paragon to their queen.

GONZALO:

Not since widow Dido's time.

ANTONIO:

Widow! a pox o' that! How came that widow in?  
widow Dido!

SEBASTIAN:

What if he had said 'widower AEneas' too? Good Lord,  
how you take it!

ADRIAN:

'Widow Dido' said you? you make me study of that:  
she was of Carthage, not of Tunis.

GONZALO:

This Tunis, sir, was Carthage.

ADRIAN:

Carthage?

GONZALO:

I assure you, Carthage.

SEBASTIAN:

His word is more than the miraculous harp; he hath  
raised the wall and houses too.

ANTONIO:

What impossible matter will he make easy next?

SEBASTIAN:

I think he will carry this island home in his pocket  
and give it his son for an apple.

ANTONIO:

And, sowing the kernels of it in the sea, bring  
forth more islands.

GONZALO:

Ay.

ANTONIO:

Why, in good time.

GONZALO:

Sir, we were talking that our garments seem now  
as fresh as when we were at Tunis at the marriage  
of your daughter, who is now queen.

ANTONIO:

And the rarest that e'er came there.

SEBASTIAN:

Bate, I beseech you, widow Dido.

ANTONIO:

O, widow Dido! ay, widow Dido.

GONZALO:

Is not, sir, my doublet as fresh as the first day I wore it? I mean, in a sort.

ANTONIO:

That sort was well fished for.

GONZALO:

When I wore it at your daughter's marriage?

ALONSO:

You cram these words into mine ears against  
The stomach of my sense. Would I had never  
Married my daughter there! for, coming thence,  
My son is lost and, in my rate, she too,  
Who is so far from Italy removed  
I ne'er again shall see her. O thou mine heir  
Of Naples and of Milan, what strange fish  
Hath made his meal on thee?

FRANCISCO:

Sir, he may live:

I saw him beat the surges under him,  
And ride upon their backs; he trod the water,  
Whose enmity he flung aside, and breasted  
The surge most swoln that met him; his bold head  
'Bove the contentious waves he kept, and oar'd  
Himself with his good arms in lusty stroke  
To the shore, that o'er his wave-worn basis bow'd,  
As stooping to relieve him: I not doubt  
He came alive to land.

ALONSO:

No, no, he's gone.

SEBASTIAN:

Sir, you may thank yourself for this great loss,  
That would not bless our Europe with your daughter,  
But rather lose her to an African;  
Where she at least is banish'd from your eye,  
Who hath cause to wet the grief on't.

ALONSO:  
Prithee, peace.

SEBASTIAN:  
You were kneel'd to and importuned otherwise  
By all of us, and the fair soul herself  
Weigh'd between loathness and obedience, at  
Which end o' the beam should bow. We have lost your  
son,  
I fear, for ever: Milan and Naples have  
More widows in them of this business' making  
Than we bring men to comfort them:  
The fault's your own.

ALONSO:  
So is the dear'st o' the loss.

GONZALO:  
My lord Sebastian,  
The truth you speak doth lack some gentleness  
And time to speak it in: you rub the sore,  
When you should bring the plaster.

SEBASTIAN:  
Very well.

ANTONIO:  
And most chirurgonly.

GONZALO:  
It is foul weather in us all, good sir,  
When you are cloudy.

SEBASTIAN:  
Foul weather?

ANTONIO:  
Very foul.

GONZALO:  
Had I plantation of this isle, my lord,—

ANTONIO:  
He'd sow't with nettle-seed.

SEBASTIAN:  
Or docks, or mallows.

GONZALO:  
And were the king on't, what would I do?

SEBASTIAN:

'Scape being drunk for want of wine.

GONZALO:

I' the commonwealth I would by contraries  
Execute all things; for no kind of traffic  
Would I admit; no name of magistrate;  
Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,  
And use of service, none; contract, succession,  
Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none;  
No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil;  
No occupation; all men idle, all;  
And women too, but innocent and pure;  
No sovereignty;--

SEBASTIAN:

Yet he would be king on't.

ANTONIO:

The latter end of his commonwealth forgets the  
beginning.

GONZALO:

All things in common nature should produce  
Without sweat or endeavour: treason, felony,  
Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine,  
Would I not have; but nature should bring forth,  
Of its own kind, all foison, all abundance,  
To feed my innocent people.

SEBASTIAN:

No marrying 'mong his subjects?

ANTONIO:

None, man; all idle: whores and knaves.

GONZALO:

I would with such perfection govern, sir,  
To excel the golden age.

SEBASTIAN:

God save his majesty!

ANTONIO:

Long live Gonzalo!

GONZALO:

And,--do you mark me, sir?

ALONSO:

Prithee, no more: thou dost talk nothing to me.

GONZALO:

I do well believe your highness; and  
did it to minister occasion to these gentlemen,  
who are of such sensible and nimble lungs that  
they always use to laugh at nothing.

ANTONIO:

'Twas you we laughed at.

GONZALO:

Who in this kind of merry fooling am nothing  
to you: so you may continue and laugh at  
nothing still.

ANTONIO:

What a blow was there given!

SEBASTIAN:

An it had not fallen flat-long.

GONZALO:

You are gentlemen of brave metal; you would lift  
the moon out of her sphere, if she would continue  
in it five weeks without changing.

SEBASTIAN:

We would so, and then go a bat-fowling.

ANTONIO:

Nay, good my lord, be not angry.

GONZALO:

No, I warrant you; I will not adventure  
my discretion so weakly. Will you laugh  
me asleep, for I am very heavy?

ANTONIO:

Go sleep, and hear us.

ALONSO:

What, all so soon asleep! I wish mine eyes  
Would, with themselves, shut up my thoughts: I find  
They are inclined to do so.

SEBASTIAN:

Please you, sir,  
Do not omit the heavy offer of it:

It seldom visits sorrow; when it doth,  
It is a comforter.

ANTONIO:

We two, my lord,  
Will guard your person while you take your rest,  
And watch your safety.

ALONSO:

Thank you. Wondrous heavy.

SEBASTIAN:

What a strange drowsiness possesses them!

ANTONIO:

It is the quality o' the climate.

SEBASTIAN:

Why

Doth it not then our eyelids sink? I find not  
Myself disposed to sleep.

ANTONIO:

Nor I; my spirits are nimble.  
They fell together all, as by consent;  
They dropp'd, as by a thunder-stroke. What might,  
Worthy Sebastian? O, what might?--No more:--  
And yet me thinks I see it in thy face,  
What thou shouldst be: the occasion speaks thee, and  
My strong imagination sees a crown  
Dropping upon thy head.

SEBASTIAN:

What, art thou waking?

ANTONIO:

Do you not hear me speak?

SEBASTIAN:

I do; and surely  
It is a sleepy language and thou speak'st  
Out of thy sleep. What is it thou didst say?  
This is a strange repose, to be asleep  
With eyes wide open; standing, speaking, moving,  
And yet so fast asleep.

ANTONIO:

Noble Sebastian,  
Thou let'st thy fortune sleep--die, rather; wink'st  
Whiles thou art waking.



