

4 VOL

1896







THE COMEDIES OF SHAKESPEARE



The Comedies
of
William Shakespeare
with many Drawings
by
Edwin A. Abbey



Printed and Published
by
Harper and Brothers
Franklin Square New York

1 8 9 6

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Complete in 4 Vols.

Volume IV.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE
MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR
WINTER'S TALE

2227550

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Measure for Measure

PERSONS REPRESENTED

VINCENTIO, *Duke of Vienna.*
ANGELO, *Lord Deputy in the Duke's absence.*
ESCALUS, *an ancient Lord, joined with Angelo
in the Deputation.*
CLAUDIO, *a young Gentleman.*
LUCIO, *a Fantastic.*
Two other like Gentlemen.
VARRIUS, *a Gentleman, Servant to the Duke.*
Provost.
THOMAS } *Two Friars.*
PETER }
A Justice.
ELBOW, *a simple Constable.*
FROTH, *a foolish Gentleman.*
Clown, *Servant to Mrs. Over-done.*
ABHORSON, *an Executioner.*
BARNARDINE, *a dissolute Prisoner.*
ISABELLA, *Sister to Claudio.*
MARIANA, *betrothed to Angelo.*
JULIET, *belov'd by Claudio.*
FRANCISCA, *a Nun.*
MISTRESS OVER-DONE, *a Bawd.*

Lords, Gentlemen, Guards, Officers, and other
Attendants.

SCENE, Vienna.

Measure for Measure

ACT I

SCENE I.—*Enter* Duke, ESCALUS, Lords, and Attendants.

D UKE. Escalus—

Escal. My lord.

Duke. 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 are as pregnant in
As art and practice 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.—

[*Exit an* Attendant.

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, drest him with our love;
And given his deputation all the organs
Of our own power. What think you of it?

Escal. If any in Vienna be of worth
To undergo such ample grace and honour,
It is Lord Angelo.

Enter ANGELO.

Duke. Look where he comes.

Ang. Always obedient to your grace's will,
I come to know your pleasure.

Duke. 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, them 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 yourself;
Mortality and Mercy in Vienna
Live in thy tongue and heart. Old Escalus,
Though first in question, is thy secondary.
Take thy commission.

Ang. 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. 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.

Ang. Yet give leave, my lord,
That we may bring you something on the way.

Duke. 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;
Though 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.

Ang. The heavens give safety to your purposes!

Escal. Lead forth, and bring you back in happiness.

Duke. I thank you. Fare you well. [*Exit.*]

Escal. 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.

Ang. 'Tis so with me. Let us withdraw together,
And we may soon our satisfaction have
Touching that point.

Escal. I'll wait upon your honour.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Enter* LUCIO *and two* Gentlemen.

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.

1 *Gent.* Heaven grant us its peace, but not the King
of Hungary's!

2 *Gent.* Amen.

Lucio. Thou concludest like the sanctimonious pi-
rate that went to sea with the ten commandments, but
scraped one out of the table.

2 *Gent.* Thou shalt not steal?

Lucio. Ay, that he razed.

1 *Gent.* 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, doth relish the petition well that prays for peace.

2 *Gent.* I never heard any soldier dislike it.

Lucio. I believe thee; for I think thou never wast where grace was said.

2 *Gent.* No? A dozen times at least.

1 *Gent.* What? In metre?

Lucio. In any proportion, or in any language.

1 *Gent.* 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.

1 *Gent.* 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.

1 *Gent.* And thou the velvet. Thou art good velvet; thou art 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.

1 *Gent.* I think I have done myself wrong, have I not?

2 *Gent.* 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—

2 *Gent.* To what, I pray?

1 *Gent.* Judge.

2 *Gent.* To three thousand dollars a year.

1 *Gent.* Ay, and more.

Lucio. A French crown more.

1 *Gent.* 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.

Enter Bawd.

1 *Gent.* How now? Which of your hips has the most profound sciatica?

Bawd. Well, well; there's one yonder arrested, and carried to prison, was worth five thousand of you all.

1 *Gent.* Who's that, I pray thee?

Bawd. Marry, sir, that's Claudio, Signior Claudio.

1 *Gent.* Claudio to prison? 'Tis not so.

Bawd. Nay, but I know 'tis so; I saw him arrested; saw him carried away; and, which is more, within these three days his head's to be chopped off.

Lucio. But, after all this fooling, I would not have it so. Art thou sure of this?

Bawd. 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.

2 *Gent.* Besides, you know, it draws something near to the speech we had to such a purpose.

1 *Gent.* But most of all agreeing with the proclamation.

Lucio. Away; let's go learn the truth of it.

[*Exeunt LUCIO and Gentlemen.*]

Bawd. 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?

Enter Clown.

Clown. Yonder man is carried to prison.

Bawd. Well, what has he done?

Clown. A woman.

Bawd. But what's his offence?

Clown. Groping for trouts in a peculiar river.

Bawd. What, is there a maid with child by him?

Clown. No; but there's a woman with maid by him.
You have not heard of the proclamation, have you?

Bawd. What proclamation, man?

Clown. All houses in the suburbs of Vienna must be pluck'd down.

Bawd. And what shall become of those in the city?

Clown. They shall stand for seed: they had gone down too, but that a wise burgher put in for them.

Bawd. But shall all our houses of resort in the suburbs be pull'd down?

Clown. To the ground, mistress.

Bawd. Why, here's a change indeed in the commonwealth! What shall become of me?

Clown. Come, fear not you; 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.

Bawd. What's to do here, Thomas Tapster? Let's withdraw.

Clown. Here comes Signior Claudio, led by the provost to prison; and there's Madam Juliet. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Enter* PROVOST, CLAUDIO, JULIET, *and* Officers; LUCIO, *and two* Gentlemen.

Claud. Fellow, why dost thou show me thus to the world?

Bear me to prison, where I am committed.

Prov. I do it not in evil disposition,
But from Lord Angelo by special charge.

Claud. Thus can the demi-god 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?

Claud. 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 I 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?

Claud. What but to speak of would offend again.

Lucio. What, is it murder?

Claud. No.

Lucio. Lechery?

Claud. Call it so.

Prov. Away, sir; you must go.

Claud. One word, good friend.—Lucio, a word with you. [Takes him aside.

Lucio. A hundred, if they'll do you any good.—
Is lechery so look'd after?

Claud. 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 chances
The stealth of our most mutual entertainment,
With character too gross, is writ on Juliet.

Lucio. With child, perhaps?

Claud. 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 eminence that fills it up,
 I stagger in. But this new governor
 Awakes me all the enroll'd 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 milk-maid, if she be in love,
 may sigh it off. Send after the duke, and appeal to him.

Claud. 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 moves men ; besides, 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 im-
 position, 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.

Claud. I thank you, good friend Lucio.

Lucio. Within two hours—

Claud. Come, officer, away.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Enter Duke and Friar THOMAS.*

Duke. 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. May your grace speak of it?

Duke. 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, 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. Gladly, my lord.

Duke. We have strict statutes and most biting laws
(The needful bits and curbs to headstrong steeds),
Which for these fourteen years we have let sleep,
Even like an o'ergrown lion in a cave,
That goes not out to prey. Now, as fond fathers,
Having bound up the threat'ning 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. 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. 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 sight
 To do it 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. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*Enter ISABELLA and FRANCISCA.*

Isab. And have you nuns no further privileges ?

Fran. Are not these large enough ?

Isab. Yes, truly ; I speak not as desiring more.
 But rather wishing a more strict restraint
 Upon the sisterhood, the votarists of Saint Clare.

Lucio. Ho ! Peace be in this place ! [*Within.*]

Isab. Who's that which calls ?

Fran. 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.

[*Exit FRANCISCA.*]

Isab. Peace and prosperity ! Who is't that calls ?

Enter LUCIO.

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 ?

Isab. 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.

Isab. 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.

Isab. Sir, mock me not : your story.

Lucio. 'Tis true, I would not—though 'tis my famil-
iar 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.

Isab. 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.

Isab. Some one with child by him ? My cousin
Juliet ?

Lucio. Is she your cousin ?

Isab. Adoptedly ; as school - maids change their
names

By vain though apt affection.

Lucio. She it is.

Isab. Oh, 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.

Isab. Doth he so seek his life?

Lucio. Has censured him
 Already; and, as I hear, the provost hath
 A warrant for his execution.

Isab. Alas, what poor ability's in me
 To do him good?

Lucio. Assay the power you have.

Isab. 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.

Isab. I'll see what I can do.

Lucio. But speedily.

Isab. 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.

Isab.

Good sir, adieu.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II

SCENE I.—*Enter* ANGELO, ESCALUS, a Justice, Provost,
Officers, and other Attendants.

Ang. 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.

Escal.

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.

Ang. '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 jus-
tice,

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 it
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 my own judgment pattern out my death,
 And nothing come in partial. Sir, he must die.

Escal. Be it as your wisdom will.

Ang. Where is the provost?

Prov. Here, if it like your honour.

Ang. 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.

[*Exit* Provost.

Escal. Well, Heaven forgive him, and forgive us all!
 Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall;
 Some run from brakes of vice, and answer none;
 And some condemned for a fault alone.

Enter ELBOW, FROTH, Clown, Officers, *etc.*

Elbow. Come, bring them away; if these be good
 people in a common-weal that do nothing but use their
 abuses in common houses, I know no law; bring them
 away.

Ang. 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 jus-
 tice, sir, and do bring in here before your good honour
 two notorious benefactors.

Ang. 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.

Escal. This comes off well; here's a wise officer.

Ang. Go to. What quality are they of? Elbow is
 your name? Why dost thou not speak, Elbow?

Clown. He cannot, sir; he's out at elbow.

Ang. 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.

Escal. How know you that?

Elbow. My wife, sir, whom I detest before Heaven, and your honour—

Escal. How! thy wife?

Elbow. Ay, sir; whom, I thank Heaven, is an honest woman—

Escal. 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.

Escal. 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.

Escal. By the woman's means?

Elbow. Ay, sir, by Mistress Over-done's means; but as she spit in his face, so she defied him.

Clown. Sir, if it please your honour, this is not so.

Elbow. Prove it before these varlets here, thou honourable man, prove it.

Escal. Do you hear how he misplaces?

[*To ANGELO.*

Clown. Sir, she came in great with child; and longing (saving your honour's reverence) for stew'd 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 threepence; your honours have seen such dishes; they are not China dishes, but very good dishes.

Escal. Go to, go to: no matter for the dish, sir.

Clown. 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 belied, 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, pay-

ing for them very honestly — for as you know, Master Froth, I could not give you threepence again.

Froth. No, indeed.

Clown. Very well; you being then, if you be remember'd, cracking the stones of the aforesaid prunes.

Froth. Ay, so I did, indeed.

Clown. Why, very well; I telling you, then, if you be remember'd, 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.

Clown. Why, very well then.

Escal. Come, you are a tedious fool: to the purpose — what was done to Elbow's wife, that he hath cause to complain of? Come we to what was done to her.

Clown. Sir, your honour cannot come to that yet.

Escal. No, sir, nor I mean it not.

Clown. 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 fourscore pound a year, whose father died at Hallowmas — was 't not at Hallowmas, Master Froth?

Froth. All-hollond eve.

Clown. 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.

Clown. Why, very well, then; I hope here be truths.

Ang. 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.

Escal. I think no less. Good-morrow to your lordship.—

[*Exit ANGELO.*
Now, sir, come on. What was done to Elbow's wife, once more?

Clown. Once, sir? there was nothing done to her once.

Elbow. I beseech you, sir, ask him what this man did to my wife.

Clown. I beseech your honour, ask me.

Escal. Well, sir, what did this gentleman do to her?

Clown. 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?

Escal. Ay, sir, very well.

Clown. Nay, I beseech you, mark it well.

Escal. Well, I do so.

Clown. Doth your honour see any harm in his face?

Escal. Why, no.

Clown. 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.

Escal. He's in the right. Constable, what say you to it?

Elbow. First, and it like you, the house is a respected house; next, this is a respected fellow; and his mistress is a respected woman.

Clown. 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 is yet to come that she was ever respected with man, woman, or child.

Clown. Sir, she was respected with him before he married with her.

Escal. Which is the wiser here? Justice or iniquity? Is this true?

Elbow. Oh, thou caitiff! Oh, thou varlet! Oh, 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.

Escal. If he took you a box o' th' 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?

Escal. 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 sees't, thou wicked varlet, now, what's come upon thee; thou art to continue now, thou varlet; thou art to continue.

Escal. Where were you born, friend? [*To FROTH.*]

Froth. Here in Vienna, sir.

Escal. Are you of fourscore pounds a year?

Froth. Yes, and 't please you, sir.

Escal. So.—What trade are you of, sir?

[*To the Clown.*]

Clown. A tapster; a poor widow's tapster.

Escal. Your mistress's name?

Clown. Mistress Over-done.

Escal. Hath she had any more than one husband?

Clown. Nine, sir; Over-done by the last.

Escal. 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.

Escal. Well, no more of it, Master Froth: farewell.—

[*Exit FROTH.*]

Come you hither to me, master tapster; what's your name, master tapster?

Clown. Pompey.

Escal. What else?

Clown. Bum, sir.

Escal. '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.

Clown. Truly, sir, I am a poor fellow that would live.

Escal. How would you live, Pompey? by being a bawd? What do you think of the trade, Pompey? is it a lawful trade?

Clown. If the law would allow it, sir.

Escal. But the law will not allow it, Pompey; nor it shall not be allowed in Vienna.

Clown. Does your worship mean to geld and spay all the youth of the city?

Escal. No, Pompey.

Clown. 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.

Escal. There *are* pretty orders beginning, I can tell you. It is but heading and hanging.

Clown. 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 threepence a day; if you live to see this come to pass, say Pompey told you so.

Escal. 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 Cæsar to you: in plain dealing, Pompey, I shall have you whipped; so for this time, Pompey, fare you well.

Clown. 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's not whipped out of his trade.

[*Exit.*

Escal. 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.

Escal. 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.

Escal. 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.

Escal. Look you, bring me in the names of some six or seven, the most efficient of your parish.

Elbow. To your worship's house, sir?

Escal. To my house. Fare you well.—[*Exit* ELBOW. What's o'clock, think you?

Just. Eleven, sir.

Escal. I pray you home to dinner with me.

Just. I humbly thank you.

Escal. It grieves me for the death of Claudio; But there's no remedy.

Just. Lord Angelo is severe.

Escal. 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's no remedy. Come, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Enter* Provost *and a* Servant.

Serv. He's hearing of a cause; he will come straight. I'll tell him of you.

Prov. Pray you, do.— [*Exit* Servant. I'll know his pleasure: maybe 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 it!

Enter ANGELO.

Ang. Now, what's the matter, provost?

Prov. Is it your will Claudio shall die to-morrow?

Ang. Did I not tell thee yea? hadst thou not order?
Why dost thou ask again?

Prov. Lest I might be too rash:
Under your good correction, I have seen,
When, after execution, judgment hath
Repented o'er his doom.

Ang. Go to; let that be mine:
Do you your office, or give up your place,
And you shall well be spared.

Prov. I crave your honour's pardon.
What shall be done, sir, with the groaning Juliet?
She's very near her hour.

Ang. Dispose of her
To some more fitter place; and that with speed.

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. Here is the sister of the man condemn'd,
Desires access to you.

Ang. Hath he a sister?

Prov. Ay, my good lord; a very virtuous maid,
And to be shortly of a sisterhood,
If not already.

Ang. Well, let her be admitted.

[*Exit* Servant.]

See you the fornicatress be removed.
Let her have needful, but not lavish, means;
There shall be order for it.

Enter LUCIO and ISABELLA.

Prov. Save your honour? [*Offering to retire.*]

Ang. Stay a little while.—[*To* ISAB.] You are wel-
come. What's your will?

Isab. I am a woful suitor to your honour,
Please but your honour hear me.

Ang. Well; what's your suit?

Isab. 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.

Ang. Well; the matter?

Isab. I have a brother is condemn'd to die:
I do beseech you, let it be his fault,
And not my brother.

Prov. Heaven give thee moving graces!

Ang. Condemn the fault, and not the actor of it!
Why, every fault's condemned ere it be done:
Mine were the very cipher of a function
To find the faults whose fine stands in record,
And let go by the actor.

Isab. Oh, just but severe law!
I had a brother then.—Heaven keep your honour!

Lucio. [Retiring.] [To *Isab.*] Give't not o'er so: to him again,
entreat him.

Kneel down before him, hang upon his gown;
You are too cold; if you should need a pin,
You could not with more tame a tongue desire it.
To him, I say.

Isab. Must he needs die?

Ang. Maiden, no remedy.

Isab. Yes; I do think that you might pardon him,
And neither Heaven nor man grieve at the mercy.

Ang. I will not do't.

Isab. But can you, if you would?

Ang. Look, what I will not, that I cannot do.

Isab. 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?

Ang. He's sentenced; 'tis too late.

Lucio. You are too cold. [To *Isabella.*]

Isab. 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 slipp'd like him;
But he, like you, would not have been so stern.

Ang. Pray you, begone.

Isab. 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. Ay, touch him: there's the vein. [*Aside.*

Ang. Your brother is a forfeit of the law,
And you but waste your words.

Isab. 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? Oh, think on that,
And mercy then will breathe within your lips
Like man new-made.

Ang. Be you content, fair maid;
It is the law, not I, condemns your brother.
Were he my kinsman, brother, or my son,
It should be thus with him—he must die to-morrow.

Isab. To-morrow? Oh, that's sudden! Spare him,
spare him:
He's not prepar'd 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. Ay, well said.

Ang. 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 now, or by remissness new-conceived,
And so in progress to be hatch'd and born)
Are now to have no successive degrees,
But where they live to end.

Isab. Yet show some pity.

Ang. 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.

Isab. So you must be the first that gives this sentence,
And he that suffers. Oh, it is excellent
To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant.

Lucio. That's well said.

Isab. 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. Oh, to him, to him, wench. He will relent;
He's coming, I perceive 't.

Prov. Pray Heaven she win him!

Isab. 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 in the right, girl; more o' that.

Isab. That in the captain's but a choleric word
Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy.

Lucio. Art advised o' that? more on't.

Ang. Why do you put these sayings upon me?

Isab. 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.

Ang. She speaks, and 'tis
Such sense that my sense breeds with it. Fare you
well.

Isab. Gentle my lord, turn back.

Ang. I will bethink me. Come again to-morrow.

Isab. Hark, how I'll bribe you. Good my lord, turn
back.

Ang. How! bribe me?

Isab. Ay, with such gifts that Heaven shall share with
you.

Lucio. You had marr'd all else.

Isab. 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 sunrise; prayers from preserved souls,
From fasting maids, whose minds are dedicate
To nothing temporal.

Ang. Well, come to me
To-morrow.

Lucio. Go to; 'tis well; away. [*Aside to ISABELLA.*

Isab. Heaven keep your honour safe!

Ang. Amen.

For I am that way going to temptation [*Aside.*
Where prayers cross.

Isab. At what hour to-morrow
Shall I attend your lordship?

Ang. At any time 'fore noon.

Isab. Save your honour!

[*Exeunt LUCIO, ISABELLA, and PROVOST.*

Ang. 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? Oh, fie, fie, fie!
 What dost thou? or what art thou, Angelo?
 Dost thou desire her foully, for those things
 That make her good? Oh, 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?
 Oh, 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. Ever till now,
 When men were fond, I smiled, and wonder'd how!
[Exit.

SCENE III.—*Enter Duke, habited like a friar, and Pro-*
 vost.

Duke. Hail to you, provost! so I think you are.

Prov. I am the provost. What's your will, good friar?

Duke. Bound by my charity, and my bless'd 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.

Prov. I would do more than that, if more were need-
ful.

Enter JULIET.

Look, here comes one; a gentlewoman of mine,
Who, falling in the flames 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. When must he die?

Prov. As I do think, to-morrow.—

I have provided for you; stay awhile, [To JULIET.
And you shall be conducted.

Duke. Repent you, fair one, of the sin you carry?

Juliet. I do; and bear the shame most patiently.

Duke. I'll teach you how you shall arraign your con-
science,

And try your penitence, if it be sound,
Or hollowly put on.

Juliet. I'll gladly learn.

Duke. Love you the man that wrong'd you?

Juliet. Yes, as I love the woman that wrong'd him.

Duke. So then it seems your most offenceful act
Was mutually committed?

Juliet. Mutually.

Duke. Then was your sin of heavier kind than his.

Juliet. I do confess it, and repent it, father.

Duke. 'Tis meet so, daughter. But lest you do re-
pent,

As that the sin hath brought you to this shame—
Which sorrow is always toward ourselves, not Heaven,
Showing we'd 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. There rest.

Your partner, as I hear, must die to-morrow,

And I am going with instruction to him.—
 Grace go with you! *Benedicite!* [Exit.
Juliet. Must die to-morrow! Oh, injurious love,
 That respites me a life whose very comfort
 Is still a dying horror!
Prov. 'Tis pity of him. [Exit.

SCENE IV.—*Enter* ANGELO.

Ang. 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 still art blood!
 Let's write good angel on the devil's horn,
 'Tis not the devil's crest.—

Enter Servant.

How now, who's there?
Serv. One Isabel, a sister,
 Desires access to you.
Ang. Teach her the way. [Exit Servant.
 O heavens!
 Why does my blood thus muster to my heart,
 Making both it unable for itself,
 And dispossessing all the 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.—

Enter ISABELLA.

How now, fair maid ?

Isab. I am come to know your pleasure.

Ang. That you might know it would much better
 please me

Than to demand what 'tis. Your brother cannot live.

Isab. Even so? Heaven keep your honour!

[*Retiring.*

Ang. Yet may he live awhile ; and it may be
 As long as you or I. Yet he must die.

Isab. Under your sentence ?

Ang. Yea.

Isab. When, I beseech you? that in his reprieve,
 Longer or shorter, he may be so fitted
 That his soul sicken not.

Ang. 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 mettle in restrained means
 To make a false one.

Isab. 'Tis set down so in heaven, but not in earth.

Ang. Say you so? then shall I 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?

Isab. Sir, believe this,
 I had rather give my body than my soul.

Ang. I talk not of your soul. Our compell'd sins
 Stand more for number than account.

Isab. How say you?

Ang. 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?

Isab. Please you to do't,
I'll take it as a peril to my soul,
It is no sin at all, but charity.

Ang. Pleased you to do't at peril of your soul,
Were equal poise of sin and charity.

Isab. 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.

Ang. Nay, but hear me.
Your sense pursues not mine: either you are ignorant
Or seem so, craftily; and that's not good.

Isab. Let me be ignorant, and in nothing good,
But graciously to know I am no better.

Ang. Thus wisdom wishes to appear most bright,
When it doth tax itself: as these black masques
Proclaim an enshield beauty ten times louder
Than beauty could displayed. But mark me,
To be received plain, I'll speak more gross:
Your brother is to die.

Isab. So.

Ang. And his offence is so, as it appears
Accountant to the law upon that pain.

Isab. True.

Ang. 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-binding 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 ?

Isab. 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 I have been sick for, ere I'd yield
My body up to shame.

Ang. Then must your brother die.

Isab. And 'twere the cheaper way.
Better it were a brother died at once
Than that a sister by redeeming him,
Should die forever.

Ang. Were not you then as cruel as the sentence
That you have slander'd so ?

Isab. Ignominy in ransom, and free pardon,
Are of two houses : lawful mercy is
Nothing akin to foul redemption.

Ang. You seem'd of late to make the law a tyrant,
And rather proved the sliding of your brother
A merriment than a vice.

Isab. Oh, pardon me, my lord ; it oft falls out,
To have what we'd have, we speak not what we mean.
I something do excuse the thing I hate,
For his advantage that I dearly love.

Ang. We are all frail.

Isab. Else let my brother die,
If not a feodary, but only he,
Owe, and succeed by weakness.

Ang. Nay, women are frail too.

Isab. Ay, as the glasses where they view them-
selves,
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.

Ang. 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.

Isab. I have no tongue but one: gentle my lord,
Let me entreat you speak the former language.

Ang. Plainly conceive, I love you.

Isab. My brother did love Juliet; and you tell
me
That he shall die for it.

Ang. He shall not, Isabel, if you give me love.

Isab. I know your virtue hath a license in't,
Which seems a little fouler than it is,
To pluck on others.

Ang. Believe me, on mine honour,
My words express my purpose.

Isab. 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.

Ang. Who will believe thee, Isabel?
My unsoil'd name, the austereness of my life,
My vouch against you, and my place i' 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. [Exit.

Isab. To whom shall I complain? Did I tell this,
Who would believe me? Oh, perilous mouths,
That bear in them one and the selfsame tongue,
Either of condemnation or approval!
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. [Exit.

ACT III

SCENE I.—*Enter* Duke, CLAUDIO, and Provost.

Duke. So then you hope of pardon from Lord Angelo?

Claud. The miserable have no other medicine
But only hope.
I have hope to live, and am prepared to die.

Duke. 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 art 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 provok'st; 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 striv'st 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 art 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.

Claud. I humbly thank you.
 To sue to live, I find I seek to die;
 And seeking death, find life. Let it come on.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. What, ho! Peace here; grace and good company!

Prov. Who's there? Come in; the wish deserves a welcome.

Duke. Dear sir, ere long I'll visit you again.

Claud. Most holy sir, I thank you.

Isab. My business is a word or two with Claudio.

Prov. And very welcome. Look, signior, here's your sister.

Duke. Provost, a word with you.

Prov. As many as you please.

Duke. Bring me to hear them speak where I may be concealed

Yet hear them. [*Exeunt Duke and Provost.*]

Claud. Now, sister, what's the comfort?

Isab. Why, as all comforts are, 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.

Claud. Is there no remedy?

Isab. None but such remedy as, to save a head,
To cleave a heart in twain.

Claud. But is there any?

Isab. 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.

Claud. Perpetual durance?

Isab. Ay, just, perpetual durance; a restraint,
Though all the world's vastidity you had,
To a determined scope.

Claud. But in what nature?

Isab. In such a one as (you consenting to't)
Would bark your honour from that trunk you bear,
And leave you naked.

Claud. Let me know the point.

Isab. Oh, I do fear thee, Claudio; and I quake,
Lest thou a feverous life should'st entertain,
And six or seven winters more respect
Than a perpetual honour. Dar'st 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.

Claud. 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.

Isab. 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 enmew
As falcon doth the fowl—is yet a devil;
His filth within being cast, he would appear
A pond as deep as hell.

Claud. The princely Angelo?

Isab. Oh, 'tis the cunning livery of hell
The damned'st body to invest and cover
In princely guards! Dost thou think, Claudio,
If I would yield him my virginity
Thou might'st be freed?

Claud. O heavens! it cannot be.

Isab. Yes, he would give it 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.

Claud. Thou shalt not do't.

Isab. O, were it but my life,
I'd throw it down for your deliverance
As frankly as a pin.

Claud. Thanks, dear Isabel.

Isab. Be ready, Claudio, for your death to-morrow.

Claud. 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.

Isab. Which is the least?

Claud. If it were damnable, he, being so wise,
Why would he for the momentary trick
Be perdurably fined? Oh, Isabel!

Isab. What says my brother?

Claud. Death is a fearful thing.

Isab. And shamed life a hateful.

Claud. 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 thoughts
 Imagine howling ! 'Tis too horrible !
 The weariest and most loathed worldly life
 That age, ache, penury, or imprisonment
 Can lay on nature is a paradise
 To what we fear of death.

Isab. Alas ! alas !

Claud. 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.

Isab. Oh, you beast !
 Oh, faithless coward ! Oh, 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.

Claud. Nay, hear me, Isabel.

Isab. Oh, fie, fie, fie !
 Thy sin's not accidental, but a trade :
 Mercy to thee would prove itself a bawd.
 'Tis best that thou diest quickly.

[*Going.*

Claud. Oh, hear me, Isabella.

Re-enter Duke.

Duke. Vouchsafe a word, young sister, but one word.

Isab. What is your will?

Duke. 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.

Isab. I have no superfluous leisure; my stay must be stolen out of other affairs; but I will attend you awhile.

Duke. [*To CLAUDIO, aside.*] 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. To-morrow you must die; go to your knees and make ready.

Claud. Let me ask my sister pardon. I am so out of love with life that I will sue to be rid of it.

Duke. Hold you there.—Farewell.— [*Exit CLAUDIO.*]

Re-enter Provost.

Provost, a word with you.

Prov. What's your will, father?

Duke. 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.

Prov. In good time. [*Exit Provost.*]

Duke. 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 convey'd to my understanding; and, but that frailty hath examples for his falling, I should wonder at An-



gelo. How will you do to content this substitute, and to save your brother?

Isab. I am now going to resolve him. I had rather my brother die by the law than my son should be unlawfully born. But oh, 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. 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 uprightly 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.

Isab. Let me hear you speak further; I have spirit to do anything that appears not foul in the truth of my spirit.

Duke. 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?

Isab. I have heard of the lady, and good words went with her name.

Duke. Her 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.

Isab. Can this be so? Did Angelo so leave her?

Duke. Left her in her tears, and dried not one of them with his comfort; swallowed his vows whole, pretend-

ing, 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.

Isab. 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. 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.

Isab. Show me how, good father.

Duke. This fore-named 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, 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?

Isab. The image of it gives me content already, and I trust it will grow to a most prosperous perfection.

Duke. 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 St. Luke's; there, at the moated grange, resides this dejected Mariana. At that place call upon me; and despatch with Angelo, that it may be quickly.

Isab. I thank you for this comfort. Fare you well,
good father. [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.—*Enter Duke, as a friar; with him ELBOW,
Clown, and Officers.*

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. Oh, heavens! what stuff is here?

Clown. 'Twas never merry world since of two usuries the merriest was put down, and the wors'er allow'd, by order of law, a furr'd gown to keep him warm; and furr'd 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. 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 pick-lock, which we have sent to the deputy.

Duke. Fie, sirrah; a bawd, a wicked bawd!
The evil that thou caus'est 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.

Clown. Indeed, it does stink in some sort, sir; but yet, sir, I would prove—

Duke. 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. That we were all, as some would seem to be, Free from our faults, as faults from seeming free!

Enter LUCIO.

Elbow. His neck will come to your waist; a cord, sir.

Clown. I spy comfort; I cry bail. Here's a gentleman, and a friend of mine.

Lucio. How now, noble Pompey? What, at the heels of Cæsar? 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 say'st thou to this tune, matter, and method? Is't not drown'd i' the last rain? Ha? What say'st 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. Still thus, and thus! still worse!

Lucio. How doth my dear morsel, thy mistress? Procures she still? Ha?

Clown. 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 powder'd bawd. An unshunn'd consequence; it must be so. Art going to prison, Pompey?

Clown. 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.

Clown. 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. And you.

Lucio. Does Bridget paint still, Pompey? Ha?

Elbow. Come your ways, sir; come.

Clown. 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.—

[*Exeunt* ELBOW, Clown, and Officers.]

What news, friar, of the duke?

Duke. 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. 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. 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. 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 the downright way of creation. Is it true, think you?

Duke. How should he be made then?

Lucio. Some report a sea-maid spawn'd him; some that he was begot between two stock-fishes. But it is certain that when he makes water his urine is congeal'd ice. That I know to be true. And he is a motion ungenerative, that's infallible.

Duke. You are pleasant, sir, and speak apace.

Lucio. Why, what a ruthless thing is this in him, for

the rebellion of a cod-piece to take away the life of a man? Would the duke that is absent have done this? Ere he would have hang'd a man for the getting of a hundred bastards he would have paid for the nursing of a thousand. He had some feeling of the sport; he knew the service, and that instructed him to mercy.

Duke. I never heard the absent duke much detected for women; he was not inclined that way.

Lucio. Oh, sir, you are deceived.

Duke. '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. 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. What, I prithee, might be the cause?

Lucio. No—pardon—'tis a secret must be lock'd 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. Wise? Why, no question but he was.

Lucio. A very superficial, ignorant, unweighing fellow.

Duke. Either this is 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 unskillfully; or, if your knowledge be more, it is much darken'd in your malice.

Lucio. Sir, I know him, and I love him.

Duke. Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with dearer love.

Lucio. Come, sir, I know what I know.

Duke. 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. He shall know you better, sir, if I may live to report you.

Lucio. I fear you not.

Duke. Oh, 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 hang'd first: thou art deceived in me, friar. But no more of this. Canst thou tell if Claudio die to-morrow, or no?

Duke. Why should he die, sir?

Lucio. Why? For filling a bottle with a tun-dish. I would the duke we talk of were return'd again. This 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 answer'd; he would never bring them to light. Would he were return'd! Marry, this Claudio is condemn'd for untrussing. Farewell, good friar; I prithee pray for me. The duke, I say to thee again, would eat mutton on Fridays. He's now 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. [*Exit.*

Duke. 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?

Enter ESCALUS, Provost, Bawd, and Officers.

Escal. Go, away with her to prison.

Bawd. 'Good my lord, be good to me; your honour is accounted a merciful man: good my lord.

Escal. Double and treble admonition, and still forfeit in the same kind? This would make mercy swear and play the tyrant.

Prov. A bawd of eleven years' continuance, may it please your honour.

Bawd. My lord, this is one Lucio's information against me. Mistress Kate Keep-down 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.

Escal. That fellow is a fellow of much license; let him be called before us.—Away with her to prison.—Go to; no more words.—[*Exeunt Bawd and Officers.*] Provost, my brother Angelo will not be alter'd: 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.

Prov. So please you, this friar hath been with him, and advised him for the entertainment of death.

Escal. Good-even, good father.

Duke. Bliss and goodness on you.

Escal. Of whence are you?

Duke. 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.

Escal. What news abroad i' the world?

Duke. 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 accursed: 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?

Escal. One that, above all other strifes, contended especially to know himself.



Duke. What pleasure was he given to?

Escal. Rather rejoicing to see another merry, than merry at anything which profess'd 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. 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.

Escal. You have paid the heavens your function, and the prisoner the very debt of your calling. I have labour'd 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. 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.

Escal. I am going to visit the prisoner. Fare you well.

Duke. Peace be with you!—

[*Exeunt ESCALUS and Provost.*]

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!
Oh, what may man within him hide,
Though angel on the outward side!

Mari. You have not been inquired after. I have sat here all day.

Enter ISABELLA.

Duke. I do constantly believe you. The time is come, even now. I shall crave your forbearance a little; maybe I will call upon you anon for some advantage to yourself.

Mari. I am always bound to you. [Exit.

Duke. Very well met, and welcome.

What is the news from this good deputy?

Isab. 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. But shall you on your knowledge find this way?

Isab. 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. Are there no other tokens
Between you 'greed concerning her observance?

Isab. 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. 'Tis well borne up.
I have not yet made known to Mariana
A word of this.—What, ho! within! come forth!

Re-enter MARIANA.

I pray you be acquainted with this maid;
She comes to do you good.

Isab. I do desire the like.

Duke. Do you persuade yourself that I respect you?

Mari. Good friar, I know you do, and have found it.

Duke. 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.

Mari. Will't please you walk aside?

[*Exeunt* MARIANA and ISABELLA.]

Duke. Oh, 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 'scapes of wit

Make thee the father of their idle dream,

And rack thee in their fancies!—Welcome! How
agreed?

Re-enter MARIANA and ISABELLA.

Isab. She'll take the enterprize upon her, father, if
you advise it.

Duke. It is not my consent,
But my entreaty too.

Isab. Little have you to say,
When you depart from him, but, soft and low,
Remember now my brother.

Mari. Fear me not.

Duke. 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 tithes to sow. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Enter* Provost and Clown.

Prov. Come hither, sirrah. Can you cut off a man's
head?

Clown. If the man be a bachelor, sir, I can; but if

he be a married man he is his wife's head, and I can never cut off a woman's head.

Prov. 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 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.

Clown. 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.

Prov. What ho, Abhorson! Where's Abhorson, there?

Enter ABHORSON.

Abhor. Do you call, sir?

Prov. 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.

Abhor. A bawd, sir? Fie upon him, he will discredit our mystery.

Prov. Go to, sir; you weigh equally; a feather will turn the scale. [*Exit.*

Clown. 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?

Abhor. Ay, sir, a mystery.

Clown. 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 hang'd I cannot imagine.

Abhor. Sir, it is a mystery.

Clown. Proof.

Abhor. 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.

Re-enter Provost.

Prov. Are you agreed?

Clown. Sir, I will serve him; for I do find your hangman is a more penitent trade than your bawd: he doth oftener ask forgiveness.

Prov. You, sirrah, provide your block and your axe, to-morrow four o'clock.

Abhor. Come on, bawd; I will instruct thee in my trade; follow.

Clown. I do desire to learn, sir; and I hope, if you have occasion to use me for your own turn, you will find me yare; for truly, sir, for your kindness I owe you a good turn.

Prov. Call hither Barnardine and Claudio.

[*Exeunt Clown and ABHORSON.*

Th' one has my pity; not a jot the other,
Being a murderer, though he were my brother.—

Enter CLAUDIO.

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?

Claud. As fast lock'd up in sleep as guiltless labour
When it lies starkly in the traveller's bones.
He will not wake.

Prov. Who can do good on him?
Well, go, prepare yourself. But hark, what noise?

Heaven give your spirits comfort!— [Knocking within.
[Exit CLAUDIO.
By-and-by.—

I hope it is some pardon, or reprieve,
For the most gentle Claudio.—Welcome, father.

Enter Duke.

Duke. The best and wholesomest spirits of the
night
Envelop you, good Provost! Who called here of
late?

Prov. None, since the curfew rung.

Duke. Not Isabel?

Prov. No.

Duke. They will then, ere't be long.

Prov. What comfort is for Claudio?

Duke. There's some in hope.

Prov. It is a bitter deputy.

Duke. 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.

[Knocking within; Provost goes out.]

This is a gentle provost. Seldom when
The steeled gaoler is the friend of men.—
How now? What noise? That spirit's possess'd with
haste

That wounds the unassisting postern with these strokes.

Re-enter Provost.

Prov. *[Speaking to one at the door.]* There he must
stay until the officer
Arise to let him in; he is call'd up.

Duke. Have you no countermand for Claudio yet,
But he must die to-morrow?

Prov. None, sir, none.

Duke. As near the dawning, Provost, as it is,
You shall hear more ere morning.

Prov. 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.

Enter a Messenger.

Duke. This is his lordship's man.

Prov. And here comes Claudio's pardon.

Mess. My lord hath sent you this note; and by me this further charge, that you swerve not from the smallest article of it, neither in time, matter, or other circumstance. Good-morrow; for, as I take it, it is almost day.

Prov. I shall obey him. [Exit Messenger.]

Duke. [*Aside.*] This is his pardon, purchased by such
 sin

For which the pardoner himself is in.
 Hence hath offence his quick celerity,
 When it is borne in high authority.
 When vice makes mercy, mercy's so extended,
 That for the fault's love is the offender friended.—
 Now, sir, what news?

Prov. 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. Pray you, let's hear.

Prov. [*Reads.*] Whatsoever you may hear to the contrary, let Claudio be executed by four of the clock; and, in the afternoon, Barnardine; for my better satisfaction, let me have Claudio's head sent me by five. Let this be duly performed, with a thought that more depends on it than we must yet deliver. Thus fail not to do your office, as you will answer it at your peril.—
 What say you to this, sir?

Duke. What is that Barnardine, who is to be executed in the afternoon?

Prov. A Bohemian born, but here nursed up and bred; one that is a prisoner nine years old.

Duke. How came it that the absent duke had not

either deliver'd him to his liberty or executed him? I have heard it was ever his manner to do so.

Prov. 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. Is it now apparent?

Prov. Most manifest, and not denied by himself.

Duke. Hath he borne himself penitently in prison? How seems he to be touch'd?

Prov. 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. He wants advice.

Prov. 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 often awaked him, as if to carry him to execution, and show'd him a seeming warrant for it. It hath not moved him at all.

Duke. 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.

Prov. Pray, sir, in what?

Duke. In the delaying death.

Prov. Alack! 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. 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 borne to Angelo.

Prov. Angelo hath seen them both, and will discover the favour.

Duke. Oh, 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 anything 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.

Prov. Pardon me, good father; it is against my oath.

Duke. Were you sworn to the duke, or to the deputy?

Prov. To him, and to his substitutes.

Duke. You will think you have made no offence, if the duke avouch the justice of your dealing?

Prov. But what likelihood is in that?

Duke. 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.

Prov. I know them both.

Duke. The contents of this is the return of the duke; you shall anon overread 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.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Enter* Clown.

Clown. I am as well acquainted here as I was in our house of profession. One would think it were Mistress Over-done'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-colour'd satin, which now peaches him a beggar. Then have we here young Dizy, and young Master Deep-vow, and Master Copper-spur, and Master Starve-lackey the rapier and dagger man, and young Drop-heir that kill'd lusty Pudding, and Master Forthright the tilter, and brave Master Shoe-tie the great traveller, and wild Half-can that stabb'd Pots, and, I think, forty more; all great doers in our trade, and are now for the Lord's sake.

Enter ABHORSON.

Abhor. Sirrah, bring Barnardine hither.

Clown. Master Barnardine! you must rise and be hang'd, Master Barnardine!

Abhor. What, ho, Barnardine!

Barnar. [*Within.*] A pox o' your throats! Who makes that noise there? What are you?

Clown. Your friends, sir; the hangman. You must be so good, sir, to rise and be put to death.

Barnar. [*Within.*] Away, you rogue, away; I am sleepy.

Abhor. Tell him he must awake, and that quickly, too.

Clown. Pray, Master Barnardine, awake till you are executed, and sleep afterwards.

Abhor. Go in to him and fetch him out.

Clown. He is coming, sir, he is coming; I hear his straw rustle.

Enter BARNARDINE.

Abhor. Is the axe upon the block, sirrah?

Clown. Very ready, sir.

Barnar. How now, Abhorson? what's the news with you?

Abhor. Truly, sir, I would desire you to clap into your prayers; for, look you, the warrant's come.

Barnar. You rogue, I have been drinking all night, I am not fitted for't.

Clown. Oh, the better, sir; for he that drinks all night and is hang'd betimes in the morning may sleep the sounder all the next day.

Enter Duke.

Abhor. Look you, sir; here comes your ghostly father. Do we jest now, think you?

Duke. 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.

Barnar. 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. Oh, sir, you must; and therefore, I beseech you,
Look forward on the journey you shall go.

Barnar. I swear I will not die to-day for any man's persuasion.

Duke. But hear you—

Barnar. Not a word; if you have anything to say to me, come to my ward, for thence will not I to-day.

[*Exit.*

Enter Provost.

Duke. Unfit to live or die. Oh, gravel heart!—
After him, fellows; bring him to the block.

[*Exeunt* ABHORSON and Clown.

Prov. Now, sir, how do you find the prisoner?

Duke. A creature unprepared, unmeet for death ;
And to transport him in the mind he is
Were damnable.

Prov. 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. Oh, 'tis an accident that Heaven provides !
Despatch 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.

Prov. This shall be done, good father, present-
ly.

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. 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.

Prov. I am your free dependant.

Duke. Quick, despatch,
And send the head to Angelo. [Exit Provost.
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 weal-balanced form,
We shall proceed with Angelo.

Re-enter Provost.

Prov. Here is the head ; I'll carry it myself.

Duke. Convenient is it. Make a swift return ;
For I would commune with you of such things
That want no ears but yours.

Prov. I'll make all speed.

[*Exit.*]

Isab. [*Within.*] Peace, ho, be here !

Duke. 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.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. Ho, by your leave.

Duke. Good-morning to you, fair and gracious
daughter.

Isab. The better, given me by so holy a man.
Hath yet the deputy sent my brother's pardon ?

Duke. He hath released him, Isabel, from the world ;
His head is off, and sent to Angelo.

Isab. Nay, but it is not so.

Duke. It is no other.

Show your wisdom, daughter, in your close patience.

Isab. Oh, I will to him, and pluck out his eyes !

Duke. You shall not be admitted to his sight.

Isab. Unhappy Claudio ! Wretched Isabel !
Injurious world ! Most damned Angelo !

Duke. 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.

Isab. I am directed by you.

Duke. 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?

Enter LUCIO.

Lucio. Good-even,
Friar; where is the provost?

Duke. Not within, sir.

Lucio. Oh, 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.

[*Exit ISABELLA.*

Duke. Sir, the duke is marvellous little beholden 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. 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. 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. Did you such a thing?

Lucio. Yes, marry, did I; but was fain to forswear it; they would else have married me to the rotten medlar.

Duke. 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.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Enter ANGELO and ESCALUS.*

Escal. Every letter he hath writ hath disvouch'd other.

Ang. 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 re-deliver our authorities there?

Escal. I guess not.

Ang. 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?

Escal. He shows his reason for that: to have a despatch of complaints, and to deliver us from devices hereafter, which shall then have no power to stand against us.

Ang. Well, I beseech you, let it be proclaim'd. 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.

Escal. I shall, sir: fare you well.

[*Exit.*]

Ang. 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 a credent bulk
 That no particular scandal once can touch
 But it confounds the breather. He should have lived,
 Save that his riotous youth, with dangerous sense,
 Might in the times to come have ta'en revenge
 By so receiving a dishonoured life
 With ransom of such shame. 'Would yet he had
 lived!

Alack, when once our grace we have forgot,
 Nothing goes right; we would, and we would not.

[*Exit.*

SCENE V.—*Enter Duke, in his own habit, and Friar*
 PETER.

Duke. The letters at fit time deliver me.

[*Giving letters.*

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.

F. Peter.

It shall be speeded well.

[*Exit Friar.*

Enter VARRIUS.

Duke. 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.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*Enter* ISABELLA and MARIANA.

Isab. 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.

Mari. Be ruled by him.

Isab. 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.

Mari. I would Friar Peter—

Isab. Oh, peace ; the friar is come.

Enter Friar PETER.

F. 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 ent'ring ; therefore, hence, away.

[*Excunt.*]

ACT V

SCENE I.—MARIANA (*veiled*), ISABELLA and PETER *at a distance.* *Enter, at opposite doors,* Duke, VARRIUS, Lords ; ANGELO, ESCALUS, LUCIO, Provost, Officers, and Citizens.

Duke. My very worthy cousin, fairly met.—
Our old and faithful friend, we are glad to see you.

Ang. and Escal. Happy return be to your royal grace !

Duke. 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.

Ang. You make my bonds still greater.

Duke. Oh, 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 razure 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.

PETER and ISABELLA come forward.

F. Peter. Now is your time; speak loud, and kneel
before him.

Isab. Justice, O royal duke! Veil your regard
Upon a wrong'd—I'd 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!

Duke. Relate your wrongs. In what? by whom? Be
brief.

Here is Lord Angelo shall give you justice.
Reveal yourself to him.

Isab. 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, oh, hear me, here.

Ang. 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.

Isab. By course of justice!

Ang. And she will speak most bitterly and strange.

Isab. 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. Nay, ten times strange.

Isab. 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. Away with her.—Poor soul,
She speaks this in the infirmity of sense.

Isab. O prince, I conjure thee as thou believ'st
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. 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.

Isab. 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. Many that are not mad
Have, sure, more lack of reason.—What would you say ?

Isab. 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.

Isab. That's he, indeed.

Duke. You were not bid to speak.

Lucio. No, my good lord,
Nor wish'd to hold my peace.

Duke. 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. The warrant's for yourself; take heed to it.

Isab. This gentleman told somewhat of my tale.

Lucio. Right.

Duke. It may be right; but you are in the wrong
To speak before your time.—Proceed.

Isab. I went
To this pernicious caitiff deputy.

Duke. That's somewhat madly spoken.

Isab. Pardon it;
The phrase is to the matter.

Duke. Mended again: the matter. Proceed.

Isab. 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. This is most likely!

Isab. Oh, that it were as like as it is true!

Duke. By Heaven, fond wretch, thou know'st not what
thou speak'st,

Or else thou art suborn'd against his honor
 In hateful practice. 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 cam'st here to complain?

Isab. 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. 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 practice.—
 Who knew of your intent and coming hither?

Isab. One that I would were here—Friar Lodowick.

Duke. 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 swing'd him roundly.

Duke. Words against me? This 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.

F. 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.

We did believe no less.

Know you that Friar Lodowick that she speaks of?

F. 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.

F. 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.

Good friar, let's hear it.

[*ISABELLA is carried off, guarded; and
MARIANA comes forward.*]

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.

Mari. Pardon, my lord, I will not show my face
Until my husband bid me.

Duke.

What, are you married?

Mari. No, my lord.

Duke.

Are you a maid?

Mari.

No, my lord.

Duke. A widow then?

Mari.

Neither, my lord.

Duke.

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. Silence that fellow ; I would he had some cause
To prattle for himself.

Lucio. Well, my lord.

Mari. 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. For the benefit of silence, would thou wert so too.

Lucio. Well, my lord.

Duke. This is no witness for Lord Angelo.

Mari. 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.

Ang. Charges she more than me ?

Mari. Not that I know.

Duke. No ? you say your husband.

Mari. 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 knew Isabel's.

Ang. This is a strange abuse. Let's see thy face.

Mari. My husband bids me ; now I will unmask.
[Unveiling.]

This is that face, thou cruel Angelo,
Which once thou swor'st 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. Know you this woman ?

Lucio. Carnally, she says.

Duke. Sirrah, no more.

Lucio. Enough, my lord.

Ang. 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.

Mari. Noble prince,
As there comes light from heaven, and words from
breath, [Exit.

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 his garden-house,
He knew me as a wife. As this is true,
Let me in safety raise me from my knees,
Or else forever be confixed here
A marble monument !

Ang. 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 practice out.

Duke. Ay, with my heart,
And punish them unto 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 his abuse, whence 'tis derived.

There is another friar that sets them on ;
Let him be sent for.

F. 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. Go, do it instantly.— [Exit Provost.

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.

Escal. My lord, we'll do it thoroughly.— [Exit Duke.]
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.

Escal. 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.

Escal. Call that same Isabel here once again ; [To an Attendant.] 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.

Escal. Say you ?

Lucio. Marry, sir, I think if you handled her privately she would sooner confess ; perchance publicly she'll be ashamed.

Re-enter Officers, with ISABELLA ; the Duke, in the friar's habit, and Provost.

Escal. I will go darkly to work with her.

Lucio. That's the way ; for women are light at midnight.

Escal. Come on, mistress: [*To ISABELLA.*] here's a gentlewoman denies all that you have said.

Lucio. My lord, here comes the rascal I spoke of: here with the provost.

Escal. In very good time: speak not you to him till we call upon you.

Lucio. Mum.

Escal. Come, sir. Did you set these women on to slander Lord Angelo? They have confess'd you did.

Duke. 'Tis false.

Escal. How! know you where you are?

Duke. Respect to your great place! and let the devil Be sometimes honour'd for his burning throne.

Where is the duke? 'tis he should hear me speak.

Escal. The duke's in us, and he will hear you speak; Look you speak justly.

Duke. Boldly, at least. But oh, 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.

Escal. 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 this purpose. What! unjust?

Duke. 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'errun 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.

Escal. Slander to the state! Away with him to prison.

Ang. 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 bald-pate. Do you know me?

Duke. I remember you, sir, by the sound of your voice. I met you at the prison in the absence of the duke.

Lucio. Oh, did you so? And do you remember what you said of the duke?

Duke. Most notedly, sir,

Lucio. Do you so, sir? And was the duke a flesh-monger, a fool, and a coward, as you then reported him to be?

Duke. 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. Oh, thou damnable fellow! Did not I pluck thee by the nose for thy speeches?

Duke. I protest I love the duke as I love myself.

Aug. Hark! how the villain would close now, after his treasonable abuses.

Escal. Such a fellow is not to be talk'd 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.

[*The Provost lays hands on the Duke.*]

Duke. Stay, sir; stay awhile.

Ang. 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 hang'd an hour! Will't not off? [*Pulls off the friar's hood, and discovers the Duke.*]

Duke. Thou art the first knave that e'er mad'st a duke.—

First, provost, let me bail these gentle three.—
Sneak not away, sir [*to LUCIO*]; for the friar and you
Must have a word anon.—Lay hold on him.

Lucio. This may prove worse than hanging.

Duke. What you have spoke, I pardon; sit you
down.— [*To ESCALUS.*
We'll borrow place of him.—Sir, by your leave :

[*To ANGELO.*

Hast thou or word, or wit, or impudence,
That yet can do thee office? If thou hast,
Rely upon it till my tale be heard,
And hold no longer out.

Ang. Oh, 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. Come hither, Mariana.—
Say, wast thou e'er contracted to this woman?

Ang. I was, my lord.

Duke. Go take her hence, and marry her instantly.—
Do you the office, friar; which consummate,
Return him here again.—Go with him, provost.

[*Exeunt ANGELO, MARIANA, PETER, and Provost.*

Escal. My lord, I am more amazed at his dishonour
Than at the strangeness of it.

Duke. 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.

Isab. Oh, give me pardon,
That I, your vassal, have employ'd and pain'd
Your unknown sovereignty.

Duke. 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. Oh, 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.

Re-enter ANGELO, MARIANA, PETER, and Provost.

Isab. I do, my lord.

Duke. 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.

Mari. Oh, my most gracious lord,
 I hope you will not mock me with a husband !

Duke. 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.

Mari. Oh, my dear lord,
 I crave no other nor no better man.

Duke. Never crave him; we are definitive.

Mari. Gentle, my liege— [*Kneeling.*]

Duke. You do but lose your labour.
 Away with him to death.—Now, sir [*to Lucio*], to you.

Mari. Oh, 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. 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.

Mari. 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.
 Oh, Isabel! will you not lend a knee?

Duke. He dies for Claudio's death.

Isab. Most bounteous sir,
[*Kneeling.*]

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;
 Intents but merely thoughts.

Mari. Merely, my lord.

Duke. 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?

Prov. It was commanded so.

Duke. Had you a special warrant for the deed?

Prov. No, my good lord; it was by private message.

Duke. For which I do discharge you of your office.
Give up your keys.

Prov. 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. What's he?

Prov. His name is Barnardine.

Duke. I would thou had'st done so by Claudio.
Go, fetch him hither; let me look upon him.

[*Exit* Provost.]

Escal. 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.

Ang. 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.

Re-enter PROVOST, BARNARDINE, CLAUDIO, and JULIET.

Duke. Which is that Barnardine?

Prov. This, my lord.

Duke. 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 squar'st 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 ?

Prov. This is another prisoner that I saved,
Who should have died when Claudio lost his head ;
As like almost to Claudio as himself.

[*Unmuffles* CLAUDIO,

Duke. If he be like your brother [*to* ISABELLA], for
his sake

Is he pardon'd. And for your lovely sake,
Give me your hand, and say you will be mine—
He is my brother too. But fitter time for that.
By this, Lord Angelo perceives he's safe ;
Methinks I see a quick'ning in his eye.—
Well, Angelo, your evil quits you well.
Look that you love your wife ; her worth, worth
yours.—

I find an apt remission in myself ;
And yet here's one in place I cannot pardon.—
You, sirrah [*to* LUCIO], that knew me for a fool, a cow-
ard,

One all of luxury, an ass, a madman,
Wherein have I so deserved of you,
That you extol me thus ?

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 whipp'd.

Duke. Whipp'd first, sir, and hang'd after.—
Proclaim it, provost, round about the city,
If any woman's 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 whipp'd 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. 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. 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.

[*Exeunt.*

The Merry Wives of Windsor

PERSONS REPRESENTED

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.
FENTON.
SHALLOW, *a country Justice.*
SLENDER, *Cousin to Shallow.*
MR. FORD } *two gentlemen dwelling at Wind-*
MR. PAGE } *sor.*
WILLIAM PAGE, *a Boy, Son to Mr. Page.*
SIR HUGH EVANS, *a Welsh Parson.*
DR. CAIUS, *a French Physician.*
Host of the Garter Inn.
BARDOLPH }
PISTOL } *Followers of Falstaff.*
NYM }
ROBIN, *Page to Falstaff.*
SIMPLE, *Servant to Slender.*
RUGBY, *Servant to Dr. Caius.*
MRS. FORD.
MRS. PAGE.
MRS. ANNE PAGE, *her Daughter, in love with*
Fenton.
MRS. QUICKLY, *Servant to Dr. Caius.*

Servants to Page, Ford, &c.

SCENE, Windsor, and the parts adjacent.

The Merry Wives of Windsor

ACT I

SCENE I.—*Enter* Justice SHALLOW, SLENDER, and Sir HUGH EVANS.

SHALLOW. Sir Hugh, persuade me not; I will make a Star-chamber matter of it; if he were twenty Sir John Falstaffs he shall not abuse Robert Shallow, Esquire.

Slen. In the county of Gloster, justice of peace, and *coram*.

Shal. Ay, Cousin Slender, and *Cust-alorum*.

Slen. Ay, and *ratolorum* too; and a gentleman born, master parson; who writes himself *armigero*; in any bill, warrant, quittance, or obligation, *armigero*.

Shal. Ay, that we do; and have done any time these three hundred years.

Slen. All his successors gone before him have done't, and all his ancestors that come after him may: they may give the dozen white luses in their coat.

Shal. It is an old coat.

Evans. The dozen white louses do become an old coat well; it agrees well, passant; it is a familiar beast to man, and signifies—love.

Shal. The luce is the fresh fish; the salt fish is an old coat.

Slen. I may quarter, coz?

Shal. You may, by marrying.

Evans. It is marring indeed, if he quarter it.

Shal. Not a whit.

Evans. Yes, py'r-lady; if he has a quarter of your coat

there is but three skirts for yourself, in my simple conjectures. But that is all one. If Sir John Falstaff have committed disparagements unto you, I am of the church, and will be glad to do my benevolence, to make atonements and compromises between you.

Shal. The Council shall hear it; it is a riot.

Evans. It is not meet the Council hear a riot; there is no fear of Got in a riot. The Council, look you, shall desire to hear the fear of Got, and not to hear a riot; take your visaments in that.

Shal. Ha! o' my life, if I were young again the sword should end it.

Evans. It is petter that friends is the sword, and end it. And there is also another device in my prain, which, peradventure, prings goot discretions with it. There is Anne Page, which is daughter to Master George Page, which is pretty virginity.

Shel. Mistress Anne Page? She has brown hair, and speaks small like a woman.

Evans. It is that fery person for all the 'orld, as just as you will desire; and seven hundred pounds of moneys, and gold, and silver, is her grandsire, upon his death's bed (Got deliver to a joyful resurrections!), give, when she is able to overtake seventeen years old. It were a goot motion if we leave our pribbles and prabbles, and desire a marriage between Master Abraham and Mistress Anne Page.

Shal. Did her grandsire leave her seven hundred pounds?

Evans. Ay, and her father is make her a petter penny.

Shal. I know the young gentlewoman; she has good gifts.

Evans. Seven hundred pounds, and possibilities, is good gifts.

Shal. Well, let us see honest Master Page. Is Falstaff there?

Evans. Shall I tell you a lie? I do despise a liar as I do despise one that is false, or as I despise one that is not true. The knight, Sir John, is there; and, I beseech you, be ruled by your well-willers. I will peat the



door [*knocks*] for Master Page. What, ho! Got pless your house here!

Enter PAGE.

Page. Who's there?

Evans. Here is Got's plessing, and your friend, and Justice Shallow; and here young Master Slender, that, peradventures, shall tell you another tale, if matters grow to your likings.

Page. I am glad to see your worships well. I thank you for my venison, Master Shallow.

Shal. Master Page, I am glad to see you. Much good do it your good heart! I wished your venison better; it was ill killed. How doth good Mistress Page?—and I thank you always with my heart, la; with my heart.

Page. Sir, I thank you.

Shal. Sir, I thank you; by yea and no, I do.

Page. I am glad to see you, good Master Slender.

Slen. How does your fallow greyhound, sir? I heard say he was outrun on Cotsale.

Page. It could not be judged, sir.

Slen. You'll not confess, you'll not confess.

Shal. That he will not. 'Tis your fault, 'tis your fault. 'Tis a good dog.

Page. A cur, sir.

Shal. Sir, he's a good dog, and a fair dog. Can there be more said? He is good, and fair. Is Sir John Falstaff here?

Page. Sir, he is within; and I would I could do a good office between you.

Evans. It is spoke as a Christians ought to speak.

Shal. He hath wrong'd me, Master Page.

Page. Sir, he doth in some sort confess it.

Shal. If it be confess'd, it is not redress'd. Is not that so, Master Page? He hath wrong'd me; indeed he hath; at a word he hath; believe me; Robert Shallow, Esquire, saith he is wrong'd.

Page. Here comes Sir John.

Enter SIR JOHN FALSTAFF, BARDOLPH, NYM, and PISTOL.

Fal. Now, Master Shallow, you'll complain of me to the king?

Shal. Knight, you have beaten my men, killed my deer, and broke open my lodge.

Fal. But not kiss'd your keeper's daughter?

Shal. Tut, a pin! This shall be answer'd.

Fal. I will answer it straight: I have done all this. That is now answer'd.

Shal. The Council shall know this.

Fal. 'Twere better for you if it were known in counsel; you'll be laugh'd at.

Evans. *Pauca verba*, Sir John, goot worts.

Fal. Good worts! Good cabbage.—Slender, I broke your head. What matter have you against me?

Slen. Marry, sir, I have matter in my head against you, and against your coney-catching rascals, Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol. They carried me to the tavern and made me drunk, and afterwards picked my pocket.

Bard. You Banbury cheese!

Slen. Ay, it is no matter.

Pist. How now, Mephostophilus?

Slen. Ay, it is no matter.

Nym. Slice, I say! *pauca, pauca*; slice! that's my humour.

Slen. Where's Simple, my man? Can you tell, cousin?

Evans. Peace, I pray you! Now let us understand. There is three umpires in this matter, as I understand: that is—Master Page, *fidelicct*, Master Page; and there is myself, *fidelicct*, myself; and the three party is, lastly and finally, mine host of the Garter.

Page. We three to hear it, and end it between them.

Evans. Fery goot. I will make a prief of it in my note-book; and we will afterwards 'ork upon the cause with as great discreetly as we can.

Fal. Pistol—

Pist. He hears with ears.

Evans. The tevil and his tam! what phrase is this. He hears with ears? Why, it is affectations.



Fal. Pistol, did you pick Master Slender's purse?

Slen. Ay, by these gloves did he (or I would I might never come in mine own great chamber again else), of seven groats in mill-sixpences, and two Edward shovel-boards that cost me two shillings and twopence apiece of Yead Miller, by these gloves.

Fal. Is this true, Pistol?

Evans. No; it is false if it is a pick-purse.

Pist. Ha, thou mountain foreigner!—Sir John, and master mine,

I combat challenge of this latten bilbo.

Word of denial in thy labras here;

Word of denial; froth and scum, thou liest.

Slen. By these gloves, then 'twas he.

Nym. Be advised, sir, and pass good humours. I will say *marry trap* with you if you run the nut-hook's humour on me; that is the very note of it.

Slen. By this hat, then, he in the red face had it; for though I cannot remember what I did when you made me drunk, yet I am not altogether an ass.

Fal. What say you, Scarlet and John?

Bard. Why, sir, for my part, I say the gentleman had drunk himself out of his five sentences.

Evans. It is his five senses; fie, what the ignorance is!

Bard. And being fap, sir, was, as they say, cashier'd; and so conclusions pass'd the careires.

Slen. Ay, you spake in Latin then too. But 'tis no matter. I'll ne'er be drunk whilst I live again but in honest, civil, godly company for this trick. If I be drunk, I'll be drunk with those that have the fear of God, and not with drunken knaves.

Evans. So Got 'udge me, that is a virtuous mind.

Fal. You hear all these matters denied, gentlemen; you hear it.

Enter Mistress ANNE PAGE, *with wine*; Mistress FORD
and Mistress PAGE *following*.

Page. Nay, daughter, carry the wine in; we'll drink within.
[*Exit* ANNE PAGE.]

Slen. O Heaven! this is Mistress Anne Page.

Page. How now, Mistress Ford?

Fal. Mistress Ford, by my troth you are very well met; by your leave, good mistress. [*Kissing her.*]

Page. Wife, bid these gentlemen welcome.—Come, we have a hot venison pasty to dinner; come, gentlemen, I hope we shall drink down all unkindness.

[*Exeunt all but SHALLOW, SLENDER, and EVANS.*]

Slen. I had rather than forty shillings I had my *Book of Songs and Sonnets* here.—

Enter SIMPLE.

How now, Simple? where have you been? I must wait on myself, must I? You have not *The Book of Riddles* about you, have you?

Sim. *Book of Riddles!* Why, did you not lend it to Alice Shortcake upon All-hallowmas last, a fortnight afore Michaelmas?

Shal. Come, coz; come, coz; we stay for you. A word with you, coz. Marry this, coz: there is, as 'twere, a tender, a kind of tender, made afar off by Sir Hugh here. Do you understand me?

Slen. Ay, sir, you shall find me reasonable; if it be so, I shall do that that is reason.

Shal. Nay, but understand me.

Slen. So I do, sir.

Evans. Give ear to his motions, Master Slender. I will description the matter to you, if you be capacity of it.

Slen. Nay, I will do as my Cousin Shallow says. I pray you pardon me; he's a justice of peace in his country, simple though I stand here.

Evans. But that is not the question; the question is concerning your marriage.

Shal. Ay, there's the point, sir.

Evans. Marry, is it; the very point of it; to Mistress Anne Page.

Slen. Why, if it be so, I will marry her upon any reasonable demands.

Evans. But can you affection the 'oman? Let us command to know that of your mouth, or of your lips; for divers philosophers hold that the lip is parcel of the mouth. Therefore, precisely, can you carry your goodwill to the maid?

Shal. Cousin Abraham Slender, can you love her?

Slen. I hope, sir, I will do as it shall become one that would do reason.

Evans. Nay, Got's lords and his ladies, you must speak possitable, if you can carry her your desires towards her.

Shal. That you must. Will you, upon good dowry, marry her?

Slen. I will do a greater thing than that upon your request, cousin, in any reason.

Shal. Nay, conceive me, conceive me, sweet coz; what I do is to pleasure you, coz. Can you love the maid?

Slen. I will marry her, sir, at your request; but if there be no great love in the beginning, yet Heaven may decrease it upon better acquaintance, when we are married, and have more occasion to know one another. I hope upon familiarity will grow more contempt. But if you say marry her, I will marry her, that I am freely dissolved, and dissolutely.

Evans. It is a fery discretion answer; save the faul' is in the 'ort dissolutely. The 'ort is, according to our meaning, resolutely. His meaning is good.

Shal. Ay, I think my cousin meant well.

Slen. Ay, or else I would I might be hanged, la.

Re-enter ANNE PAGE.

Shal. Here comes fair Mistress Anne.—Would I were young for your sake, Mistress Anne!

Anne. The dinner is on the table; my father desires your worships' company.

Shal. I will wait on him, fair Mistress Anne.

Evans. Od's plessed will! I will not be absence at the grace. [*Exeunt SHALLOW and Sir HUGH EVANS.*]

Anne. Will't please your worship to come in, sir?

Slen. No, I thank you, forsooth, heartily; I am very well.

Anne. The dinner attends you, sir.

Slen. I am not a-hungry, I thank you, forsooth. Go, sirrah, for all you are my man, go, wait upon my Cousin Shallow. [*Exit SIMPLE.*] A justice of peace sometimes may be beholden to his friend for a man. I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be dead. But what though? yet I live like a poor gentleman born.

Anne. I may not go in without your worship: they will not sit till you come.

Slen. I' faith, I'll eat nothing; I thank you as much as though I did.

Anne. I pray you, sir, walk in.

Slen. I had rather walk here, I thank you. I bruised my shin the other day with playing at sword and dagger with a master of fence, three veneys for a dish of stewed prunes; and, by my troth, I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since. Why do your dogs bark so? Be there bears i' the town?

Anne. I think there are, sir; I heard them talked of.

Slen. I love the sport well; but I shall as soon quarrel at it as any man in England. You are afraid if you see the bear loose, are you not?

Anne. Ay, indeed, sir.

Slen. That's meat and drink to me now. I have seen Sackerson loose twenty times, and have taken him by the chain; but, I warrant you, the women have so cried and shrieked at it, that it passed: but women, indeed, cannot abide 'em; they are very ill-favoured, rough things.

Re-enter PAGE.

Page. Come, gentle Master Slender, come; we stay for you.

Slen. I'll eat nothing, I thank you, sir.

Page. By cock and pie, you shall not choose, sir; come, come.

Slen. Nay, pray you lead the way.

Page. Come on, sir.

Slen. Mistress Anne, yourself shall go first.

Anne. Not I, sir; pray you, keep on.

Slen. Truly, I will not go first, truly, la. I will not do you that wrong.

Anne. I pray you, sir.

Slen. I'll rather be unmannerly than troublesome. You do yourself wrong, indeed, la. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Enter* Sir HUGH EVANS *and* SIMPLE.

Evans. Go your ways, and ask of Doctor Caius' house which is the way; and there dwells one Mistress Quickly, which is in the manner of his nurse, or his dry-nurse, or his cook, or his laundry, his washer, and his wringer.

Sim. Well, sir.

Evans. Nay, it is petter yet.—Give her this letter; for it is a 'oman that altogether's acquaintance with Mistress Anne Page; and the letter is to desire and require her to solicit your master's desires to Mistress Anne Page. I pray you, pe gone. I will make an end of my dinner; there's pippins and cheese to come. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Enter* FALSTAFF, Host, BARDOLPH, NYM, PISTOL, *and* ROBIN.

Fal. Mine Host of the Garter—

Host. What says my bully-rook? Speak scholarly and wisely.

Fal. Truly, mine host, I must turn away some of my followers.

Host. Discard, bully Hercules; cashier; let them wag; trot, trot.

Fal. I sit at ten pounds a week.

Host. Thou'rt an emperor, cæsar, keisar, and phee-zar. I will entertain Bardolph; he shall draw, he shall tap. Said I well, bully Hector?

Fal. Do so, good mine host.

Host. I have spoke; let him follow. Let me see thee froth and lime. I am at a word; follow.

[*Exit Host.*

Fal. Bardolph, follow him; a tapster is a good trade. An old cloak makes a new jerkin; a withered serving-man a fresh tapster. Go; adieu.

Bard. It is a life that I have desired. I will thrive.

[*Exit BARDOLPH.*

Pist. Oh, base Hungarian wight! Wilt thou the spigot wield?

Nym. He was gotten in drink. Is not the humour conceited? His mind is not heroic, and there's the humour of it.

Fal. I am glad I am so acquit of this tinder-box. His thefts were too open; his filching was like an unskilful singer, he kept not time.

Nym. The good-humour is to steal at a minute's rest.

Pist. Convey, the wise it call. Steal! foh. A fico for the phrase!

Fal. Well, sirs, I am almost out at heels.

Pist. Why, then, let kibes ensue.

Fal. There is no remedy; I must coney-catch; I must shift.

Pist. Young ravens must have food.

Fal. Which of you know Ford of this town?

Pist. I ken the wight; he is of substance good.

Fal. My honest lads, I will tell you what I am about.

Pist. Two yards, and more.

Fal. No quips now, Pistol; indeed I am in the waist two yards about; but I am now about no waste; I am about thrift. Briefly, I do mean to make love to Ford's wife; I spy entertainment in her; she discourses, she carves, she gives the leer of invitation. I can construe the action of her familiar style, and the hardest voice of her behaviour, to be English'd rightly, is, I am Sir John Falstaff's.

Pist. He hath studied her well, and translated her well; out of honesty into English.

Nym. The anchor is deep. Will that humour pass?

Fal. Now, the report goes, she has all the rule of her husband's purse; she hath legions of angels.

Pist. As many devils entertain; and, To her, boy, say I.

Nym. The humour rises; it is good; humour me the angels.

Fal. I have writ me here a letter to her; and here another to Page's wife, who even now gave me good eyes too, examined my parts with most judicious eyliads; sometimes the beam of her view gilded my foot, sometimes my portly belly.

Pist. Then did the sun on dunghill shine.

Nym. I thank thee for that humour.

Fal. Oh, she did discourse o'er my exteriors with such a greedy intention that the appetite of her eye did seem to scorch me up like a burning-glass! Here's another letter to her. She bears the purse too; she is a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty. I will be cheater to them both, and they shall be exchequers to me; they shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both. Go, bear thou this letter to Mistress Page; and thou this to Mistress Ford. We will thrive, lads, we will thrive.

Pist. Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become, And by my side wear steel? Then, Lucifer, take all!

Nym. I will run no base humour; here, take the humour-letter; I will keep the 'haviour of reputation.

Fal. Hold, sirrah [to ROBIN], bear you these letters tightly;

Sail like my pinnacle to these golden shores.—

Rogues, hence, avaunt! vanish like hailstones; go, Trudge, plod, away o' the hoof; seek shelter, pack!

Falstaff will learn the humour of this age,

French thrift, you rogues; myself, and skirted page.

[*Exeunt FALSTAFF and ROBIN.*]

Pist. Let vultures gripe thy guts! for gourd and ful-lam holds,

And high and low beguile the rich and poor.

Tester I'll have in pouch when thou shalt lack,

Base Phrygian Turk!

Nym. I have operations in my head which be humours of revenge.

Pist. Wilt thou revenge?

Nym. By welkin and her star!

Pist. With wit, or steel?

Nym. With both the humours, I.

I will discuss the humour of this love to Page.

Pist. And I to Ford shall eke unfold,

How Falstaff, varlet vile,

His dove will prove, his gold will hold,

And his soft couch defile.

Nym. My humour shall not cool. I will incense Page to deal with poison; I will possess him with yellowness, for the revolt of mien is dangerous: that is my true humour.

Pist. Thou art the Mars of malcontents: I second thee; troop on. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Enter Mrs. QUICKLY, SIMPLE, and RUGBY.*

Quick. What; John Rugby! I pray thee go to the casement, and see if you can see my master, Master Doctor Caius, coming; if he do, i' faith, and find anybody in the house, here will be an old abusing of God's patience and the king's English.

Rug. I'll go watch. [*Exit RUGBY.*]

Quick. Go; and we'll have a posset for't soon at night, in faith, at the latter end of a sea-coal fire. An honest, willing, kind fellow as ever servant shall come in house withal; and, I warrant you, no tell-tale nor no breed-bate. His worst fault is that he is given to prayer; he is something peevish that way. But nobody but has his fault. But let that pass. Peter Simple, you say your name is?

Sim. Ay, for fault of a better.

Quick. And Master Slender's your master?

Sim. Ay, forsooth.

Quick. Does he not wear a great round beard, like a glover's paring-knife?

Sim. No, forsooth: he hath but a little wee face, with a little yellow beard; a Cain-coloured beard.



Quick. A softly-sprighted man, is he not?

Sim. Ay, forsooth; but he is as tall a man of his hands as any is between this and his head; he hath fought with a warrener.

Quick. How say you? Oh, I should remember him. Does he not hold up his head, as it were, and strut in his gait?

Sim. Yes, indeed, does he.

Quick. Well, Heaven send Anne Page no worse fortune! Tell Master Parson Evans I will do what I can for your master. Anne is a good girl, and I wish—

Re-enter RUGBY.

Rug. Out, alas! here comes my master.

Quick. We shall all be shent. Run in here, good young man; go into this closet.

[*Shuts SIMPLE in the closet.*

He will not stay long.—What, John Rugby! John, what, John, I say!—Go, John, go inquire for my master; I doubt he be not well, that he comes not home. And down, down, adown-a, etc. [*Sings.*

Enter Doctor CAIUS.

Caius. Vat is you sing? I do not like these toys. Pray you, go and vetch me in my closet *un boitier verd*; a box; a green-a box. Do intend vat I speak? A green-a box.

Quick. Ay, forsooth, I'll fetch it you. I am glad he went not in himself; if he had found the young man he would have been horn-mad. [*Aside.*

Caius. *Fe, fe, fe, fe! mai foi, il fait fort chaud. Je m'en vais a la Cour—la grande affaire.*

Quick. Is it this, sir?

Caius. *Oui; mette le au mon pocket; Depeche,* quickly. Vere is dat knave Rugby?

Quick. What, John Rugby? John?

Rug. Here, sir.

Caius. You are John Rugby, and you are Jack Rug-

by. Come, take-a your rapier, and come after my heels to the court.

Rug. 'Tis ready, sir, here in the porch.

Caius. By my trot, I tarry too long. Od's me! *Qu'ay-j'oublic?* Dere is some simples in my closet dat I vill not for the varld I shall leave behind.

Quick. Ah me! he'll find the young man there, and be mad.

Caius. *O diable, diable!* Vat is in my closet? Vil-lany? *larron!* [*Pulling SIMPLE out.*] Rugby, my rapier.

Quick. Good master, be content.

Caius. Verefore shall I be content-a?

Quick. The young man is an honest man.

Caius. Vat shall de honest man do in my closet? Dere is no honest man dat shall come in my closet.

Quick. I beseech you, be not so phlegmatic; hear the truth of it. He came of an errand to me from Par-son Hugh.

Caius. Vell.

Sim. Ay, forsooth, to desire her to—

Quick. Peace, I pray you.

Caius. Peace-a your tongue.—Speak-a your tale.

Sim. To desire this honest gentlewoman, your maid, to speak a good word to Mistress Anne Page for my master, in the way of marriage.

Quick. This is all, indeed, la; but I'll ne'er put my finger in the fire, and need not.

Caius. Sir Hugh send-a you?—Rugby, *baillez* me some paper. Tarry you a little-a while. [*Writes.*]

Quick. I am glad he is so quiet; if he had been thoroughly moved, you should have heard him so loud and so melancholy. But notwithstanding, man, I'll do your master what good I can. And the very yea and the no is, the French doctor, my master—I may call him my master, look you, for I keep his house; and I wash, wring, brew, bake, scour, dress meat and drink, make the beds, and do all myself—

Sim. 'Tis a great charge to come under one body's hand.

Quick. You are avised o' that? You shall find it a great charge; and to be up early and down late; but notwithstanding (to tell you in your ear, I would have no words of it), my master himself is in love with Mistress Anne Page; but notwithstanding that—I know Anne's mind—that's neither here nor there.

Caius. You jack'nape, give-a dis letter to Sir Hugh; by gar, it is a shallenge. I vill cut his troat in de park; and I vill teach a scurvy jack-a-nape priest to meddle or make: you may be gone; it is not good you tarry here. By gar, I vill cut all his two stones; by gar, he shall not have a stone to trow at his dog.

[*Exit SIMPLE.*]

Quick. Alas, he speaks but for his friend.

Caius. It is no matter-a for dat. Do not you tell-a me dat I shall have Anne Page for myself? By gar, I vill kill de Jack priest; and I have appointed mine host of *de Jarterre* to measure our weapons. By gar, I vill myself have Anne Page.

Quick. Sir, the maid loves you, and all shall be well: we must give folks leave to prate. What, the good-ger!

Caius. Rugby, come to the court vit me. By gar, if I have not Anne Page I shall turn your head out of my door.—Follow my heels, Rugby.

[*Exeunt CAIUS and RUGBY.*]

Quick. You shall have An fool's-head of your own. No, I know Anne's mind for that: never a woman in Windsor knows more of Anne's mind than I do, nor can do more than I do with her, I thank Heaven.

Fent. [*Within.*] Who's within there, hoa?

Quick. Who's there, I trow? Come near the house, I pray you.

Enter FENTON.

Fent. How now, good woman: how dost thou?

Quick. The better that it pleases your good worship to ask.

Fent. What news? How does pretty Mistress Anne?

Quick. In troth, sir, and she is pretty, and honest, and gentle; and one that is your friend, I can tell you that by the way; I praise Heaven for it.

Fent. Shall I do any good, think'st thou? Shall I not lose my suit?

Quick. Troth, sir, all is in His hands above; but notwithstanding, Master Fenton, I'll be sworn on a book she loves you. Have not your worship a wart above your eye?

Fent. Yes, marry, have I. What of that?

Quick. Well, thereby hangs a tale; good faith, it is such another Nan; but, I detest, an honest maid as ever broke bread. We had an hour's talk of that wart. I shall never laugh but in that maid's company. But, indeed, she is given too much to allicholy and musing. But for you—well, go to.

Fent. Well, I shall see her to-day. Hold, there's money for thee; let me have thy voice in my behalf. If thou see'st her before me, commend me—

Quick. Will I? I' faith, that we will; and I will tell your worship more of the wart the next time we have confidence; and of other wooers.

Fent. Well, farewell; I am in great haste now.

[*Exit.*

Quick. Farewell to your worship.—Truly, an honest gentleman; but Anne loves him not; for I know Anne's mind as well as another does. Out upon 't! what have I forgot?

[*Exit.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*Enter* Mistress PAGE, *with a letter.*

Mrs. Page. What! have I 'scaped love-letters in the holy-day time of my beauty, and am I now a subject for them? Let me see:

[*Reads.*] Ask me no reason why I love you; for though Love use reason for his precision, he admits him not for his counsellor. You are not young, no more am I; go to, then, there's sympathy. You are merry, so am I; ha, ha! then there's more sympathy.



You love sack, and so do I; would you desire better sympathy? Let it suffice thee, Mistress Page (at the least, if the love of a soldier can suffice), that I love thee. I will not say, pity me; 'tis not a soldier-like phrase; but I say, love me. By me,

Thine own true knight,
By day or night,
Or any kind of light,
With all his might
For thee to fight,

John Falstaff.—

What a Herod of Jewry is this! Oh, wicked, wicked world! One that is well-nigh worn to pieces with age, to show himself a young gallant! What an unweighed behavior hath this Flemish drunkard picked (with the devil's name) out of my conversation that he dares in this manner assay me? Why, he hath not been thrice in my company! What should I say to him? I was then frugal of my mirth—Heaven forgive me! Why, I'll exhibit a bill in the parliament for the putting down of men. How shall I be revenged on him?—for revenged I will be, as sure as his guts are made of puddings.

Enter Mistress FORD.

Mrs. Ford. Mistress Page! trust me, I was going to your house.

Mrs. Page. And, trust me, I was coming to you. You look very ill.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I'll ne'er believe that; I have to show to the contrary.

Mrs. Page. 'Faith, but you do, in my mind.

Mrs. Ford. Well, I do, then; yet I say I could show you to the contrary. Oh, Mistress Page, give me some counsel!

Mrs. Page. What's the matter, woman?

Mrs. Ford. Oh, woman, if it were not for one trifling respect, I could come to such honour!

Mrs. Page. Hang the trifle, woman; take the honour. What is it? Dispense with trifles. What is it?

Mrs. Ford. If I would but go to hell for an eternal moment, or so, I could be knighted.

Mrs. Page. What? Thou liest! Sir Alice Ford! These knights will hack; and so thou should'st not alter the article of thy gentry.

Mrs. Ford. We burn daylight. Here, read, read; perceive how I might be knighted. I shall think the worse of fat men as long as I have an eye to make difference of men's liking. And yet he would not swear; praised women's modesty; and gave such orderly and well-behaved reproof to all uncomeliness that I would have sworn his disposition would have gone to the truth of his words. But they do no more adhere and keep place together than the hundredth psalm to the tune of Green Sleeves. What tempest, I trow, threw this whale, with so many tuns of oil in his belly, ashore at Windsor? How shall I be revenged on him? I think the best way were to entertain him with hope till the wicked fire of lust have melted him in his own grease. Did you ever hear the like?

Mrs. Page. Letter for letter, but that the name of Page and Ford differs! To thy great comfort in this mystery of ill opinions, here's the twin-brother of thy letter. But let thine inherit first; for, I protest, mine never shall. I warrant he hath a thousand of these letters writ with blank space for different names (sure more), and these are of the second edition. He will print them out of doubt; for he cares not what he puts into the press, when he would put us two. I had rather be a giantess, and lie under Mount Pelion. Well, I will find you twenty lascivious turtles ere one chaste man.

Mrs. Ford. Why, this is the very same; the very hand, the very words. What doth he think of us?

Mrs. Page. Nay, I know not. It makes me almost ready to wrangle with mine own honesty. I'll entertain myself like one that I am not acquainted withal; for, sure, unless he know some strain in me that I know not myself, he would never have boarded me in this fury.

Mrs. Ford. Boarding, call you it? I'll be sure to keep him above deck.

Mrs. Page. So will I; if he come under my hatches, I'll never to sea again. Let's be revenged on him; let's appoint him a meeting; give him a show of comfort in his suit; and lead him on with a fine-baited delay till he hath pawned his horses to mine Host of the Garter.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I will consent to act any villany against him that may not sully the chariness of our honesty. Oh, that my husband saw this letter! It would give eternal food to his jealousy.

Mrs. Page. Why, look where he comes; and my good man too. He's as far from jealousy as I am from giving him cause; and that, I hope, is an unmeasurable distance.

Mrs. Ford. You are the happier woman.

Mrs. Page. Let's consult together against this greasy knight. Come hither. [They retire.]

Enter FORD, PISTOL, PAGE, and NYM.

Ford. Well, I hope it be not so.

Pist. Hope is a curtail dog in some affairs. Sir John affects thy wife.

Ford. Why, sir, my wife is not young.

Pist. He woos both high and low, both rich and poor,

Both young and old, one with another, Ford.
He loves thy gally-mawfry. Ford, perpend.

Ford. Love my wife?

Pist. With liver burning hot. Prevent, or go thou,
Like Sir Actæon he, with Ringwood at thy heels.
Oh, odious is the name!

Ford. What name, sir?

Pist. The horn, I say. Farewell.
Take heed; have open eye; for thieves do foot by night.
Take heed, ere summer comes, or cuckoo-birds do sing.—

Away, Sir Corporal Nym.—

Believe it, Page; he speaks sense. [*Exit* PISTOL.]

Ford. I will be patient; I will find out this.

Nym. And this is true. [*To* PAGE.] I like not the humour of lying. He hath wronged me in some humours; I should have borne the humoured letter to her; but I have a sword, and it shall bite upon my necessity. He loves your wife; there's the short and the long. My name is Corporal Nym; I speak, and I avouch. 'Tis true. My name is Nym, and Falstaff loves your wife. Adieu! I love not the humour of bread and cheese; and there's the humour of it. Adieu.

[*Exit* NYM.]

Page. The humour of it, quoth 'a! Here's a fellow frights humour out of his wits.

Ford. I will seek out Falstaff.

Page. I never heard such a drawling, affecting rogue.

Ford. If I do find it, well.

Page. I will not believe such a Cataian, though the priest o' the town commended him for a true man.

Ford. 'Twas a good sensible fellow. Well.

Page. How now, Meg?

Mrs. Page. Whither go you, George? Hark you.

Mrs. Ford. How now, sweet Frank? Why art thou melancholy?

Ford. I melancholy! I am not melancholy. Get you home: go.

Mrs. Ford. 'Faith, thou hast some crotchets in thy head now.—Will you go, Mistress Page?

Mrs. Page. Have with you.—You'll come to dinner, George?—Look who comes yonder: she shall be our messenger to this paltry knight.

[*Aside to* MRS. FORD.]

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY.

Mrs. Ford. Trust me, I thought on her. She'll fit it.

Mrs. Page. You are come to see my daughter Anne?

Quick. Ay, forsooth. And, I pray, how does good Mistress Anne?





Mrs. Page. Go in with us and see ; we have an hour's talk with you. [*Exeunt Mrs. PAGE, Mrs. FORD, and Mrs. QUICKLY.*]

Page. How now, Master Ford ?

Ford. You heard what this knave told me, did you not ?

Page. Yes ; and you heard what the other told me ?

Ford. Do you think there is truth in them ?

Page. Hang 'em, slaves ! I do not think the knight would offer it ; but these that accuse him in his intent towards our wives are a yoke of his discarded men ; very rogues, now they be out of service.

Ford. Were they his men ?

Page. Marry, were they.

Ford. I like it never the better for that. Does he lie at the Garter ?

Page. Ay, marry, does he. If he should intend this voyage toward my wife I would turn her loose to him ; and what he gets of her more than sharp words, let it lie on my head.

Ford. I do not misdoubt my wife, but I would be loath to turn them together. A man may be too confident. I would have nothing lie on my head ; I cannot be thus satisfied.

Page. Look where my ranting Host of the Garter comes. There is either liquor in his pate or money in his purse when he looks so merrily.—How now, mine Host ?

Enter Host and SHALLOW.

Host. How now, bully-rook ? Thou'rt a gentleman ; cavalero-justice, I say.

Shal. I follow, mine Host, I follow.—Good-even, and twenty, good Master Page ! Master Page, will you go with us ? We have sport in hand.

Host. Tell him, cavalero-justice ; tell him, bully-rook.

Shal. Sir, there is a fray to be fought between Sir Hugh the Welsh priest and Caius the French doctor.

Ford. Good mine Host o' the Garter, a word with you.

Host. What say'st thou, bully-rook? [*They go aside.*]

Shal. Will you [*to PAGE*] go with us to behold it? My merry Host hath had the measuring of their weapons; and, I think, he hath appointed them contrary places; for, believe me, I hear the parson is no jester. Hark, I will tell you what our sport shall be.

Host. Hast thou no suit against my knight, my guest-cavalier?

Ford. None, I protest; but I'll give you a pottle of burnt sack to give me recourse to him, and tell him my name is Brook; only for a jest.

Host. My hand, bully. Thou shalt have egress and regress. Said I well? And thy name shall be Brook. It is a merry knight.—Will you go, cavaliers?

Shal. Have with you, mine Host.

Page. I have heard the Frenchman hath good skill in his rapier.

Shal. Tut, sir; I could have told you more. In these times you stand on distance, your passes, stoccadoes, and I know not what. 'Tis the heart, Master Page; 'tis here, 'tis here. I have seen the time, with my long sword, I would have made you four tall fellows skip like rats.

Host. Here, boys, here, here! Shall we wag?

Page. Have with you. I had rather hear them scold than fight. [*Exeunt Host, SHALLOW, and PAGE.*]

Ford. Though Page be a secure fool, and stands so firmly on his wife's frailty, yet I cannot put off my opinion so easily. She was in his company at Page's house, and what they made there I know not. Well, I will look further into 't. And I have a disguise to sound Falstaff. If I find her honest, I lose not my labour; if she be otherwise, 'tis labour well bestowed.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Enter FALSTAFF and PISTOL.*

Fal. I will not lend thee a penny.

Pist. Why, then the world's mine oyster,
Which I with sword will open.—
I will retort the sum in equipage.

Fal. Not a penny. I have been content, sir, you should lay my countenance to pawn. I have grated upon my good friends for three reprieves for you and your coach-fellow Nym, or else you had looked through the grate like a geminy of baboons. I am damned in hell for swearing to gentlemen my friends you were good soldiers and tall fellows; and when Mistress Bridget lost the handle of her fan, I took 't upon mine honour thou hadst it not.

Pist. Didst thou not share? Hadst thou not fifteen pence?

Fal. Reason, you rogue, reason. Think'st thou I'll endanger my soul *gratis*? At a word, hang no more about me; I am no gibbet for you. Go. A short knife and a throng; to your manor of Pickthatch, go. You'll not bear a letter for me, you rogue! you stand upon your honour! Why, thou unconfinable baseness, it is as much as I can do to keep the terms of my honour precise. I, I, I myself sometimes, leaving the fear of Heaven on the left hand, and hiding mine honour in my necessity, am fain to shuffle, to hedge, and to lurch; and yet you, rogue, will ensconce your rags, your cat-a-mountain looks, your red-lattice phrases, and your bold-beating oaths, under the shelter of your honour! You will not do it, you?

Pist. I do relent; what would'st thou more of man?

Enter ROBIN.

Robin. Sir, here's a woman would speak with you.

Fal. Let her approach.

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY.

Quick. Give your worship good-morrow.

Fal. Good-morrow, good wife.

Quick. Not so, and 't please your worship.

Fal. Good maid, then.

Quick. I'll be sworn, as my mother was the first hour I was born.

Fal. I do believe the swearer. What with me?

Quick. Shall I vouchsafe your worship a word or two?

Fal. Two thousand, fair woman; and I'll vouchsafe thee the hearing.

Quick. There is one Mistress Ford, sir— I pray, come a little nearer this ways. I myself dwell with Master Doctor Caius.

Fal. Well, on. Mistress Ford, you say—

Quick. Your worship says very true. I pray your worship, come a little nearer this ways.

Fal. I warrant thee nobody hears; mine own people, mine own people.

Quick. Are they so? Heaven bless them, and make them his servants!

Fal. Well, Mistress Ford. What of her?

Quick. Why, sir, she's a good creature. Lord, Lord! your worship's a wanton. Well, Heaven forgive you, and all of us, I pray!

Fal. Mistress Ford—come, Mistress Ford—

Quick. Marry, this is the short and the long of it: you have brought her into such a canaries as 'tis wonderful. The best courtier of them all, when the court lay at Windsor, could never have brought her to such a canary. Yet there has been knights and lords and gentlemen, with their coaches; I warrant you, coach after coach, letter after letter, gift after gift; smelling so sweetly (all musk), and so rushling, I warrant you, in silk and gold; and in such alligant terms; and in such wine and sugar of the best, and the fairest, that would have won any woman's heart; and, I warrant you, they could never get an eye-wink of her. I had myself twenty angels given me this morning; but I defy all angels (in any such sort, as they say) but in the way of honesty; and, I warrant you, they could never get her so much as sip on a cup with the proudest of them all. And yet there has been earls, nay, which is more, pensioners; but I warrant you, all is one with her.

Fal. But what says she to me? Be brief, my good she Mercury.

Quick. Marry, she hath received your letter; for the

which she thanks you a thousand times; and she gives you to notify that her husband will be absence from his house between ten and eleven.

Fal. Ten and eleven?

Quick. Ay, forsooth; and then you may come and see the picture, she says, that you wot of. Master Ford, her husband, will be from home. Alas! the sweet woman leads an ill life with him; he's a very jealousy man; she leads a very frampold life with him, good heart.

Fal. Ten and eleven. Woman, commend me to her; I will not fail her.

Quick. Why, you say well. But I have another messenger to your worship. Mistress Page hath her hearty commendations to you too; and let me tell you in your ear she's as fartuous a civil modest wife, and one (I tell you) that will not miss you morning nor evening prayer, as any is in Windsor, whoe'er be the other. And she bade me tell your worship that her husband is seldom from home; but she hopes there will come a time. I never knew a woman so dote upon a man; surely, I think you have charms, la; yes, in truth.

Fal. Not I, I assure thee; setting the attraction of my good parts aside, I have no other charms.

Quick. Blessing on your heart for't!

Fal. But, I pray thee, tell me this: has Ford's wife and Page's wife acquainted each other how they love me?

Quick. That were a jest, indeed! They have not so little grace, I hope. That were a trick, indeed! But Mistress Page would desire you to send her your little page, of all loves; her husband has a marvellous infection to the little page; and, truly, Master Page is an honest man. Never a wife in Windsor leads a better life than she does; do what she will, say what she will, take all, pay all, go to bed when she list, rise when she list, all is as she will. And, truly, she deserves it; for if there be a kind woman in Windsor, she is one. You must send her your page; no remedy.

Fal. Why, I will.

Quick. Nay, but do so then. And, look you, he may come and go between you both; and, in any case, have a nay word, that you may know one another's mind, and the boy never need to understand anything; for 'tis not good that children should know any wickedness; old folks, you know, have discretion, as they say, and know the world.

Fal. Fare thee well: commend me to them both. There's my purse; I am yet thy debtor. Boy, go along with this woman. This news distracts me!

[*Exeunt QUICKLY and ROBIN.*]

Pist. This punk is one of Cupid's carriers. Clap on more sails; pursue, up with your fights; Give fire; she is my prize, or ocean whelm them all!

[*Exit PISTOL.*]

Fal. Say'st thou so, old Jack? Go thy ways; I'll make more of thy old body than I have done. Will they yet look after thee? Wilt thou, after the expense of so much money, be now a gainer? Good body, I thank thee. Let them say 'tis grossly done; so it be fairly done, no matter.

Enter BARDOLPH.

Bard. Sir John, there's one Master Brook below would fain speak with you and be acquainted with you, and hath sent your worship a morning's draught of sack.

Fal. Brook is his name?

Bard. Ay, sir.

Fal. Call him in. [*Exit BARDOLPH.*] Such Brooks are welcome to me that o'erflow such liquor. Ah! ha! Mistress Ford and Mistress Page, have I encompassed you? Go to; *via!*

Re-enter BARDOLPH, with FORD disguised.

Ford. Bless you, sir.

Fal. And you, sir. Would you speak with me?

Ford. I make bold to press with so little preparation upon you.

Fal. Your welcome. What's your will? Give us leave, drawer. [Exit BARDOLPH.]

Ford. Sir, I am a gentleman that have spent much; my name is Brook.

Fal. Good Master Brook, I desire more acquaintance of you.

Ford. Good Sir John, I sue for yours: not to charge you, for I must let you understand I think myself in better plight for a lender than you are; the which hath something emboldened me to this unseasoned intrusion, for they say if money go before, all ways do lie open.

Fal. Money is a good soldier, and will on.

Ford. Troth, and I have a bag of money here troubles me. If you will help me to bear it, Sir John, take all, or half, for easing me of the carriage.

Fal. Sir, I know not how I may deserve to be your porter.

Ford. I will tell you, sir, if you will give me the hearing.

Fal. Speak, good Master Brook; I shall be glad to be your servant.

Ford. Sir, I hear you are a scholar—I will be brief with you—and you have been a man long known to me, though I had never so good means as desire to make myself acquainted with you. I shall discover a thing to you, wherein I must very much lay open mine own imperfection; but, good Sir John, as you have one eye upon my follies, as you hear them unfolded, turn another into the register of your own, that I may pass with a reproof the easier, sith you yourself know how easy it is to be such an offender.

Fal. Very well, sir; proceed.

Ford. There is a gentlewoman in this town, her husband's name is Ford.

Fal. Well, sir.

Ford. I have long loved her, and, I protest to you, bestowed much on her; followed her with a doting observance; engrossed opportunities to meet her; fee'd every slight occasion that could but niggardly give me sight of her; not only bought many presents to give

her, but have given largely to many to know what she would have given. Briefly, I have pursued her, as love hath pursued me, which hath been on the wing of all occasions. But whatsoever I have merited, either in my mind or in my means, meed, I am sure, I have received none, unless experience be a jewel that I have purchased at an infinite rate, and that hath taught me to say this:

*Love like a shadow flies, when substance love pursues;
Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues.*

Fal. Have you received no promise of satisfaction at her hands?

Ford. Never.

Fal. Have you importuned her to such a purpose?

Ford. Never.

Fal. Of what quality was your love then?

Ford. Like a fair house built upon another man's ground, so that I have lost my edifice by mistaking the place where I erected it.

Fal. To what purpose have you unfolded this to me?

Ford. When I have told you that, I have told you all. Some say that though she appear honest to me, yet in other places she enlargeth her mirth so far that there is shrewd construction made of her. Now, Sir John, here is the heart of my purpose: You are a gentleman of excellent breeding, admirable discourse, of great admittance, authentic in your place and person, generally allowed for your many warlike, courtlike, and learned preparations.

Fal. Oh, sir!

Ford. Believe it, for you know it. There is money; spend it, spend it, spend more; spend all I have; only give me so much of your time in exchange of it as to lay an amiable siege to the honesty of this Ford's wife. Use your art of wooing, win her to consent to you; if any man may, you may as soon as any.

Fal. Would it apply well to the vehemency of your



affection that I should win what you would enjoy? Methinks you prescribe to yourself very preposterously.

Ford. Oh, understand my drift! She dwells so securely on the excellency of her honour that the folly of my soul dares not present itself; she is too bright to be looked against. Now, could I come to her with any detection in my hand, my desires had instance and argument to commend themselves; I could drive her then from the ward of her purity, her reputation, her marriage-vow, and a thousand other her defences, which now are too strongly embattled against me. What say you to 't, Sir John?

Fal. Master Brook, I will first make bold with your money; next, give me your hand; and last, as I am a gentleman, you shall, if you will, enjoy Ford's wife.

Ford. O good sir!

Fal. Master Brook, I say you shall.

Ford. Want no money, Sir John, you shall want none.

Fal. Want no Mistress Ford, Master Brook, you shall want none. I shall be with her (I may tell you) by her own appointment; even as you came in to me her assistant, or go-between, parted from me. I say I shall be with her between ten and eleven; for at that time the jealous, rascally knave her husband will be forth. Come you to me at night; you shall know how I speed.

Ford. I am blest in your acquaintance. Do you know Ford, sir?

Fal. Hang him, poor cuckoldly knave! I know him not. Yet I wrong him to call him poor; they say the jealous wittolly knave hath masses of money, for the which his wife seems to me well-favoured. I will use her as the key of the cuckoldly rogue's coffer, and there's my harvest-home.

Ford. I would you knew Ford, sir, that you might avoid him if you saw him.

Fal. Hang him, mechanical salt-butter rogue! I will stare him out of his wits; I will awe him with my cud-

gel; it shall hang like a meteor o'er the cuckold's horns. Master Brook, thou shalt know I will predominate o'er the peasant, and thou shalt lie with his wife. Come to me soon at night. Ford's a knave, and I will aggravate his style; thou, Master Brook, shalt know him for a knave and cuckold. Come to me soon at night.

[*Exit.*]

Ford. What a damned Epicurean rascal is this! My heart is ready to crack with impatience. Who says this is improvident jealousy? My wife hath sent to him, the hour is fixed, the match is made. Would any man have thought this? See the hell of having a false woman! My bed shall be abused, my coffers ransacked, my reputation gnawn at; and I shall not only receive this villanous wrong, but stand under the adoption of abominable terms, and by him that does me this wrong. Terms! names!—Amaimon sounds well; Lucifer, well; Barbason, well; yet they are devils' additions, the names of fiends. But cuckold! wittol cuckold! the devil himself hath not such a name. Page is an ass, a secure ass; he will trust his wife, he will not be jealous. I will rather trust a Fleming with my butter, Parson Hugh the Welshman with my cheese, an Irishman with my aqua-vitæ bottle, or a thief to walk my ambling gelding, than my wife with herself; then she plots, then she ruminates, then she devises. And what they think in their hearts they may effect, they will break their hearts but they will effect. Heaven be praised for my jealousy!—Eleven o'clock the hour—I will prevent this, detect my wife, be revenged on Falstaff, and laugh at Page. I will about it; better three hours too soon than a minute too late. Fie, fie, fie! cuckold! cuckold! cuckold!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*Enter CAIUS and RUGBY.*

Caius. Jack Rugby!

Rug. Sir.

Caius. Vat is de clock, Jack?

Rug. 'Tis past the hour, sir, that Sir Hugh promised to meet.

Caius. By gar, he has save his soul, dat he is no come; he has pray his Pible vell, dat he is no come. By gar, Jack Rugby, he is dead already, if he be come.

Rug. He is wise, sir; he knew your worship would kill him if he came.

Caius. By gar, de herring is no dead so as I vill kill him. Take your rapier, Jack; I vill tell you how I vill kill him.

Rug. Alas, sir, I cannot fence.

Caius. Villany, take your rapier.

Rug. Forbear; here's company.

Enter Host, SHALLOW, SLENDER, *and* PAGE.

Host. Bless thee, bully doctor.

Shal. Save you, Master Doctor Caius.

Page. Now, good master doctor!

Slen. Give you good-morrow, sir.

Caius. Vat be all you, one, two, three, four, come for?

Host. To see thee fight, to see thee foin, to see thee traverse, to see thee here, to see thee there; to see thee pass thy punto, thy stock, thy reverse, thy distance, thy montant. Is he dead, my Ethiopian? is he dead, my Francisco? ha, bully! What says my Æsculapius? my Galen? my heart of elder? Ha! is he dead, bully Stale? is he dead?

Caius. By gar, he is de coward Jack priest of the world; he is not show his face.

Host. Thou art a Castilian king-urinal! Hector of Greece, my boy!

Caius. I pray you, bear vitness that me have stay six or seven, two, tree hours for him, and he is no come.

Shal. He is the wiser man, master doctor. He is a curer of souls, and you a curer of bodies; if you should fight, you go against the hair of your professions. Is it not true, Master Page?

Page. Master Shallow, you have yourself been a great fighter, though now a man of peace.

Shal. Bodykins, Master Page, though I now be old,

and of the peace, if I see a sword out, my finger itches to make one. Though we are justices, and doctors, and churchmen, Master Page, we have some salt of our youth in us; we are the sons of women, Master Page.

Page. 'Tis true, Master Shallow.

Shal. It will be found so, Master Page. Master Doctor Caius, I am come to fetch you home. I am sworn of the peace; you have showed yourself a wise physician, and Sir Hugh hath shown himself a wise and patient churchman. You must go with me, master doctor.

Host. Pardon, guest-justice.—A word, Monsieur Muck-water.

Caius. Muck-water? Vat is dat?

Host. Muck-water, in our English tongue, is valour, bully.

Caius. By gar, then I have as much muck-water as de Englishman. Scurvy jack-dog priest; by gar, me vill cut his ears.

Host. He will clapper-claw thee tightly, bully.

Caius. Clapper-de-claw? Vat is dat?

Host. That is, he will make thee amends.

Caius. By gar, me do look he shall clapper-de-claw me; for, by gar, me vill have it.

Host. And I will provoke him to 't, or let him wag.

Caius. Me tank you for dat.

Host. And moreover, bully— But first, master guest, and Master Page, and eke Cavalero Slender, go you through the town to Frogmore. [*Aside to them.*]

Page. Sir Hugh is there, is he?

Host. He is there. See what humour he is in; and I will bring the doctor about by the fields. Will it do well?

Shal. We will do it.

Page, Shal., and Slen. Adieu, good master doctor.

[*Exeunt PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.*]

Caius. By gar, me vill kill de priest; for he speak for a jack-a-nape to Anne Page.

Host. Let him die. But first sheathe thy impatience; throw cold water on thy choler. Go about the fields

with me through Frogmore. I will bring thee where Mistress Anne Page is, at a farmhouse a-feasting; and thou shalt woo her. Cried game, said I well?

Caius. By gar, me tank you for dat; by gar, I love you; and I shall procuree you de good guest, de earl, de knight, de lords, de gentlemen, my patients.

Host. For the which I will be thy adversary toward Anne Page. Said I well?

Caius. By gar, 'tis good; vell said.

Host. Let us wag then.

Caius. Come at my heels, Jack Rugby. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III

SCENE I.—*Enter* Sir HUGH EVANS *and* SIMPLE.

Evans. I pray you now, good Master Slender's serving-man, and friend Simple py your name, which way have you looked for Master Caius, that calls himself Doctor of Physic?

Sim. Marry, sir, the city-ward, the park-ward, every way; old Windsor way, and every way but the town way.

Evans. I most feheemently desire you, you will also look that way.

Sim. I will, sir.

Evans. Pless my soul! how full of cholers I am, and trempling of mind! I shall pe glad if he have deceived me. How melancholies I am! I will knog his urinals apout his knave's costard when I have good opportunities for the 'ork. Pless my soul! [*Sings.*]

*To shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious pirds sing madrigals;
There will we make our peds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies.
To shallow—*

'Mercy on me! I have a great dispositions to cry.

*Melodious pirds sing madrigals;
When as I sat in Pabylon—*

*And a thousand vagram posies.
To shallow—*

Sim. Yonder he is coming this way, Sir Hugh.
Evans. He's welcome—

To shallow rivers, to whose falls—

Heaven prosper the right!—What weapon is he?

Sim. No weapons, sir. There comes my master, Master Shallow, and another gentleman from Frogmore, over the stile, this way.

Evans. Pray you, give me my gown, or else keep it in your arms.

Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.

Shal. How now, master parson? Good-morrow, good Sir Hugh. Keep a gamester from the dice, and a good student from his book, and it is wonderful.

Slen. Ah, sweet Anne Page!

Page. Save you, good Sir Hugh!

Evans. Pless you from His mercy sake, all of you!

Shal. What! the sword and the Word? do you study them both, master parson?

Page. And youthful still, in your doublet and hose, this raw rheumatic day?

Evans. There is reasons and causes for it.

Page. We are come to you to do a good office, master parson.

Evans. Fery well. What is it?

Page. Yonder is a most reverend gentleman who, be-like, having received wrong by some person, is at most odds with his own gravity and patience that ever you saw.

Shal. I have lived fourscore years and upward; I never heard a man of his place, gravity, and learning so wide of his own respect.

Evans. What is he?

Page. I think you know him; Master Doctor Caius, the renowned French physician.

Evans. Got's will, and his passion of my heart! I had as lief you would tell me of a mess of porridge.

Page. Why?

Evans. He has no more knowledge in Hibocrates and Galen—and he is a knave besides; a cowardly knave as you would desire to be acquainted withal.

Page. I warrant you he's the man should fight with him.

Slen. Oh, sweet Anne Page!

Shal. It appears so by his weapons. Keep them asunder; here comes Doctor Caius.

Enter Host, CAIUS, and RUGBY.

Page. Nay, good master parson, keep in your weapon.

Shal. So do you, good master doctor.

Host. Disarm them, and let them question; let them keep their limbs whole, and hack our English.

Caius. I pray you let-a me speak a word vit your ear. Verefore vill you not meet-a me?

Evans. Pray you, use your patience. In good time.

Caius. By gar, you are de coward, de Jack dog, John ape.

Evans. Pray you, let us not be laughing-stogs to other men's humours. I desire you in friendship, and I will one way or other make you amends. I will knog your urinals apout your knave's cogscorb for missing your meetings and appointments.

Caius. *Diable!* Jack Rugby—mine *Host de Jarterre*, have I not stay for him to kill him? Have I not, at de place I did appoint?

Evans. As I am a Christians soul, now look you, this is the place appointed. I'll pe judgment py mine Host of the Garter.

Host. Peace, I say; Guallia and Gaul, French and Welsh, soul-curer and body-curer.

Caius. Ay, dat is very good! excellent!

Host. Peace, I say. Hear mine Host of the Garter. Am I politic? am I subtle? am I a Machiavel? Shall I lose my doctor? No; he gives me the potions and

the motions. Shall I lose my parson, my priest, my Sir Hugh? No; he gives me the proverbs and the no-verbs. Give me thy hand, terrestrial; so. Give me thy hand, celestial; so. Boys of art, I have deceived you both; I have directed you to wrong places. Your hearts are mighty, your skins are whole, and let burnt sack be the issue. Come, lay their swords to pawn. Follow me, lad of peace; follow, follow, follow.

Shal. Trust me, a mad host.—Follow, gentlemen, follow.

Slen. Oh, sweet Anne Page!

[*Exeunt* SHALLOW, SLENDER, PAGE, and Host.

Caius. Ha! do I perceive dat? Have you make-a de sot of us? Ha, ha!

Evans. This is well; he has made us his vlouting-stog. I desire you that we may pe friends; and let us knog our prains together to pe revenge on this same scall, scurvy, cogging companion, the Host of the Garter.

Caius. By gar, vit all my heart. He promise to bring me vere is Anne Page. By gar, he deceive me too.

Evans. Well, I will smite his noddles. Pray you, follow. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Enter* MISTRESS PAGE and ROBIN.

Mrs. Page. Nay, keep your way, little gallant; you were wont to be a follower, but now you are a leader. Whether had you rather, lead mine eyes, or eye your master's heels?

Robin. I had rather, forsooth, go before you like a man than follow him like a dwarf.

Mrs. Page. Oh, you are a flattering boy; now I see you'll be a courtier.

Enter FORD.

Ford. Well met, Mistress Page. Whither go you?

Mrs. Page. Truly, sir, to see your wife. Is she at home?

Ford. Ay; and as idle as she may hang together for



want of company. I think if your husbands were dead, you two would marry.

Mrs. Page. Be sure of that—two other husbands.

Ford. Where had you this pretty weather-cock?

Mrs. Page. I cannot tell what the dickens his name is my husband had him of. What do you call your knight's name, sirrah?

Robin. Sir John Falstaff.

Ford. Sir John Falstaff!

Mrs. Page. He, he; I can never hit on 's name. There is such a league between my good man and he! Is your wife at home, indeed?

Ford. Indeed she is.

Mrs. Page. By your leave, sir. I am sick till I see her.

[*Exeunt Mrs. PAGE and ROBIN.*]

Ford. Has Page any brains? hath he any eyes? hath he any thinking? Sure, they sleep; he hath no use of them. Why, this boy will carry a letter twenty miles as easy as a cannon will shoot point-blank twelve score. He pieces out his wife's inclination; he gives her folly motion and advantage. And now she's going to my wife, and Falstaff's boy with her. A man may hear this shower sing in the wind! And Falstaff' boy with her! Good plots!—they are laid; and our revolted wives share damnation together. Well, I will take him; then torture my wife, pluck the borrowed veil of modesty from the so-seeming Mistress Page, divulge Page himself for a secure and wilful Actæon; and to these violent proceedings all my neighbours shall cry aim. [*Clock strikes.*] The clock gives me my cue, and my assurance bids me search; there I shall find Falstaff. I shall be rather praised for this than mocked; for it is as positive as the earth is firm that Falstaff is there. I will go.

Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, SLENDER, Host, Sir HUGH EVANS, CAIUS, and RUGBY.

Shal., Page, etc. Well met, Master Ford.

Ford. Trust me, a good knot. I have good cheer at home; and I pray you all go with me.

Shal. I must excuse myself, Master Ford.

Slen. And so must I, sir; we have appointed to dine with Mistress Anne, and I would not break with her for more money than I'll speak of.

Shal. We have lingered about a match between Anne Page and my Cousin Slender, and this day we shall have our answer.

Slen. I hope I have your good-will, Father Page.

Page. You have, Master Slender; I stand wholly for you. But my wife, master doctor, is for you altogether.

Caius. Ay, by gar; and de maid is love-a me; my nursh-a Quickly tell me so mush.

Host. What say you to young Master Fenton? He capers, he dances, he has eyes of youth, he writes verses, he speaks holyday, he smells April and May. He will carry 't, he will carry 't; 'tis in his buttons; he will carry 't.

Page. Not by my consent, I promise you. The gentleman is of no having. He kept company with the wild Prince and Poins; he is of too high a region, he knows too much. No, he shall not knit a knot in his fortunes with the finger of my substance. If he take her, let him take her simply; the wealth I have waits on my consent, and my consent goes not that way.

Ford. I beseech you heartily some of you go home with me to dinner. Besides your cheer, you shall have sport; I will show you a monster.—Master doctor, you shall go; so shall you, Master Page; and you, Sir Hugh.

Shal. Well, fare you well. We shall have the freer wooing at Master Page's.

[*Exeunt* SHALLOW and SLENDER.]

Caius. Go home, John Rugby; I come anon.

[*Exit* RUGBY.]

Host. Farewell, my hearts. I will to my honest knight Falstaff, and drink canary with him.

[*Exit* Host.]

Ford. [*Aside.*] I think I shall drink in pipe-wine first with him; I'll make him dance. Will you go, gentles?

All. Have with you, to see this monster. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Enter* Mistress FORD *and* Mistress PAGE.

Mrs. Ford. What, John! what, Robert!

Mrs. Page. Quickly! quickly. Is the buck-basket—

Mrs. Ford. I warrant. What, Robin, I say.

Enter Servants *with a basket.*

Mrs. Page. Come, come, come.

Mrs. Ford. Here, set it down.

Mrs. Page. Give your men the charge; we must be brief.

Mrs. Ford. Marry, as I told you before, John and Robert, be ready here hard by in the brew-house; and when I suddenly call you, come forth, and (without any pause or staggering) take this basket on your shoulders; that done, trudge with it in all haste, and carry it among the whitsters in Datchet mead, and there empty it in the muddy ditch, close by the Thames' side.

Mrs. Page. You will do it?

Mrs. Ford. I have told them over and over: they lack no direction. Be gone, and come when you are called.

[*Exeunt* Servants.]

Mrs. Page. Here comes little Robin.

Enter ROBIN.

Mrs. Ford. How now, my eyas-musket? What news with you?

Robin. My master Sir John is come in at your back door, Mistress Ford, and requests your company.

Mrs. Page. You little Jack-a-lent, have you been true to us?

Robin. Ay, I'll be sworn. My master knows not of your being here, and hath threatened to put me into everlasting liberty if I tell you of it; for he swears he'll turn me away.

Mrs. Page. Thou art a good boy; this secrecy of thine shall be a tailor to thee, and shall make thee a new doublet and hose. I'll go hide me.

Mrs. Ford. Do so. Go tell thy master I am alone. Mistress Page, remember you your cue. [*Exit* ROBIN.]

Mrs. Page. I warrant thee; if I do not act it, hiss me. [*Exit* MRS. PAGE.]

Mrs. Ford. Go to, then. We'll use this unwholesome humidity, this gross watery pumpion; we'll teach him how to know turtles from jays.

Enter FALSTAFF.

Fal. Have I caught thee, my heavenly jewel? Why, now let me die, for I have lived long enough. This is the period of my ambition. Oh, this blessed hour!

Mrs. Ford. Oh, sweet Sir John!

Fal. Mistress Ford, I cannot cog, I cannot prate, Mistress Ford. Now shall I sin in my wish. I would thy husband were dead. I'll speak it before the best lord, I would make thee my lady.

Mrs. Ford. I your lady, Sir John! Alas, I should be a pitiful lady.

Fal. Let the court of France show me such another. I see how thine eye would emulate the diamond. Thou hast the right arched beauty of the brow that becomes the ship-tire, the tire-valiant, or any tire of Venetian admittance.

Mrs. Ford. A plain kerchief, Sir John: my brows become nothing else, nor that well neither.

Fal. Thou art a traitor to say so. Thou wouldst make an absolute courtier; and the firm fixture of thy foot would give an excellent motion to thy gait in a semicircled farthingale. I see what thou wert if fortune thy foe were not. Nature is thy friend. Come, thou canst not hide it.

Mrs. Ford. Believe me, there's no such thing in me.

Fal. What made me love thee? Let that persuade thee there's something extraordinary in thee. Come, I cannot cog, and say thou art this and that, like a many of these lispig hawthorn buds that come like women in men's apparel, and smell like Bucklersbury in simple-

time; I cannot. But I love thee; none but thee; and thou deservest it.

Mrs. Ford. Do not betray me, sir; I fear you love Mistress Page.

Fal. Thou might'st as well say I love to walk by the Counter-gate, which is as hateful to me as the reek of a lime-kiln.

Mrs. Ford. Well, Heaven knows how I love you; and you shall one day find it.

Fal. Keep in that mind; I'll deserve it.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I must tell you, so you do; or else I could not be in that mind.

Rob. [*Within.*] Mistress Ford, Mistress Ford! here's Mistress Page at the door, sweating and blowing and looking wildly, and would needs speak with you presently.

Fal. She shall not see me; I will ensconce me behind the arras.

Mrs. Ford. Pray you, do so; she's a very tattling woman.—

[*FALSTAFF hides himself.*]

Enter Mistress PAGE and ROBIN.

What's the matter? how now?

Mrs. Page. Oh, Mistress Ford, what have you done? You're shamed, you are overthrown, you are undone forever.

Mrs. Ford. What's the matter, good Mistress Page?

Mrs. Page. Oh, well-a-day, Mistress Ford! having an honest man to your husband, to give him such cause of suspicion!

Mrs. Ford. What cause of suspicion?

Mrs. Page. What cause of suspicion? Out upon you! how am I mistook in you!

Mrs. Ford. Why, alas! what's the matter?

Mrs. Page. Your husband's coming hither, woman, with all the officers in Windsor, to search for a gentleman that he says is here now in the house, by your consent, to take an ill advantage of his absence. You are undone.

Mrs. Ford. Speak louder. [*Aside.*] 'Tis not so, I hope.

Mrs. Page. Pray Heaven it be not so that you have such a man here; but 'tis most certain your husband's coming with half Windsor at his heels to search for such a one. I come before to tell you. If you know yourself clear, why, I am glad of it; but if you have a friend here, convey, convey him out. Be not amazed; call all your senses to you; defend your reputation, or bid farewell to your good life forever.

Mrs. Ford. What shall I do? There is a gentleman, my dear friend; and I fear not mine own shame so much as his peril. I had rather than a thousand pound he were out of the house.

Mrs. Page. For shame, never stand you had rather, and you had rather; your husband's here at hand, be-think you of some conveyance: in the house you cannot hide him. Oh, how have you deceived me! Look, here is a basket; if he be of any reasonable stature he may creep in here, and throw foul linen upon him as if it were going to bucking. Or, it is whitening time, send him by your two men to Datchet mead.

Mrs. Ford. He's too big to go in there. What shall I do?

Re-enter FALSTAFF.

Fal. Let me see 't! let me see 't! Oh, let me see 't! I'll in, I'll in; follow your friend's counsel; I'll in.

Mrs. Page. What! Sir John Falstaff! Are these your letters, knight?

Fal. I love thee, and none but thee; help me away: let me creep in here; I'll never—

[*He goes into the basket; they cover him with foul linen.*]

Mrs. Page. Help to cover your master, boy. Call your men, Mistress Ford. You dissembling knight!

Mrs. Ford. What, John, Robert, John! [*Exit ROBIN; re-enter Servants.*] Go, take up these clothes here, quickly; where's the cowl-staff? Look, how you drumble. Carry them to the laundress in Datchet mead; quickly, come.

Enter FORD, PAGE, CAIUS, and Sir HUGH EVANS.

Ford. Pray you, come near. If I suspect without cause, why then make sport at me, then let me be your jest; I deserve it.—How now? whither bear you this?

Serv. To the laundress, forsooth.

Mrs. Ford. Why, what have you to do whither they bear it? You were best meddle with buck-washing.

Ford. Buck? I would I could wash myself of the buck! Buck! buck! buck! Ay, buck; I warrant you, buck; and of the season too, it shall appear. [*Exeunt Servants with the basket.*] Gentlemen, I have dreamed to-night; I'll tell you my dream. Here, here, here be my keys: ascend my chambers, search, seek, find out. I'll warrant we'll unkennel the fox. Let me stop this way first. So, now uncape.

Page. Good Master Ford, be contented. You wrong yourself too much.

Ford. True, Master Page. Up, gentlemen; you shall see sport anon. Follow me, gentlemen. [*Exit.*

Evans. This is fery fantastical humours and jealousies.

Caius. Py gar, 'tis no de fashion of France; it is not jealous in France.

Page. Nay, follow him, gentlemen, see the issue of his search. [*Exeunt EVANS, PAGE, and CAIUS.*

Mrs. Page. Is there not a double excellency in this?

Mrs. Ford. I know not which pleases me better, that my husband is deceived, or Sir John.

Mrs. Page. What a taking was he in when your husband asked who was in the basket!

Mrs. Ford. I am half afraid he will have need of washing, so throwing him into the water will do him a benefit.

Mrs. Page. Hang him, dishonest rascal! I would all of the same strain were in the same distress.

Mrs. Ford. I think my husband hath some special suspicion of Falstaff's being here; for I never saw him so gross in his jealousy till now.

Mrs. Page. I will lay a plot to try that. And we will yet have more tricks with Falstaff; his dissolute disease will scarce obey this medicine.

Mrs. Ford. Shall we send that foolish carrion, Mistress Quickly, to him, and excuse his throwing into the water, and give him another hope, to betray him to another punishment?

Mrs. Page. We'll do it; let him be sent for to-morrow eight o'clock to have amends.

Re-enter FORD, PAGE, CAIUS, and Sir HUGH EVANS.

Ford. I cannot find him. Maybe the knave bragged of that he could not compass.

Mrs. Page. Heard you that?

Mrs. Ford. Ay, ay; peace.—You use me well, Master Ford, do you?

Ford. Ay, I do so.

Mrs. Ford. Heaven make you better than your thoughts.

Ford. Amen.

Mrs. Page. You do yourself mighty wrong, Master Ford.

Ford. Ay, ay; I must bear it.

Evans. If there be anypody in the house, and in the champers, and in the coffers, and in the presses, Heaven forgive my sins at the day of judgment.

Caius. By gar, nor I too; dere is nobodies.

Page. Fie, fie, Master Ford! are you not ashamed? What spirit, what devil suggests this imagination? I would not have your distemper in this kind for the wealth of Windsor Castle.

Ford. 'Tis my fault, Master Page; I suffer for it.

Evans. You suffer for a pad conscience. Your wife is as honest a 'omans as I will desires among five thousand, and five hundred too.

Caius. By gar, I see 'tis an honest woman.

Ford. Well, I promised you a dinner. Come, come, walk in the park. I pray you, pardon me; I will hereafter make known to you why I have done this. Come,



E. A. Alt.

wife; come, Mistress Page; I pray you pardon me; pray heartily, pardon me.

Page. Let's go in, gentlemen; but, trust me, we'll mock him. I do invite you to-morrow morning to my house to breakfast; after, we'll a-birding together; I have a fine hawk for the bush. Shall it be so?

Ford. Anything.

Evans. If there is one I shall make two in the company.

Caius. If there be one or two, I shall make-a de turd.

Evans. In your teeth: for shame.

Ford. Pray you go, Master Page.

Evans. I pray you now remembrance to -morrow on the lousy knave, mine host.

Caius. Dat is good; by gar, vit all my heart.

Evans. A lousy knave, to have his gibes and his mockeries. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—*Enter* FENTON *and* Mistress ANNE PAGE.

Fent. I see I cannot get thy father's love,
Therefore no more turn me to him, sweet Nan.

Anne. Alas! how then?

Fent. Why, thou must be thyself.
He doth object I am too great of birth;
And that, my state being gall'd with my expense,
I seek to heal it only by his wealth.
Besides these, other bars he lays before me—
My riots past, my wild societies;
And tells me 'tis a thing impossible
I should love thee but as a property.

Anne. Maybe he tells you true.

Fent. No, Heaven so speed me in my time to come!
Albeit I will confess thy father's wealth
Was the first motive that I woo'd thee, Anne;
Yet, wooing thee, I found thee of more value
Than stamps in gold or sums in sealed bags;
And 'tis the very riches of thyself
That now I aim at.

Anne.

Gentle Master Fenton

Yet seek my father's love ; still seek it, sir.
 If opportunity and humblest suit
 Cannot attain it, why then— Hark you hither.
 [*They converse apart.*]

Enter SHALLOW, SLENDER, and Mistress QUICKLY.

Shal. Break their talk, Mistress Quickly ; my kinsman shall speak for himself.

Slen. I'll make a shaft or a bolt on't ; slid, 'tis but venturing.

Shal. Be not dismayed.

Slen. No, she shall not dismay me. I care not for that—but that I am afeared.

Quick. Hark ye. Master Slender would speak a word with you.

Anne. I come to him.—This is my father's choice.
 Oh, what a world of vile ill-favour'd faults
 Looks handsome in three hundred pounds a year!

[*Aside.*]

Quick. And how does good Master Fenton? Pray you, a word with you.

Shal. She's coming ; to her, coz. Oh, boy, thou hadst a father !

Slen. I had a father, Mistress Anne ; my uncle can tell you good jests of him.—Pray you, uncle, tell Mistress Anne the jest how my father stole two geese out of a pen, good uncle.

Shal. Mistress Anne, my cousin loves you.

Slen. Ay, that I do ; as well as I love any woman in Gloucestershire.

Shal. He will maintain you like a gentlewoman.

Slen. Ay, that I will, come cut and long tail, under the degree of a 'squire.

Shal. He will make you a hundred and fifty pounds jointure.

Anne. Good Master Shallow, let him woo for himself.

Shal. Marry, I thank you for it ; I thank you for that good comfort. She calls you, coz : I'll leave you.

Anne. Now, Master Slender.

Slender. Now, good Mistress Anne.

Anne. What is your will?

Slender. My will? 'Od's heartlings, that's a pretty jest, indeed! I ne'er made my will yet, I thank Heaven; I am not such a sickly creature, I give Heaven praise.

Anne. I mean, Master Slender, what would you with me?

Slender. Truly, for mine own part, I would little or nothing with you. Your father and my uncle have made motions. If it be my luck, so; if not, happy man be his dole! They can tell you how things go better than I can. You may ask your father; here he comes.

Enter PAGE and Mistress PAGE.

Page. Now, Master Slender. Love him, daughter Anne.

Why, how now? what does Master Fenton here?
You wrong me, sir, thus still to haunt my house.
I told you, sir, my daughter is disposed of.

Fenton. Nay, Master Page, be not impatient.

Mrs. Page. Good Master Fenton, come not to my child.

Page. She is no match for you.

Fenton. Sir, will you hear me?

Page. No, good Master Fenton.
Come, Master Shallow; come, son Slender; in.—
Knowing my mind, you wrong me, Master Fenton.

[*Exeunt PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.*]

Quick. Speak to Mistress Page.

Fenton. Good Mistress Page, for that I love your daughter

In such a righteous fashion as I do,
Perforce, against all checks, rebukes, and manners,
I must advance the colours of my love,
And not retire. Let me have your good-will.

Anne. Good mother, do not marry me to yond' fool.

Mrs. Page. I mean it not; I seek you a better husband.

Quick. That's my master, master doctor.

Anne. Alas, I had rather be set quick i' the earth,
And bowl'd to death with turnips.

Mrs. Page. Come, trouble not yourself, good Master Fenton,

I will not be your friend, nor enemy.
My daughter will I question how she loves you,
And as I find her, so am I affected.
'Till then, farewell, sir; she must needs go in;
Her father will be angry.

[*Excunt Mrs. PAGE and ANNE.*]

Fent. Farewell, gentle mistress; farewell, Nan.

Quick. This is my doing, now. Nay, said I, will you cast away your child on a fool and a physician? Look on Master Fenton. This is my doing.

Fent. I thank thee; and, I pray thee, once to-night Give my sweet Nan this ring. There's for thy pains.

[*Exit.*]

Quick. Now Heaven send thee good-fortune! A kind heart he hath: a woman would run through fire and water for such a kind heart. But yet, I would my master had Mistress Anne; or I would Master Slender had her; or, in sooth, I would Master Fenton had her. I will do what I can for them all three; for so I have promised, and I'll be as good as my word; but speciously for Master Fenton. Well, I must of another errand to Sir John Falstaff from my two mistresses. What a beast am I to slack it!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—*Enter FALSTAFF and BARDOLPH.*

Fal. Bardolph, I say!—

Bard. Here, sir.

Fal. Go, fetch me a quart of sack; put a toast in't.
[*Exit BARDOLPH.*—Have I lived to be carried in a basket, like a barrow of butcher's offal, and to be thrown into the Thames? Well, if I be served such another trick, I'll have my brains ta'en out and butter'd, and give them to a dog for a New-year's gift. The rogues slighted me into the river with as little remorse as they

would have drowned a bitch's blind puppies, fifteen i' the litter; and you may know by my size that I have a kind of alacrity in sinking; if the bottom were as deep as hell, I should down. I had been drowned but that the shore was shelvy and shallow; a death that I abhor; for the water swells a man; and what a thing should I have been when I had been swelled! I should have been a mountain of mummy.

Re-enter BARDOLPH, *with the wine.*

Bard. Here's Mistress Quickly, sir, to speak with you.

Fal. Come, let me pour in some sack to the Thames water; for my belly's as cold as if I had swallowed snow-balls for pills to cool the reins. Call her in.

Bard. Come in, woman.

Enter Mrs. QUICKLY.

Quick. By your leave; I cry you mercy. Give your worship good-morrow.

Fal. Take away these chalices. Go, brew me a potle of sack finely.

Bar. With eggs, sir?

Fal. Simple of itself; I'll no pullet-sperm in my brewage. [*Exit* BARDOLPH.]—How now?

Quick. Marry, sir, I come to your worship from Mistress Ford.

Fal. Mistress Ford! I have had ford enough: I was thrown into the ford; I have my belly full of ford.

Quick. Alas the day! Good heart, that was not her fault; she does so take on with her men; they mistook their erection.

Fal. So did I mine, to build upon a foolish woman's promise.

Quick. Well, she laments, sir, for it, that it would yearn your heart to see it. Her husband goes this morning a-birding; she desires you once more to come to her between eight and nine. I must carry her word quickly. She'll make you amends, I warrant you.

Fal. Well, I will visit her. Tell her so. And bid her think what a man is: let her consider his frailty, and then judge of my merit.

Quick. I will tell her.

Fal. Do so. Between nine and ten say'st thou?

Quick. Eight and nine, sir.

Fal. Well, be gone: I will not miss her.

Quick. Peace be with you, sir! [Exit.

Fal. I marvel I hear not of Master Brook; he sent me word to stay within; I like his money well. Oh, here he comes.

Enter FORD.

Ford. Bless you, sir!

Fal. Now, Master Brook, you come to know what hath passed between me and Ford's wife?

Ford. That indeed, Sir John, is my business.

Fal. Master Brook, I will not lie to you; I was at her house the hour she appointed me.

Ford. And how sped you, sir?

Fal. Very ill-favouredly, Master Brook.

Ford. How so, sir? Did she change her determination?

Fal. No, Master Brook; but the peaking cornuto, her husband, Master Brook, dwelling in a continual 'larum of jealousy, comes me in the instant of our encounter, after we had embraced, kissed, protested, and, as it were, spoke the prologue of our comedy; and at his heels a rabble of his companions, thither provoked and instigated by his distemper, and, forsooth, to search his house for his wife's love.

Ford. What, while you were there?

Fal. While I was there.

Ford. And did he search for you, and could not find you?

Fal. You shall hear. As good-luck would have it, comes in one Mistress Page; gives intelligence of Ford's approach; and, by her invention, and Ford's wife's distraction, they conveyed me into a buck-basket.

Ford. A buck-basket?

Fal. By the Lord, a buck-basket. Rammed me in with foul shirts and smocks, socks, foul stockings, and greasy napkins, that, Master Brook, there was the rankest compound of villanous smell that ever offended nostril.

Ford. And how long lay you there?

Fal. Nay, you shall hear, Master Brook, what I have suffered to bring this woman to evil for your good. Being thus crammed in the basket, a couple of Ford's knaves, his hinds, were called forth by their mistress to carry me in the name of foul clothes to Datchet-lane. They took me on their shoulders; met the jealous knave their master in the door, who asked them once or twice what they had in their basket. I quaked for fear lest the lunatic knave would have searched it; but Fate, ordaining he should be a cuckold, held his hand. Well, on went he for a search, and away went I for foul clothes. But mark the sequel, Master Brook. I suffered the pangs of three several deaths: first, an intolerable fright to be detected with a jealous rotten bellwether; next, to be compassed like a good bilbo in the circumference of a peck, hilt to point, heel to head; and then to be stopped in, like a strong distillation, with stinking clothes that fretted in their own grease. Think of that—a man of my kidney—think of that; that am as subject to heat as butter; a man of continual dissolution and thaw. It was a miracle to 'scape suffocation. And in the height of this bath, when I was more than half stewed in grease, like a Dutch dish, to be thrown into the Thames and cooled, glowing hot, in that surge, like a horse-shoe! think of that—hissing hot—think of that, Master Brook!

Ford. In good sadness, sir, I am sorry that for my sake you have suffered all this. My suit then is desperate: you'll undertake her no more.

Fal. Master Brook, I will be thrown into Ætna, as I have been into Thames, ere I will leave her thus. Her husband is this morning gone a-birding. I have received from her another embassy of meeting; 'twixt eight and nine is the hour, Master Brook.

Ford. 'Tis past eight already, sir.

Fal. Is it? I will then address me to my appointment. Come to me at your convenient leisure, and you shall know how I speed; and the conclusion shall be crowned with your enjoying her. Adieu. You shall have her, Master Brook; Master Brook, you shall cuckold Ford. [*Exit.*

Ford. Hum! ha! Is this a vision? is this a dream? do I sleep? Master Ford, awake; awake, Master Ford; there's a hole made in your best coat, Master Ford. This 'tis to be married! this 'tis to have linen and buck-baskets! Well, I will proclaim myself what I am. I will now take the lecher; he is at my house: he cannot 'scape me; 'tis impossible he should; he cannot creep into a halfpenny purse, nor into a pepper-box: but lest the devil that guides him should aid him, I will search impossible places. Though what I am I cannot avoid, yet to be what I would not shall not make me tame. If I have horns to make one mad, let the proverb go with me, I'll be horn mad. [*Exit.*

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*Enter* MISTRESS PAGE, MISTRESS QUICKLY, and WILLIAM.

Mrs. Page. Is he at Master Ford's already, think'st thou?

Quick. Sure he is by this; or will be presently. But truly he is very courageous mad about his throwing into the water. Mistress Ford desires you to come suddenly.

Mrs. Page. I'll be with her by-and-by; I'll but bring my young man here to school. Look where his master comes; 'tis a playing-day, I see.

Enter Sir HUGH EVANS.

How now, Sir Hugh? no school to-day?

Evans. No; Master Slender is let the poys leave to play.



Quick. Blessing of his heart!

Mrs. Page. Sir Hugh, my husband says my son profits nothing in the world at his book; I pray you, ask him some questions in his accidence.

Evans. Come hither, William; hold up your head; come.

Mrs. Page. Come on, sirrah; hold up your head. Answer your master; be not afraid.

Evans. William, how many numpers is in nouns?

Will. Two.

Quick. Truly, I thought there had been one number more; because they say od's nouns.

Evans. Peace your tattlings. What is fair, William?

Will. Pulcher.

Quick. Poulcats! There are fairer things than poulcats, sure.

Evans. You are a very simplicity 'oman; I pray you, peace. What is *lapis*, William?

Will. A stone.

Evans. And what is a stone, William?

Will. A pebble.

Evans. No, it is *lapis*; I pray you rememper in your prain.

Will. Lapis.

Evans. That is good, William. What is he, William, that does lend articles?

Will. Articles are borrowed of the pronoun; and be thus declined, *Singulariter, nominativo, hic, hæc, hoc.*

Evans. *Nominativo, hig, hag, hog*; pray you, mark: *genitivo, hujus.* Well, what is your accusative case?

Will. Accusativo, hinc.

Evans. I pray you, have your rememprance, child: *Accusativo, hing, hang, hog.*

Quick. Hang hog is Latin for bacon, I warrant you.

Evans. Leave your prabbles, 'oman. What is the focative case, William?

Will. O—*vocativo, O.*

Evans. Rememper, William; focative is *caret.*

Quick. And that's a good root.

Evans. 'Oman, forbear.

Mrs. Page. Peace.

Evans. What is your genitive case plural, William?

Will. Genitive case?

Evans. Ay.

Will. *Genitivo*—*horum, harum, horum.*

Quick. Vengeance of Jenny's case! fie on her! Never name her, child, if she be a whore.

Evans. For shame, 'oman.

Quick. You do ill to teach the child such words. He teaches him to hick and to hack, which they'll do fast enough of themselves; and to call *horum*! fie upon you!

Evans. 'Oman, art thou lunatics? hast thou no understandings for thy cases and the numpers of the genders? Thou art as foolish Christian creatures as I would desires.

Mrs. Page. Prithee, hold thy peace.

Evans. Show me now, William, some declensions of your pronouns.

Will. Forsooth, I have forgot.

Evans. It is *ki, kæ, cod*; if you forget your *kies*, your *kæs*, and your *cods*, you must be preeches. Go your ways and play; go.

Mrs. Page. He is a better scholar than I thought he was.

Evans. He is a good sprag memory. Farewell, Mistress Page.

Mrs. Page. Adieu, good Sir Hugh. [*Exit* SIR HUGH.] Get you home, boy. Come, we stay too long.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Enter* FALSTAFF *and* Mistress FORD.

Fal. Mistress Ford, your sorrow hath eaten up my sufferance. I see you are obsequious in your love, and I profess requital to a hair's breadth; not only, Mistress Ford, in the simple office of love, but in all the accoutrement, complement, and ceremony of it. But are you sure of your husband now?

Mrs. Ford. He's a-birding, sweet Sir John.

Mrs. Page. [*Within.*] What hoa, Gossip Ford! what hoa!

Mrs. Ford. Step into the chamber, Sir John.

[*Exit* FALSTAFF.]

Enter Mistress PAGE.

Mrs. Page. How now, sweetheart? Who's at home besides yourself?

Mrs. Ford. Why, none but mine own people.

Mrs. Page. Indeed!

Mrs. Ford. No, certainly. Speak louder. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Page. Truly, I am so glad you have nobody here.

Mrs. Ford. Why?

Mrs. Page. Why, woman, your husband is in his old lunes again. He so takes on yonder with my husband; so rails against all married mankind; so curses all Eve's daughters, of what complexion soever; and so buffets himself on the forehead, crying, Peer out, peer out! that any madness I ever yet beheld seemed but tame-ness, civility, and patience to this his distemper he is in now. I am glad the fat knight is not here.

Mrs. Ford. Why, does he talk of him?

Mrs. Page. Of none but him; and swears he was carried out, the last time he searched for him, in a basket; protests to my husband he is now here; and hath drawn him and the rest of their company from their sport to make another experiment of his suspicion. But I am glad the knight is not here; now he shall see his own foolery.

Mrs. Ford. How near is he, Mistress Page?

Mrs. Page. Hard by; at street end; he will be here anon.

Mrs. Ford. I am undone!—the knight is here.

Mrs. Page. Why, then you are utterly ashamed, and he's but a dead man. What a woman are you? Away with him, away with him; better shame than murder.

Mrs. Ford. Which way should he go? how should I bestow him? Shall I put him into the basket again?

Re-enter FALSTAFF.

Fal. No, I'll come no more i' the basket. May I not go out ere he come?

Mrs. Page. Alas, three of Master Ford's brothers watch the door with pistols, that none shall issue out; otherwise you might slip away ere he came. But what make you here?

Fal. What shall I do? I'll creep up into the chimney.

Mrs. Ford. There they always used to discharge their birding-pieces. Creep into the kiln-hole.

Fal. Where is it?

Mrs. Ford. He will seek there, on my word. Neither press, coffer, chest, trunk, well, vault, but he hath an abstract for the remembrance of such places, and goes to them by his note. There is no hiding you in the house.

Fal. I'll go out then.

Mrs. Page. If you go out in your own semblance you die, Sir John. Unless you go out disguised—

Mrs. Ford. How might we disguise him?

Mrs. Page. Alas the day, I know not. There is no woman's gown big enough for him; otherwise he might put on a hat, a muffler, and a kerchief, and so escape.

Fal. Good hearts, devise something: any extremity rather than a mischief.

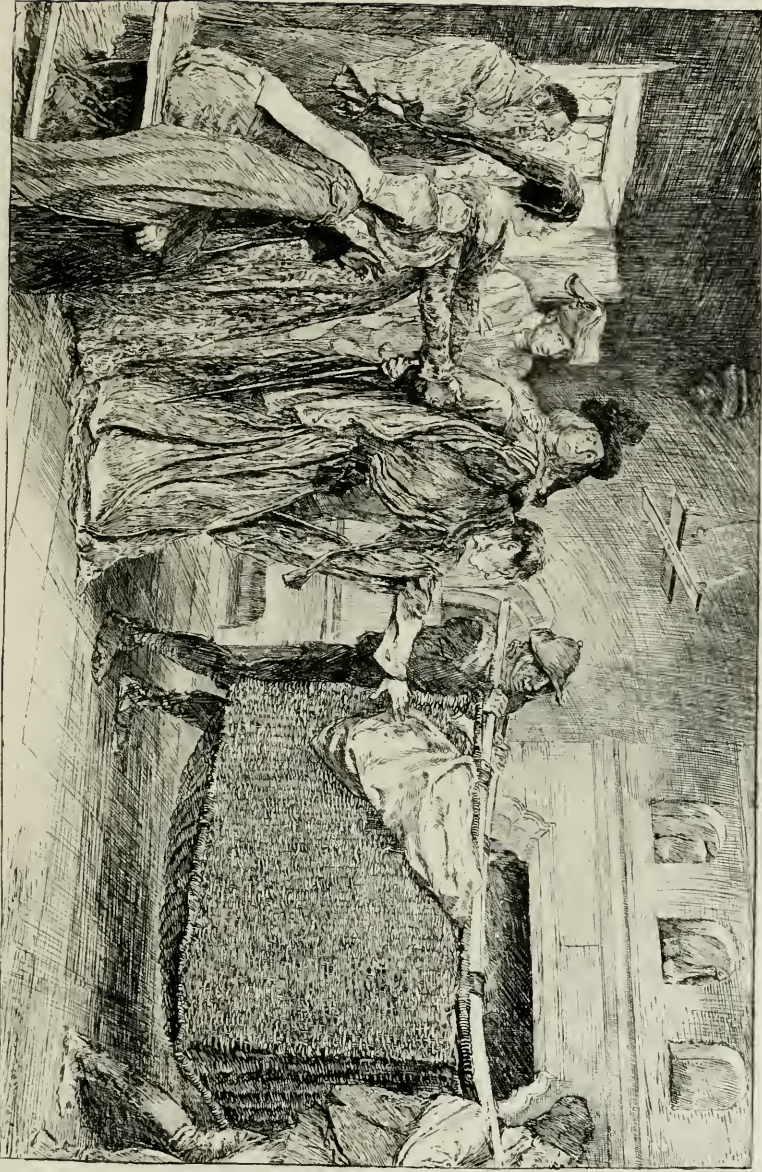
Mrs. Ford. My maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brentford, has a gown above.

Mrs. Page. On my word, it will serve him; she's as big as he is. And there's her thrum'd hat, and her muffler too. Run up, Sir John.

Mrs. Ford. Go, go, sweet Sir John. Mistress Page and I will look some linen for your head.

Mrs. Page. Quick, quick; we'll come dress you straight: put on the gown the while. [*Exit FALSTAFF.*]

Mrs. Ford. I would my husband would meet him in this shape. He cannot abide the old woman of Brentford; he swears she's a witch; forbade her my house, and hath threatened to beat her.



Mrs. Page. Heaven guide him to thy husband's cudgel, and the devil guide his cudgel afterwards!

Mrs. Ford. But is my husband coming?

Mrs. Page. Ay, in good sadness, is he; and talks of the basket too, howsoever he hath had intelligence.

Mrs. Ford. We'll try that; for I'll appoint my men to carry the basket again, to meet him at the door with it, as they did last time.

Mrs. Page. Nay, but he'll be here presently. Let's go dress him like the witch of Brentford.

Mrs. Ford. I'll first direct my men what they shall do with the basket. Go up; I'll bring linen for him straight. [Exit.]

Mrs. Page. Hang him, dishonest varlet! we cannot misuse him enough.

We'll leave a proof, by that which we will do,

Wives may be merry and yet honest too.

We do not act that often, jest and laugh;

'Tis old but true, Still swine eat all the draff.

[Exit.]

Re-enter Mistress FORD, *with two* Servants.

Mrs. Ford. Go, sirs, take the basket again on your shoulders; your master is hard at door; if he bid you set it down, obey him: quickly, despatch.

1 *Serv.* Come, come, take it up. [Exit.]

2 *Serv.* Pray Heaven it be not full of the knight again.

1 *Serv.* I hope not; I had as lief bear so much lead.

Enter FORD, PAGE, SHALLOW, CAIUS, *and* Sir HUGH EVANS.

Ford. Ay, but if it prove true, Master Page, have you any way then to unfool me again?—Set down the basket, villain!—Somebody call my wife.—You, youth in a basket, come out here!—Oh, you panderly rascals! There's a knot, a ging, a pack, a conspiracy against me. Now shall the devil be shamed. What! wife, I say! come, come forth; behold what honest clothes you send forth to bleaching.

Page. Why, this passes! Master Ford, you are not to go loose any longer; you must be pinioned.

Evans. Why, this is lunatics! this is mad as a mad dog!

Shal. Indeed, Master Ford, this is not well; indeed.

Enter Mistress FORD.

Ford. So say I too, sir.—Come hither, Mistress Ford; Mistress Ford, the honest woman, the modest wife, the virtuous creature, that hath the jealous fool to her husband! I suspect without cause, mistress, do I?

Mrs. Ford. Heaven be my witness, you do if you suspect me in any dishonesty.

Ford. Well said, brazen-face; hold it out.—Come forth, sirrah. [*Pulls the clothes out of the basket.*]

Page. This passes!

Mrs. Ford. Are you not ashamed? Let the clothes alone.

Ford. I shall find you anon.

Evans. 'Tis unreasonable! Will you take up your wife's clothes? Come away.

Ford. Empty the basket, I say.

Mrs. Ford. Why, man, why?

Ford. Master Page, as I am a man, there was one conveyed out of my house yesterday in this basket. Why may not he be there again? In my house I am sure he is. My intelligence is true; my jealousy is reasonable. Pluck me out all the linen.

Mrs. Ford. If you find a man there, he shall die a flea's death.

Page. Here's no man.

Shal. By my fidelity, this is not well, Master Ford; this wrongs you.

Evans. Master Ford, you must pray, and not follow the imaginations of your own heart: this is jealousies.

Ford. Well, he's not here I seek for.

Page. No, nor nowhere else but in your brain.

Ford. Help to search my house this one time. If I find not what I seek, show no colour for my extremity—

let me forever be your table-sport; let them say of me, As jealous as Ford, that searched a hollow walnut for his wife's leman. Satisfy me once more; once more search with me.

Mrs. Ford. What hoa, Mistress Page! come you and the old woman down; my husband will come into the chamber.

Ford. Old woman? What old woman's that?

Mrs. Ford. Why, it is my maid's aunt of Brentford.

Ford. A witch, a quean, an old cozening quean! Have I not forbid her my house? She comes of errands, does she? We are simple men; we do not know what's brought to pass under the profession of fortune-telling. She works by charms, by spells, by the figure, and such daubery as this is; beyond our element; we know nothing.—Come down, you witch, you hag you; come down, I say.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, good, sweet husband. Good gentlemen, let him not strike the old woman.

Enter FALSTAFF in women's clothes, led by Mistress PAGE.

Mrs. Page. Come, Mother Pratt, come, give me your hand.

Ford. I'll *prat* her.—Out of my door, you witch! [*beats him*] you rag, you baggage, you polecat, you ronyon! out! out! I'll conjure you, I'll fortune-tell you.

[*Exit FALSTAFF.*]

Mrs. Page. Are you not ashamed? I think you have killed the poor woman.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, he will do it. 'Tis a goodly credit for you.

Ford. Hang her, witch!

Evans. By yea and no, I think the 'oman is a witch, indeed. I like not when a 'oman has a great peard; I spy a great peard under her muffler.

Ford. Will you follow, gentlemen? I beseech you, follow; see but the issue of my jealousy. If I cry out thus upon no trail, never trust me when I open again.

Page. Let's obey his humour a little further. Come, gentlemen. [*Exeunt* PAGE, FORD, SHALLOW, and EVANS.]

Mrs. Page. Trust me, he beat him most pitifully.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, by the mass, that he did not; he beat him most unpitifully, methought.

Mrs. Page. I'll have the cudgel hallowed, and hung o'er the altar; it hath done meritorious service.

Mrs. Ford. What think you? May we, with the warrant of womanhood, and the witness of a good conscience, pursue him with any further revenge?

Mrs. Page. The spirit of wantonness is, sure, scared out of him; if the devil have him not in fee-simple, with fine and recovery, he will never, I think, in the way of waste, attempt us again.

Mrs. Ford. Shall we tell our husbands how we have served him?

Mrs. Page. Yes, by all means, if it be but to scrape the figures out of your husband's brains. If they can find in their hearts the poor unvirtuous fat knight shall be any further afflicted, we two will still be the ministers.

Mrs. Ford. I'll warrant they'll have him publicly shamed; and, methinks, there would be no period to the jest should he not be publicly shamed.

Mrs. Page. Come, to the forge with it then, shape it. I would not have things cool. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Enter* Host and BARDOLPH.

Bard. Sir, the Germans desire to have three of your horses. The duke himself will be to-morrow at court, and they are going to meet him.

Host. What duke should that be comes so secretly? I hear not of him in the court. Let me speak with the gentlemen. They speak English?

Bard. Ay, sir, I'll call them to you.

Host. They shall have my horses; but I'll make them pay, I'll sauce them. They have had my house a week at command; I have turned away my other guests. They must come off; I'll sauce them. Come. [*Exeunt.*]



SCENE IV.—*Enter* PAGE, FORD, Mistress PAGE, Mistress Ford, *and* Sir HUGH EVANS.

Evans. 'Tis one of the pest discretions of a 'oman as ever I did look upon.

Page. And did he send you both these letters at an instant?

Mrs. Page. Within a quarter of an hour.

Ford. Pardon me, wife. Henceforth do what thou wilt;

I rather will suspect the sun with cold
Than thee with wantonness. Now doth thy honour stand,

In him that was of late an heretic,
As firm as faith.

Page. 'Tis well, 'tis well; no more.

Be not as extreme in submission
As in offence;

But let our plot go forward. Let our wives
Yet once again, to make us public sport,
Appoint a meeting with this old fat fellow,
Where we may take him and disgrace him for it.

Ford. There is no better way than that they spoke of.

Page. How? to send him word they'll meet him in the park at midnight? Fie, fie; he'll never come.

Evans. You say he has been thrown into the rivers, and has been grievously peaten as an old 'oman; methinks there should be terrors in him that he should not come; methinks his flesh is punished, he shall have no desires.

Page. So think I too.

Mrs. Ford. Devise but how you'll use him when he comes,
And let us two devise to bring him thither.

Mrs. Page. There is an old tale goes that Herne the hunter,
Sometime a keeper here in Windsor forest,
Doth all the winter-time, at still midnight,
Walk round about an oak with great ragg'd horns;

And there he blasts the tree, and takes the cattle ;
And makes milch-kine yield blood, and shakes a
chain

In a most hideous and dreadful manner.

You have heard of such a spirit ; and well you know
The superstitious idle-headed eld
Received, and did deliver to our age,
This tale of Herne the hunter for a truth.

Page. Why, yet there want not many that do fear
In deep of night to walk by this Herne's oak ;
But what of this ?

Mrs. Ford. Marry, this is our device :
That Falstaff at that oak shall meet with us,
Disguised like Herne, with huge horns on his head.

Page. Well, let it not be doubted but he'll come,
And in this shape. When you have brought him
thither,

What shall be done with him ? what is your plot ?

Mrs. Page. That likewise have we thought upon,
and thus :

Nan Page my daughter, and my little son,
And three or four more of their growth, we'll dress
Like urchins, ouphes, and fairies, green and white,
With rounds of waxen tapers on their heads,
And rattles in their hands ; upon a sudden,
As Falstaff, she, and I, are newly met,
Let them from forth a saw-pit rush at once
With some diffused song ; upon their sight,
We two in great amazedness will fly.
Then let them all encircle him about,
And, fairy-like, to-pinch the unclean knight ;
And ask him why that hour of fairy revel
In their so sacred paths he dares to tread
In shape profane.

Mrs. Ford. And till he tell the truth,
Let the supposed fairies pinch him sound,
And burn him with their tapers.

Mrs. Page. The truth being known,
We'll all present ourselves, dishorn the spirit,
And mock him home to Windsor.

Ford. The children must
Be practised well to this, or they'll ne'er do it.

Evans. I will teach the children their behaviours;
and I will pe like a jack-an-apes also, to purn the
knight with my taber.

Ford. That will be excellent. I'll go buy them viz-
ards.

Mrs. Page. My Nan shall be the queen of all the fair-
ies,
Finely attired in a robe of white.

Page. That silk will I go buy; and in that time shall
Master Slender steal my Nan away,
And marry her at Eton. [*Aside.*] Go, send to Fal-
staff straight.

Ford. Nay, I'll to him again in name of Brook.
He'll tell me all his purpose. Sure, he'll come.

Mrs. Page. Fear not you that. Go, get us proper-
ties
And tricking for our fairies.

Evans. Let us apout it. It is admiraple pleasures,
and fery honest knaveries.

[*Exeunt* PAGE, FORD, and EVANS.]

Mrs. Page. Go, Mistress Ford,
Send quickly to Sir John, to know his mind.

[*Exit* Mistress FORD.]

I'll to the doctor; he hath my good-will,
And none but he, to marry with Nan Page.
That Slender, though well-landed, is an idiot;
And he my husband best of all affects.
The doctor is well-money'd, and his friends
Potent at court; he, none but he, shall have her,
Though twenty thousand worthier come to crave her.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—*Enter* Host and SIMPLE.

Host. What wouldst thou have, boor? what, thick-
skin? Speak, breathe, discuss; brief, short, quick,
snap.

Sim. Marry, sir, I come to speak with Sir John Fal-
staff from Master Slender.

Host. There's his chamber, his house, his castle, his standing-bed, and truckle-bed; 'tis painted about with the story of the prodigal, fresh and new. Go, knock and call; he'll speak like an Anthropophaginian unto thee. Knock, I say.

Sim. There's an old woman, a fat woman, gone up into his chamber; I'll be so bold as stay, sir, till she come down. I come to speak with her, indeed.

Host. Ha! a fat woman! The knight may be robbed. I'll call.—Bully knight! Bully Sir John! speak from thy lungs military. Art thou there? It is thine Host, thine Ephesian, calls.

Fal. [*Above.*] How now, mine Host?

Host. Here's a Bohemian-Tartar tarries the coming down of thy fat woman. Let her descend, bully, let her descend; my chambers are honourable. Fie! privacy? fie!

Enter FALSTAFF.

Fal. There was, mine Host, an old fat woman even now with me; but she's gone.

Sim. Pray you, sir, was't not the wise woman of Brentford?

Fal. Ay, marry, was it, mussel-shell. What would you with her?

Sim. My master, sir, my master Slender sent to her, seeing her go through the streets, to know, sir, whether one Nym, sir, that beguiled him of a chain, had the chain or no.

Fal. I spake with the old woman about it.

Sim. And what says she, I pray, sir?

Fal. Marry, she says that the very same man that beguiled Master Slender of his chain cozened him of it.

Sim. I would I could have spoken with the woman herself; I had other things to have spoken with her too, from him.

Fal. What are they? Let us know.

Host. Ay, come; quick.

Sim. I may not conceal them, sir.

Fal. Conceal them, or thou diest.

Sim. Why, sir, they were nothing but about Mistress Anne Page; to know if it were my master's fortune to have her or no.

Fal. 'Tis, 'tis his fortune.

Sim. What, sir?

Fal. To have her—or no. Go; say the woman told me so.

Sim. May I be so bold to say so, sir?

Fal. Ay, Sir Tike; who more bold?

Sim. I thank your worship. I shall make my master glad with these tidings. [*Exit SIMPLE.*]

Host. Thou art clerkly, thou art clerkly, Sir John. Was there a wise woman with thee?

Fal. Ay, that there was, mine Host; one that hath taught me more wit than ever I learned before in my life. And I paid nothing for it neither, but was paid for my learning.

Enter BARDOLPH.

Bard. Out, alas, sir! Cozenage! mere cozenage!

Host. Where be my horses? Speak well of them, varletto.

Bard. Run away with the cozeners: for so soon as I came beyond Eton they threw me off from behind one of them in a slough of mire, and set spurs and away like three German devils, three Doctor Faustuses.

Host. They are gone but to meet the duke, villain. Do not say they be fled. Germans are honest men.

Enter Sir HUGH EVANS.

Evans. Where is mine Host?

Host. What is the matter, sir?

Evans. Have a care of your entertainments. There is a friend of mine come to town tells me there is three cousin-germans that has cozened all the hosts of Reading, of Maidenhead, of Colebrook, of horses and money. I tell you for good-will, look you. You are wise, and full of gibes and vouting stogs; and 'tis not convenient you should be cozened. Fare you well. [*Exit.*]

Enter Doctor CAIUS.

Caius. Vere is mine *Host de Jarterre*?

Host. Here, master doctor, in perplexity and doubtful dilemma.

Caius. I cannot tell vat is dat; but it is tell-a me dat you make grand preparations for a duke *de Jarmany*. By my trot, dere is no duke dat de court is know to come. I tell you for good-vill. Adieu. [*Exit.*]

Host. Hue and cry, villain, go; assist me, knight; I am undone. Fly, run, hue and cry, villain! I am undone. [*Excunt* *Host and* BARDOLPH.]

Fal. I would all the world might be cozened, for I have been cozened and beaten too. If it should come to the ear of the court how I have been transformed, and how my transformation hath been washed and cudgelled, they would melt me out of my fat, drop by drop, and liquor fishermen's boots with me; I warrant they would whip me with their fine wits till I were as crestfallen as a dried pear. I never prospered since I forswore myself at *primero*. Well, if my wind were but long enough to say my prayers, I would repent.—

Enter Mistress QUICKLY.

Now! whence come you?

Quick. From the two parties, forsooth.

Fal. The devil take one party, and his dam the other, and so they shall be both bestowed! I have suffered more for their sakes, more than the villanous inconsistency of man's disposition is able to bear.

Quick. And have not they suffered? Yes, I warrant; speciously one of them. Mistress Ford, good heart, is beaten black and blue that you cannot see a white spot about her.

Fal. What tell'st thou me of black and blue! I was beaten myself into all the colours of the rainbow, and I was like to be apprehended for the witch of Brentford; but that my admirable dexterity of wit, my counterfeiting the action of an old woman, delivered me, the knave

constable had set me i' the stocks, i' the common stocks, for a witch.

Quick. Sir, let me speak with you in your chamber; you shall hear how things go; and, I warrant, to your content. Here is a letter will say somewhat. Good hearts, what ado here is to bring you together! Sure, one of you does not serve Heaven well that you are so crossed.

Fal. Come up into my chamber. [Exeunt.

SCENE VI.—*Enter FENTON and Host.*

Host. Master Fenton, talk not to me—my mind is heavy; I will give over all.

Fent. Yet hear me speak. Assist me in my purpose,

And, as I am a gentleman, I'll give thee
A hundred pound in gold, more than your loss.

Host. I will hear you, Master Fenton; and I will, at the least, keep your counsel.

Fent. From time to time I have acquainted you
With the dear love I bear to fair Anne Page,
Who, mutually, hath answer'd my affection
(So far forth as herself might be her chooser)
Even to my wish. I have a letter from her
Of such contents as you will wonder at;
The mirth whereof so larded with my matter,
That neither, singly, can be manifested
Without the show of both; wherein fat Falstaff
Hath a great scene. The image of the jest

[*Showing the letter.*

I'll show you here at large. Hark, good mine Host.
To-night, at Herne's oak, just 'twixt twelve and one,
Must my sweet Nan present the fairy queen;
The purpose why is here. In which disguise,
While other jests are something rank on foot,
Her father hath commanded her to slip
Away with Slender, and with him at Eton
Immediately to marry. She hath consented.
Now, sir,

Her mother, even strong against that match,
 And firm for Doctor Caius, hath appointed
 That he shall likewise shuffle her away
 While other sports are tasking of their minds,
 And at the deanery, where a priest attends,
 Straight marry her. To this her mother's plot
 She, seemingly obedient, likewise hath
 Made promise to the doctor. Now, thus it rests :
 Her father means she shall be all in white ;
 And in that habit, when Slender sees his time
 To take her by the hand, and bid her go,
 She shall go with him. Her mother hath intended,
 The better to denote her to the doctor
 (For they must all be masqued and vizarded),
 That quaint in green she shall be loose enrobed,
 With ribbons pendent flaring 'bout her head ;
 And when the doctor spies his vantage ripe,
 To pinch her by the hand, and on that token
 The maid hath given consent to go with him.

Host. Which means she to deceive, father or mother ?

Fent. Both, my good Host, to go along with me.
 And here it rests : that you'll procure the vicar
 To stay for me at church, 'twixt twelve and one,
 And, in the lawful name of marrying,
 To give our hearts united ceremony.

Host. Well, husband your device. I'll to the vicar.
 Bring you the maid, you shall not lack a priest.

Fent. So shall I evermore be bound to thee ;
 Besides, I'll make a present recompense. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V

SCENE I.—*Enter* FALSTAFF *and* Mistress QUICKLY.

Fal. Prithee, no more prattling ; go. I'll hold. This is the third time ; I hope good-luck lies in odd numbers. Away, go ; they say there is divinity in odd numbers, either in nativity, chance, or death. Away.

Quick. I'll provide you a chain, and I'll do what I can to get you a pair of horns.





Fal. Away, I say; time wears. Hold up your head and mince.—
 [*Exit* Mistress QUICKLY.]

Enter FORD.

How now, Master Brook? Master Brook, the matter will be known to-night or never. Be you in the park about midnight, at Herne's oak, and you shall see wonders.

Ford. Went you not to her yesterday, sir, as you told me you had appointed?

Fal. I went to her, Master Brook, as you see, like a poor old man; but I came from her, Master Brook, like a poor old woman. That same knave, Ford, her husband, hath the finest mad devil of jealousy in him, Master Brook, that ever governed frenzy. I will tell you. He beat me grievously, in the shape of a woman; for, in the shape of man, Master Brook, I fear not Goliath with a weaver's beam; because I know also life is a shuttle. I am in haste; go along with me; I'll tell you all, Master Brook. Since I plucked geese, played truant, and whipped top, I knew not what 'twas to be beaten till lately. Follow me. I'll tell you strange things of this knave Ford, on whom to-night I will be revenged, and I will deliver his wife into your hand. Follow. Strange things in hand, Master Brook. Follow.
 [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Enter* PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.

Page. Come, come; we'll couch i' the castle-ditch till we see the light of our fairies. Remember, son Slender, my daughter.

Slen. Ay, forsooth; I have spoke with her, and we have a nay-word how to know one another. I come to her in white and cry Mum; she cries Budget; and by that we know one another.

Shal. That's good too. But what needs either your mum or her budget. The white will decipher her well enough. It hath struck ten o'clock.

Page. The night is dark; light and spirits will become it well. Heaven prosper our sport! No man means evil but the devil, and we shall know him by his horns. Let's away; follow me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Enter* MISTRESS PAGE, MISTRESS FORD, and DOCTOR CAIUS.

Mrs. Page. Master doctor, my daughter is in green; when you see your time, take her by the hand, away with her to the deanery, and despatch it quickly. Go before into the park; we two must go together.

Caius. I know vat I have to do. Adieu.

Mrs. Page. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit* CAIUS.] My husband will not rejoice so much at the abuse of Falstaff as he will chafe at the doctor's marrying my daughter. But 'tis no matter. Better a little chiding than a great deal of heart-break.

Mrs. Ford. Where is Nan now, and her troop of fairies, and the Welsh devil Hugh?

Mrs. Page. They are all couched in a pit hard by Herne's oak, with obscured lights; which at the very instant of Falstaff's and our meeting, they will at once display to the night.

Mrs. Ford. That cannot choose but amaze him.

Mrs. Page. If he be not amazed he will be mocked; if he be amazed he will every way be mocked.

Mrs. Ford. We'll betray him finely.

Mrs. Page. Against such lewdsters and their lechery, Those that betray them do no treachery.

Mrs. Ford. The hour draws on. To the oak, to the oak! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Enter* SIR HUGH EVANS and Fairies.

Evans. Trib, trib, fairies; come; and rememper your parts. Be pold, I pray you; follow me into the pit; and when I give the watch-'ords, do as I pid you. Come, come; trib, trib. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. — *Enter FALSTAFF, disguised, with a buck's head on.*

Fal. The Windsor bell hath struck twelve; the minute draws on. Now, the hot-blooded gods assist me! Remember, Jove, thou wast a bull for thy Europa; love set on thy horns. Oh, powerful love! that in some respects makes a beast a man; in some other, a man a beast. You were also, Jupiter, a swan, for the love of Leda. Oh, omnipotent love! how near the god drew to the complexion of a goose! A fault done first in the form of a beast. O Jove, a beastly fault! and then another fault in the semblance of a fowl; think on't, Jove; a foul fault. When gods have hot backs, what shall poor men do? For me, I am here a Windsor stag; and the fattest, I think, i' the forest. Send me a cool rut-time, Jove, or who can blame me to piss my tallow? Who comes here? my doe?

Enter Mistress FORD and Mistress PAGE.

Mrs. Ford. Sir John? art thou there, my deer? my male deer?

Fal. My doe with the black scut? Let the sky rain potatoes; let it thunder to the tune of Green Sleeves; hail kissing-comfits, and snow eringoes; let there come a tempest of provocation, I will shelter me here.

[Embracing her.]

Mrs. Ford. Mistress Page is come with me, sweetheart.

Fal. Divide me like a bribe-buck, each a haunch. I will keep my sides to myself, my shoulders for the fellow of this walk, and my horns I bequeath your husbands. Am I a woodman? Ha! Speak I like Herne the hunter? Why, now is Cupid a child of conscience; he makes restitution. As I am a true spirit, welcome!

[Noise within.]

Mrs. Page. Alas! what noise?

Mrs. Ford. Heaven forgive our sins!

Fal. What should this be?

Mrs. Ford. } Away, away. [*They run off.*
Mrs. Page. }

Fal. I think the devil will not have me damned, lest the oil that is in me should set hell on fire; he would never else cross me thus.

Enter Sir HUGH EVANS, *like a satyr*; Mistress QUICKLY and PISTOL; ANNE PAGE, *as the Fairy Queen, attended by her brother and others, dressed like fairies, with waxen tapers on their heads.*

Quick. Fairies black, grey, green, and white,
 You moonshine revellers, and shades of night,
 You orphan-heirs of fixed destiny,
 Attend your office and your quality.—
 Crier Hobgoblin, make the fairy o-yes.

Pist. Elves, list your names; silence, you airy toys.
 Cricket, to Windsor chimneys shalt thou leap;
 Where fires thou find'st unraked and hearths unswept,
 There pinch the maids as blue as bilberry.
 Our radiant queen hates sluts and sluttery.

Fal. They are fairies; he that speaks to them shall die.

I'll wink and couch. No man their works must eye.

[*Lies down upon his face.*

Evans. Where's Pede? Go you, and where you find a maid

That, ere she sleep, has thrice her prayers said,
 Raise up the organs of her fantasy,
 Sleep she as sound as careless infancy;
 Put those as sleep, and think not on their sins,
 Pinch them, arms, legs, packs, shoulders, sides, and shins.

Quick. About, about;
 Search Windsor castle, elves, within and out.
 Strew good-luck, oupes, on every sacred room,
 That it may stand till the perpetual doom,
 In state as wholesome as in state 'tis fit,
 Worthy the owner, and the owner it.
 The several chairs of order look you scour

With juice of balm, and every precious flower.
 Each fair instalment, coat, and several crest,
 With loyal blazon evermore be blest!
 And nightly, meadow-fairies, look you sing,
 Like to the Garter's compass, in a ring.
 The expressure that it bears, green let it be,
 More fertile-fresh than all the field to see;
 And *Honi soit qui mal y pense* write,
 In emerald tufts, flowers purple, blue, and white.
 Like sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery,
 Buckled below fair knighthood's bending knee;
 Fairies use flowers for their charactery.
 Away; disperse. But 'till 'tis one o'clock,
 Our dance of custom, round about the oak
 Of Herne the hunter, let us not forget.

Evans. Pray you, lock hand in hand; yourselves in
 order see;

And twenty glow-worms shall our lanterns be,
 To guide our measure round about the tree.
 Put stay; I smell a man of middle earth.

Fal. Heaven defend me from that Welsh fairy, lest
 he transform me to a piece of cheese!

Pist. Vile worm, thou wast o'erlook'd even in thy
 birth.

Quick. With trial-fire touch me his finger-end:
 If he be chaste, the flame will back descend,
 And turn him to no pain; but if he start,
 It is the flesh of a corrupted heart.

Pist. A trial, come.

Evans. Come, will this wood take fire?

[*They burn him with their tapers.*]

Fal. Oh, oh, oh!

Quick. Corrupt, corrupt, and tainted in desire!
 About him, fairies; sing a scornful rhyme;
 And, as you trip, still pinch him to your time.

Evans. It is right; indeed, he is full of lecheries and
 iniquity.

SONG.

Fie on sinful fantasy!
Fie on lust and luxury!

*Lust is but a bloody fire,
Kindled with unchaste desire.
Fed in heart whose flames aspire,
As thoughts do blow them higher and higher.
Pinch him, fairies, mutually;
Pinch him for his villany;
Pinch him, and burn him, and turn him about,
Till candles, and starlight, and moonshine be out.*

[*During this song the fairies pinch FALSTAFF. Doctor CAIUS comes one way, and steals away a fairy in green; SLENDER another way, and takes off a fairy in white; and FENTON comes, and steals away ANNE PAGE. A noise of hunting is made within. All the fairies run away. FALSTAFF pulls off his buck's head, and rises.*

*Enter PAGE, FORD, Mistress PAGE, and Mistress FORD.
They lay hold on him.*

Page. Nay, do not fly. I think we have watch'd you now;

Will none but Herne the hunter serve your turn?

Mrs. Page. I pray you, come; hold up the jest no higher.—

Now, good Sir John, how like you Windsor wives? See you these, husband? Do not these fair yokes Become the forest better than the town?

Ford. Now, sir, who's a cuckold now?—Master Brook, Falstaff's a knave, a cuckoldy knave; here are his horns, Master Brook. And, Master Brook, he hath enjoyed nothing of Ford's but his buck-basket, his cudgel, and twenty pounds of money, which must be paid to Master Brook; his horses are arrested for it, Master Brook.

Mrs. Ford. Sir John, we have had ill-luck; we could never meet. I will never take you for my love again, but I will always count you my deer.

Fal. I do begin to perceive that I am made an ass.

Ford. Ay, and an ox too; both the proofs are extant.

Fal. And these are not fairies? I was three or four

times in the thought they were not fairies. And yet the guiltiness of my mind, the sudden surprise of my powers, drove the grossness of the foppery into a received belief, in despite of the teeth of all rhyme and reason, that they were fairies. See now how wit may be made a Jack-a-lent, when 'tis upon ill employment?

Evans. Sir John Falstaff, serve Got, and leave your desires, and fairies will not pinse you.

Ford. Well said, Fairy Hugh.

Evans. And leave you your jealousies, too, I pray you.

Ford. I will never mistrust my wife again till thou art able to woo her in good English.

Fal. Have I laid my brain in the sun, and dried it, that it wants matter to prevent so gross o'erreaching as this? Am I ridden with a Welsh goat too? Shall I have a coxcomb of frize? 'Tis time I were choked with a piece of toasted cheese.

Evans. Seese is not good to give putter; your pelly is all putter.

Fal. Seese and putter! Have I lived to stand at the taunt of one that makes fritters of English? This is enough to be the decay of lust and late-walking through the realm.

Mrs. Page. Why, Sir John, do you think, though we would have thrust virtue out of our hearts by the head and shoulders, and have given ourselves without scruple to hell, that ever the devil could have made you our delight?

Ford. What, a hodge-pudding? a bag of flax?

Mrs. Page. A puffed man?

Page. Old, cold, withered, and of intolerable entrails?

Ford. And one that is as slanderous as Satan?

Page. And as poor as Job?

Ford. And as wicked as his wife?

Evans. And given to fornications and to taverns, and sack and wine, and metheglins, and to drinkings, and swearings and starings, pribbles and prabbles?

Fal. Well, I am your theme; you have the start of me; I am dejected; I am not able to answer the Welsh

flannel; ignorance itself is a plummet o'er me; use me as you will.

Ford. Marry, sir, we'll bring you to Windsor, to one Master Brook, that you have cozened of money, to whom you should have been a pander: over and above that you have suffered, I think to repay that money will be a biting affliction.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, husband, let that go to make amends;

Forgive that sum, and so we'll all be friends.

Ford. Well, here's my hand; all's forgiven at last.

Page. Yet be cheerful, knight. Thou shalt eat a posset to-night at my house, where I will desire thee to laugh at my wife, that now laughs at thee. Tell her Master Slender hath married her daughter.

Mrs. Page. Doctors doubt that. If Anne Page be my daughter, she is by this Doctor Caius' wife. [*Aside.*]

Enter SLENDER.

Slen. Whoo! ho! ho! Father Page.

Page. Son! how now? how now, son? have you despatched?

Slen. Despatched! I'll make the best in Gloucestershire know on't; would I were hanged, la, else.

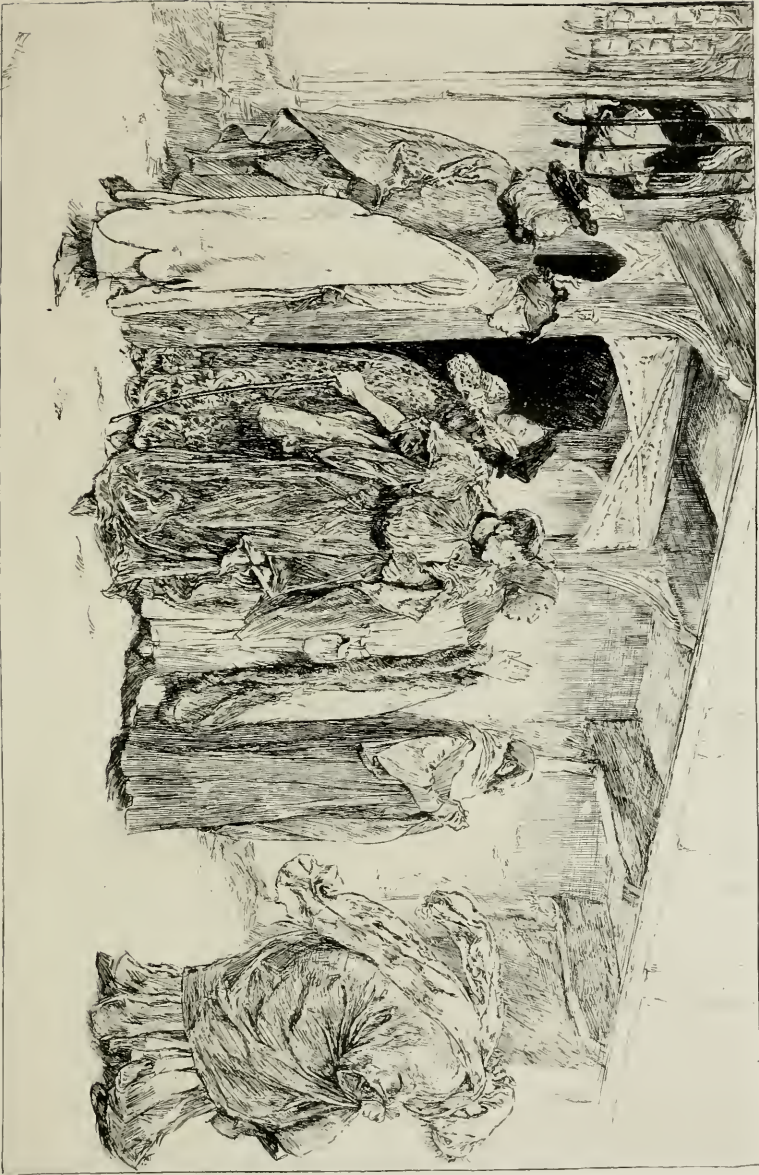
Page. Of what, son?

Slen. I came yonder at Eton to marry Mistress Anne Page, and she's a great lubberly boy. If it had not been i' the church I would have swunged him, or he should have swunged me. If I did not think it had been Anne Page, would I might never stir, and 'tis a postmaster's boy.

Page. Upon my life, then, you took the wrong.

Slen. What need you tell me that? I think so, when I took a boy for a girl. If I had been married to him, for all he was in woman's apparel, I would not have had him.

Page. Why, this is your own folly. Did not I tell you how you should know my daughter by her garments?



Slender. I went to her in white, and cried Mum, and she cried Budget, as Anne and I had appointed; and yet it was not Anne, but a postmaster's boy.

Evans. Jeshu! Master Slender, cannot you see but marry poys?

Page. Oh, I am vexed at heart. What shall I do?

Mrs. Page. Good George, be not angry. I knew of your purpose; turned my daughter into green; and, indeed, she is now with the doctor at the deanery, and there married.

Enter CAIUS.

Caius. Vere is Mistress Page? By gar, I am cozened. I ha' married *un garçon*, a boy; *un paisan*, by gar, a boy. It is not Anne Page. By gar, I am cozened.

Mrs. Page. Why, did you take her in green?

Caius. Ay, by gar, and 'tis a boy; by gar, I'll raise all Windsor. [*Exit CAIUS.*]

Ford. This is strange! Who hath got the right Anne?

Page. My heart misgives me. Here comes Master Fenton.

Enter FENTON and ANNE PAGE.

How now, Master Fenton?

Anne. Pardon, good father! Good my mother, pardon!

Page. Now, mistress? how chance you went not with Master Slender?

Mrs. Page. Why went you not with master doctor, maid?

Fent. You do amaze her. Hear the truth of it. You would have married her most shamefully, Where there was no proportion held in love. The truth is, she and I, long since contracted, Are now so sure that nothing can dissolve us. The offence is holy that she hath committed; And this deceit loses the name of craft, ❧ disobedience, or unduteous title;

Since therein she doth evitate and shun
 A thousand irreligious cursed hours
 Which forced marriage would have brought upon her.

Ford. Stand not amazed. Here is no remedy.

In love, the heavens themselves do guide the state ;
 Money buys lands, and wives are sold by fate.

Fal. I am glad, though you have ta'en a special stand
 to strike at me, that your arrow hath glanced.

Page. Well, what remedy? Fenton, Heaven give
 thee joy !

What cannot be eschewed, must be embraced.

Fal. When night-dogs run, all sorts of deer are
 chased.

Evans. I will dance and eat plums at your wedding.

Mrs. Page. Well, I will muse no further.—Master
 Fenton,

Heaven give you many, many merry days !
 Good husband, let us every one go home,
 And laugh this sport o'er by a country fire ;
 Sir John and all.

Ford. Let it be so.—Sir John,

To Master Brook you yet shall hold your word ;
 For he to-night shall lie with Mistress Ford. [*Exeunt.*]

The Winter's Tale

PERSONS REPRESENTED

LEONTES, *King of Sicilia.*
MAMILLIUS, *his Son.*
CAMILLO
ANTIGONUS
CLEOMENES } *Sicilian Lords.*
DION
Another Sicilian Lord.
ROGERO, *a Sicilian Gentleman.*
An Attendant *on the young Prince Mamillius.*
Officers *of a Court of Judicature.*
POLIXENES, *King of Bohemia.*
FLORIZEL, *his Son.*
ARCHIDAMUS, *a Bohemian Lord.*
A Mariner.
Gaoler.
An old Shepherd, *reputed Father of Perdita.*
Clown, *his Son.*
Servant *to the old Shepherd.*
AUTOLYCUS, *a Rogue.*
Time, *as Chorus.*
HERMIONE, *Queen to Leontes.*
PERDITA, *Daughter to Leontes and Hermione.*
PAULINA, *Wife to Antigonus.*
EMILIA, *a Lady* } *attending the Queen.*
Two other Ladies }
MOPSA } *Shepherdesses.*
DORCAS }

Lords. Ladies, and Attendants ; Satyrs for a
Dance, Shepherds, Shepherdesses, Guards,
&c.

SCENE, sometimes in Sicilia, sometimes in
Bohemia.

The Winter's Tale

ACT I

SCENE I.—*Enter CAMILLO and ARCHIDAMUS.*

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.

Cam. I think this coming summer the King of Sicilia means to pay Bohemia the visitation which he justly owes him.

Arch. Wherein our entertainment shall shame us: we will be justified in our loves; for, indeed—

Cam. 'Beseech you—

Arch. 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.

Cam. You pay a great deal too dear for what's given freely.

Arch. Believe me, I speak as my understanding instructs me, and as mine honesty puts it to utterance.

Cam. Sicilia cannot show himself overkind to Bohemia. They were trained together in their childhoods; and there rooted betwixt them then such an affection that 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 attornied, 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!

Arch. 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.

Cam. I very well agree with you in the hopes of him. It is a gallant child; one that, indeed, physicks the subject, makes old hearts fresh. They that went on crutches ere he was born desire yet their life to see him a man.

Arch. Would they else be content to die?

Cam. Yes; if there were no other excuse why they should desire to live.

Arch. If the king had no son they would desire to live on crutches till he had one. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Enter* LEONTES, POLIXENES, HERMIONE, MAMILLIUS, CAMILLO, *and* Attendants.

Pol. Nine changes of the wat'ry star have been
The shepherd's note since we have left our throne
Without a burden. Time as long again
Would be fill'd 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 more
That go before it.

Leon. Stay your thanks awhile,
And pay them when you part.

Pol. 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.

Leon. We are tougher, brother,
Than you can put us to't.

Pol. No longer stay.

Leon. One seven-night longer.

Pol. Very sooth, to-morrow.

Leon. We'll part the time between's then; and in
that

I'll no gainsaying.

Pol. 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.

Leon. Tongue-tied, our queen? Speak you.

Her. I had thought, sir, to have held my peace until
You had 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.

Leon. Well said, Hermione.

Her. 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 [*to POLIXENES*] I'll advent-
ure

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 his parting; yet, good deed, Leontes,
I love thee not a jar o' the clock behind
What lady she her lord.—You'll stay?

Pol. No, madam.

Her. Nay, but you will?

Pol. I may not, verily.

Her. 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 is
 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.

Pol. Your guest, then, madam.
 To be your prisoner should import offending;
 Which is for me less easy to commit
 Than you to punish.

Her. 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.

Pol. 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.

Her. Was not my lord the verier wag o' the two?

Pol. 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.

Her. By this we gather
 You have tripp'd since.

Pol. Oh, my most sacred lady,
 Temptations have since then been born to us; for



In those unfledged days was my wife a girl;
Your precious self had not then cross'd the eyes
Of my young playfellow.

Her. 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.

Leon. Is he won yet?

Her. He'll stay, my lord.

Leon. At my request he would not.
Hermione, my dearest, thou never spok'st
To better purpose.

Her. Never?

Leon. Never but once.

Her. What, have I twice said well? When was't
before?

I prithee tell me. Cram us with praise, and make us
As fat as tame things. One good deed, dying tongueless
Slaughters a thousand, waiting upon that.
Our praises are our wages. You may ride us
With one soft kiss a thousand furlongs ere
With spur we heat 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. Oh, would her name were Grace!
But once before I spoke to the purpose. When?
Nay, let me have 't; I long.

Leon. 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 forever.

Her. It is grace, indeed.
Why, lo you now, I have spoke to the purpose twice:
The one forever earn'd a royal husband;
The other for some while a friend.

[Giving her hand to POLIXENES.]

Leon. [*Aside.*] Too hot, too hot.
 To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods.
 I have *tremor cordis* on me—my heart dances;
 But not for joy—not joy. This entertainment
 May a free face put on; derive a liberty
 From heartiness, from bounty, fertile bosom,
 And well become the agent. It may, I grant.
 But to be padding palms and pinching fingers,
 As now they are, and making practised smiles,
 As in a looking-glass, and then to sigh, as 'twere
 'The mort o' the deer—oh, that is entertainment
 My bosom likes not, nor my brows.—Mamillius,
 Art thou my boy?

Mam. Ay, my good lord.

Leon. I' fecks?
 Why, that's my bawcock. What, hast smutch'd thy
 nose?

They say it's 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

[*Observing* POLIXENES and HERMIONE.

Upon his palm?—How now, you wanton calf?
 Art thou my calf?

Mam. Yes, if you will, my lord.

Leon. 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'erdyed 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;
 Communicat'st with dreams—(how can this be?)
 With what's unreal thou coactive art,

And fellow'st nothing. Then, 'tis very credent,
 Thou may'st 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.

Pol. What means Sicilia?

Her. He something seems unsettled.

Pol. How, my lord?
 What cheer? How is 't with you, best brother?

Her. You look
 As if you held a brow of much distraction.
 Are you moved, my lord?

Leon. 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, methought 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?

Mam. No, my lord, I'll fight.

Leon. You will? Why, happy man be his dole!—My
 brother,
 Are you so fond of your young prince as we
 Do seem to be of ours?

Pol. 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.

Leon. So stands this squire
 Officed with me. We two will walk, my lord,
 And leave you to your graver steps.—Hermione,
 How thou lov'st 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.

Her. If you would seek us,
We are yours i' the garden. Shall's attend you there ?

Leon. 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!

[*Aside; observing POLIXENES and HERMIONE.*
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—

[*Exeunt POLIXENES, HERMIONE, and Attendants.*

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 his 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's 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 it ;
It will let in and out the enemy,
With bag and baggage. Many thousand of us
Have the disease, and feel 't not.—How now, boy ?

Mam. I am like you, they say.

Leon. Why, that's some comfort.—

What! Camillo there?

Cam. Ay, my good lord.

Leon. Go play, Mamillius; thou'rt an honest man.—

[*Exit* MAMILLIUS.]

Camillo, this great sir will yet stay longer.

Cam. You had much ado to make his anchor hold;
When you cast out, it still came home.

Leon. Didst note it?

Cam. He would not stay at your petitions; made
His business more material.

Leon. 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?

Cam. At the good queen's entreaty.

Leon. At the queen's, be 't. Good, should be perti-
nent?

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 headpiece extraordinary? Lower messes.
Perchance, are to this business purblind: say.

Cam. Business, my lord? I think, most understand
Bohemia stays here longer.

Leon. Ha?

Cam. Stays here longer.

Leon. Ay, but why?

Cam. To satisfy your highness and the entreaties
Of our most gracious mistress.

Leon. 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.

Cam. Be it forbid, my lord !

Leon. To bide upon 't. Thou art not honest ; or,
If thou inclin'st 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 see'st a game play'd home, the rich stake drawn,
And tak'st it all for jest.

Cam. 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 played the fool, it was my negligence,
Not weighing well the end ; if ever fearful
To do a thing where I the issue doubted,
Whereof 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.

Leon. Have 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 it, and justify it.

Cam. 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.

Leon. Is whispering nothing ?
Is leaning cheek to cheek, is meeting noses,
Kissing with inside lip, stopping the career
Of laughter 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.

Cam. Good my lord, be cured
Of this diseased opinion, and betimes ;
For 'tis most dangerous.

Leon. Say it be ; 'tis true.

Cam. No, no, my lord.

Leon. 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.

Cam. Who does infect her ?

Leon. Why, he that wears her like her medal, hang-
ing
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 cup-bearer—whom I from meaner form
 Have bench'd and rear'd to worship; who may'st see
 Plainly, as heaven sees earth, and earth sees heaven,
 How I am galled—might'st bespice a cup,
 To give mine enemy a lasting wink;
 Which draught to me were cordial.

Cam. Sir, my lord,

I could do this, and that with no rash potion,
 But with a ling'ring 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—

Leon. Make 't 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?

Cam. 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.

Leon. Thou dost advise me

Even so as I mine own course have set down.
 I'll give no blemish to her honour, none.

Cam. 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 cup-bearer;



If from me he have wholesome beverage,
Account me not your servant.

Leon. This is all;
Do 't, and thou hast the one half of my heart;
Do 't not, thou split'st thine own.

Cam. I'll do 't, my lord.

Leon. I will seem friendly, as thou hast advised me.

[*Exit.*

Cam. Oh, 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 villainy 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.

Enter POLIXENES.

Pol. This is strange! Methinks
My favour here begins to warp. Not speak?—
Good-day, Camillo.

Cam. Hail, most royal sir!

Pol. What is the news i' the court?

Cam. None rare, my lord.

Pol. 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,
Waffing 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 changes thus his manners.

Cam. I dare not know, my lord.

Pol. 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 it.

Cam. 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.

Pol. 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 behoove my knowledge
Thereof to be inform'd, imprison it not
In ignorant concealment.

Cam. I may not answer.

Pol. 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.

Cam. Sir, I'll 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.

Pol. On, good Camillo.

Cam. I am appointed him to murder you.

Pol. By whom, Camillo?

Cam. By the king.

Pol. For what?

Cam. He thinks, nay, with all confidence he swears,

As he hath seen 't, or been an instrument
To vice you to 't, that you have touch'd his queen
Forbiddenly.

Pol. Oh, 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!

Cam. 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.

Pol. How should this grow?

Cam. 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.

Pol. I do believe thee:
I saw his heart in his 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.

Cam. It is in mine authority to command
The keys of all the posterns. Please your highness
To take the urgent hour. Come, sir, away. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II

SCENE I.—*Enter* HERMIONE, MAMILLIUS, *and* Ladies.

Her. Take the boy to you: he so troubles me
'Tis past enduring.

1 Lady. Come, my gracious lord,
Shall I be your playfellow?

Mam. No, I'll none of you.

1 Lady. Why, my sweet lord?

Mam. You'll kiss me hard; and speak to me as if I
were a baby still.—I love you better.

2 Lady. And why so, my lord?

Mam. 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 half-moon made with a pen.

2 *Lady.* Who taught you this?

Mam. I learn'd it out of women's faces.—Pray now
What colour are your eyebrows?

1 *Lady.* Blue, my lord.

Mam. Nay, that's a mock. I've seen a lady's nose
That has been blue, but not her eyebrows.

2 *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.

1 *Lady.* She is spread of late

Into a goodly bulk. Good time encounter her!

Her. What wisdom stirs amongst you? Come, sir,
now

I am for you again. Pray you, sit by us
And tell 's a tale.

Mam. Merry or sad shall 't be?

Her. As merry as you will.

Mam. A sad tale's best for winter.

I have one of sprites and goblins.

Her. Let's have that, sir.

Come on, sit down. Come on, and do your best
To fright me with your sprites : you're powerful at it.

Mam. There was a man—

Her. Nay, come, sit down ; then on.

Mam. —dwelt by a church-yard. I will tell it softly ;
Yon crickets shall not hear it.

Her. Come on, then,

And give 't me in mine ear.

Enter LEONTES, ANTIGONUS, Lords, and others.

Leon. Was he met there? his train? Camillo with
him?

1 *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.

Leon. How bless'd 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-employed 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?

Lord. By his great authority,
 Which often hath no less prevail'd than so
 On your command.

Leon. 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.

Her. What is this, sport?

Leon. 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.

Her. But I'd say he had not,
 And I'll be sworn you would believe my saying
 Howe'er you lean to the nayward.

Leon. You, my lords,
 Look on her, mark her well; be but about
 To say she is a goodly lady, and
 The justice of your hearts 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. Oh, I am out,
That mercy does ; for calumny will sear
Virtue itself : these shrugs, these hums, and has,
When you have said she's goodly, come between,
Ere you can say she's honest. But be it known,
From him that has most cause to grieve it should
be,

She's an adultrous.

Her. 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.

Leon. You have mistook, my lady,
Polixenes for Leontes. Oh, 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 adultrous ; 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-swarver, even as bad as those
That vulgars give bold titles ; ay, and privy
To this their late escape.

Her. 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 thoroughly then to say
You did mistake.

Leon. No ; if I mistake
In those foundations which I build upon,
The centre is not big enough to bear
A schoolboy's top.—Away with her to prison.

He who shall speak for her is afar off guilty
But that he speaks.

Her. 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!

Leon. [*To the Guards.*] Shall I be heard?

Her. 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 mis-
tress

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.

Leon. Go, do our bidding; hence.

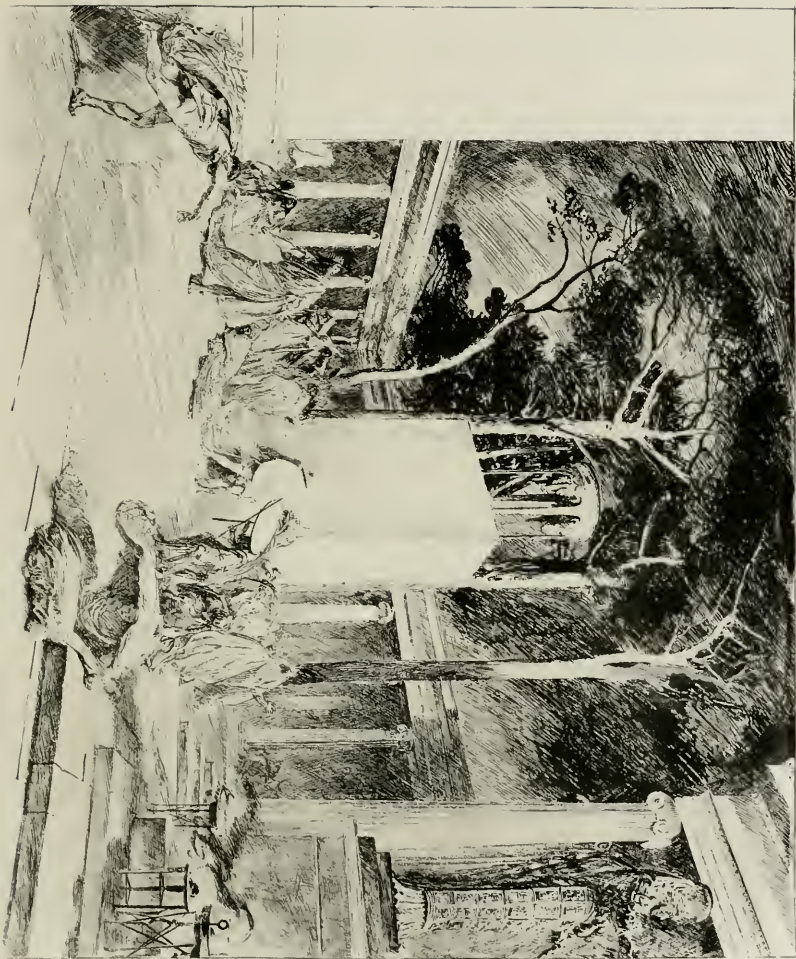
[*Exeunt Queen and Ladies.*]

1 Lord. 'Beseech your highness, call the queen again.

Ant. Be certain what you do, sir, lest your justice
Prove violence; in the which three great ones suffer:
Yourself, your queen, your son.

1 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.

Ant. 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 further trust her;



For every inch of woman in the world,
Ay, every dram of woman's flesh, is false,
If she be.

Leon. Hold your peaces.

1 Lord. Good my lord—

Ant. 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 them 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.

Leon. 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.

Ant. If it be so,
We need no grave to bury honesty;
There's not a gram of it the face to sweeten
Of the whole dungy earth.

Leon. What! lack I credit?

1 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.

Leon. 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 as truth, like us—inform yourselves,
We need no more of your advice. The matter,
The loss, the gain, the ord'ring on 't, is all
Properly ours.

Ant. And I wish, my liege,
You had only in your silent judgment tried it
Without more overture.

Leon. 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 despatch'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?

Lord. Well done, my lord.

Leon. 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.

Ant. [*Aside.*] To laughter, as I take it,
If the good truth were known. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Enter PAULINA and Attendants.*

Paul. The keeper of the prison—call to him;
[*Exit an Attendant.*]

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,

Re-enter Attendant, with the Keeper.

You know me, do you not ?

Keep. For a worthy lady,
And one whom much I honour.

Paul. Pray you, then,
Conduct me to the queen.

Keep. I may not, madam ; to the contrary
I have express commandment.

Paul. Here's ado,
To lock up honesty and honour from
The access of gentle visitors !—Is it lawful,
Pray you, to see her women ? any of them ?
Emilia ?

Keep. So please you, madam, to put
Apart these your attendants, I shall bring
Emilia forth.

Paul. I pray now, call her.
Withdraw yourselves. [*Exeunt Attendants.*]

Keep. And, madam,
I must be present at your conference.

Paul. Well, be it so, prithee. [*Exit Keeper.*]
Here's such ado to make no stain a stain
As passes colouring.—

Re-enter Keeper, with EMILIA.

Dear gentlewoman, how fares our gracious lady ?

Emil. As well as one so great, and so forlorn,
May hold together. On her frights and griefs
(Which never tender lady hath borne greater)
She is, something before her time, deliver'd.

Paul. A boy ?

Emil. 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.

Paul. I dare be sworn.
These dangerous, unsafe lunes o' 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 th' loudest. We do not know
 How he may soften at the sight o' the child ;
 The silence often of pure innocence
 Persuades when speaking fails.

Emil. 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.

Paul. Tell her, Emilia,
 I'll use that tongue I have. If wit flow from it
 As boldness from my bosom, let it not be doubted
 I shall do good.

Emil. Now be you blest for it !
 I'll to the queen. Please you, come something nearer.

Keep. Madam, if 't please the queen to send the babe,
 I know not what I shall incur to pass it,
 Having no warrant.

Paul. 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,
 Nor guilty of, the anger of the king ;
 If any be, the trespass of the queen.

Keep. I do believe it.

Paul. Do not you fear : upon
 Mine honour, I will stand 'twixt you and danger.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Enter* LEONTES, ANTIGONUS, Lords, and other Attendants.

Leon. 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 aduress; 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?

I Attend. [*Advancing.*]

My lord!

Leon. How does the boy?

I Attend.

He took good rest to-night;
'Tis hoped his sickness is discharged.

Leon.

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. [*Exit Attendant.*—Fie, fie! no
thought of him;

The very 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.

Enter PAULINA, with a Child.

I Lord.

You must not enter.

Paul. 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.

Ant. That's enough.

1 Attend. Madam, he hath not slept to-night; com-
manded

None should come at him.

Paul. 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 med'cinal as true;
Honest as either, to purge him of that humour
That presses him from sleep.

Leon. What noise there, ho?

Paul. No noise, my lord, but needful conference
About some gossips for your highness.

Leon. How?—

Away with that audacious lady. Antigonus,
I charged thee that she should not come about me;
I knew she would.

Ant. I told her so, my lord,
On your displeasure's peril, and on mine,
She should not visit you.

Leon. What, canst not rule her?

Paul. 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.

Ant. Lo you now, you hear!
When she will take the rein, I let her run;
But she'll not stumble.

Paul. 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.

Leon. Good queen!

Paul. 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.

Leon. Force her hence.

Paul. 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.

[Laying down the Child.

Leon. Out!

A mankind witch! Hence with her, out o' door.
 A most intelligencing bawd!

Paul. 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.

Leon. Traitors!

Will you not push her out? Give her the bastard.—
 Thou dotard [to ANTIGONUS], thou art woman-tired,
 unroosted

By thy dame Partlet here. Take up the bastard;
 Take 't up, I say; give 't to thy crone.

Paul. Forever

Unvenerable be thy hands if thou
 Tak'st up the princess by that forced baseness
 Which he has put upon 't!

Leon. He dreads his wife.

Paul. So I would you did; then 'twere past all
 doubt

You'd call your children yours.

Leon. A nest of traitors!

Ant. I am none, by this good light.

Paul. 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.

Leon. 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.

Paul. 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 his 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!

Leon. A gross hag!—
And, lozel, thou art worthy to be hang'd,
That wilt not stay her tongue.

Ant. Hang all the husbands
That cannot do that feat, you'll leave yourself
Hardly one subject.

Leon. Once more, take her hence.

Paul. A most unworthy and unnatural lord
Can do no more.

Leon. I'll have thee burn'd.

Paul. I care not.

It is a 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 sa-
vours



Of tyranny, and will ignoble make you,
Yea, scandalous to the world.

Leon. 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.

Paul. 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 need 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. [*Exit.*]

Leon. 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 sett'st on thy wife.

Ant. I did not, sir.
These lords, my noble fellows, if they please,
Can clear me in 't.

1 Lord. We can; my royal liege,
He is not guilty of her coming hither.

Leon. You are liars all.

1 Lord. 'Beseech your highness, give us better credit.
We have always truly served you; and beseech
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.

Leon. 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 ;

[*To* ANTIGONUS.]

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 gray—what will you adventure
To save this brat's life ?

Ant. Anything, 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 ; anything possible.

Leon. It shall be possible. Swear by this sword
Thou wilt perform my bidding.

Ant. I will, my lord.

Leon. Mark, and perform it (seest 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 liegeman 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.

Ant. 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 doth require ! and blessing,
Against this cruelty, fight on thy side,
Poor thing, condemn'd to loss ! [*Exit with the Child.*]

Leon. No, I'll not rear
Another's issue.

1 Attend. 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.

1 Lord. So please you, sir, their speed
Hath been beyond account.

Leon. 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 burden to me. Leave me,
And think upon my bidding. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III

SCENE I.—*Enter CLEOMENES and DION.*

Cleo. 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. Oh, the sacrifice!
How ceremonious, solemn, and unearthly
It was i' the offering!

Cleo. 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—oh, be 't so!—

As it hath been to us, rare, pleasant, speedy,
The time is worth the use on 't.

Cleo. 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! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—LEONTES, Lords, and Officers *appear properly seated.*

Leon. This session (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.

Off. It is his highness' pleasure that the queen
Appear in person here in court.—Silence!

HERMIONE *is brought in, guarded*; PAULINA and Ladies
attending.

Leon. Read the indictment.

Off. Hermione, queen to the worthy Leontes, King
of Sicilia, thou art here accused and arraigned of high
treason, in committing adultery with Polixenes, King of
Bohemia, and conspiring with Camillo to take away
the life of our sovereign lord the king, thy royal hus-
band; the pretence whereof being by circumstances
partly laid open, thou, Hermione, contrary to the faith
and allegiance of a true subject, didst counsel and aid
them, for their better safety, to fly away by night.

Her. 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!

Leon. I ne'er heard yet
 That any of these bolder vices wanted
 Less impudence to gainsay what they did
 Than to perform it first.

Her. That's true enough,
 Though 'tis a saying, sir, not due to me.

Leon. You will not own it.

Her. 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.

Leon. You knew of his departure, as you know
 What you have underta'en to do in his absence.

Her. Sir,
 You speak a language that I understand not.
 My life stands in the level of your dreams,
 Which I'll lay down.

Leon. 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.

Her. 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
 Proclaim'd 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 rigour, and not law.—Your honours all,
 I do refer me to the oracle;
 Apollo be my judge.

Lord. This your request
 Is altogether just; therefore bring forth,
 And in Apollo's name, his oracle.

[*Exeunt certain Officers.*]

Her. The Emperor of Russia was my father.
 Oh 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!

Re-enter Officers with CLEOMENES and DION.

Off. You here shall swear upon this sword of justice

That you, Cleomenes and Dion, have
 Been both at Delphos; and from thence have brought
 This 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.

Cleo. } All this we swear.
Dion. }

Leon. Break up the seals and read.

Off. [*Reads.*] Hermione is chaste, Polixenes blameless, Camillo a true subject, Leontes a jealous tyrant, his innocent babe truly begotten; and the king shall live without an heir if that which is lost be not found.

Lords. Now blessed be the great Apollo!

Her. Praised!

Leon. Hast thou read truth?

Off. Ay, my lord; even so
 As it is here set down.

Leon. There is no truth at all i' the oracle.
 The sessions shall proceed; this is mere falsehood.

Enter a Servant, hastily.

Serv. My lord the king, the king!

Leon. What is the business?

Serv. Oh, sir, I shall be hated to report it!
 The prince your son, with mere conceit and fear
 Of the queen's speed, is gone.

Leon. How! gone?

Serv. Is dead.

Leon. Apollo's angry; and the heavens themselves
 Do strike at my injustice.
 How now there? [*HERMIONE faints.*]

Paul. This news is mortal to the queen. Look
 down,
 And see what death is doing.

Leon. 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

[*Excunt PAULINA and Ladies, with HERMIONE.*]
 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 it, and being done. He, most humane
 And fill'd with honour to my kingly guest
 Unclasp'd my practice; quit his fortunes here,
 Which you knew great; and to the certain hazard
 Of all incertainties himself commended
 No richer than his honour. How he glisters
 Through my rust! and how his piety
 Does my deeds make the blacker!

Re-enter PAULINA.

Paul. Woe the while!
 Oh, cut my lace, lest my heart, cracking it,
 Break too!

1 Lord. What fit is this, good lady?

Paul. 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!—Oh, think what they have done,
 And then run mad, indeed; stark mad! for all
 Thy bygone fooleries were but spices of it.
 That thou betray'dst Polixenes 'twas nothing;
 That did but show thee, of a fool, inconstant,
 And damnable ungrateful. Nor was 't much
 Thou would'st 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

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.

Leon. 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 to these sorrows. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Enter* ANTIGONUS, *with the Child, and a*
 Mariner.

Ant. Thou art perfect then our ship hath touch'd
 upon
 The deserts of Bohemia?

Mar. 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 us.

Ant. Their sacred wills be done!—Go, get aboard;
 Look to thy bark; I'll not be long before
 I call upon thee.

Mar. 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.

Ant. Go thou away:
 I'll follow instantly.

Mar. I am glad at heart
To be so rid o' the business.

[*Exit.*

Ant. Come, poor babe.
I have heard (but not believed) the spirits of 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 forever, 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!

[*Laying down the Child.*

There lie, and there thy character: there these,

[*Laying down a bundle.*

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 art 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 forever. [*Exit, pursued by a bear.*]

Enter an old Shepherd.

Shep. I would there were no age between ten 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 anywhere I have them, 'tis by the sea-side, browsing of ivy. Good-luck, and 't be thy will! what have we here? [*Taking up the Child.*] 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 halloa'd but even now. Whoa, ho, ho!

Enter Clown.

Clown. Hilloa, loa!

Shep. What, art so near? If thou'lt see a thing to talk on when thou art dead and rotten, come hither. What ail'st 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.

Shep. 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 to the point. Oh, 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'd 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.

Shep. 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.

Shep. 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.

[*Aside.*

Shep. Heavy matters! heavy matters! But look thee here, boy. Now bless thyself. Thou met'st with things dying, I with things new born. 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 mad old man; if the sins of your youth are forgiven you, you're well to live. Gold! all gold!

Shep. This is fairy gold, boy, and 'twill prove so. Up with it, 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.

Shep. That's a good deed. If thou may'st 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.

Shep. 'Tis a lucky day, boy ; and we'll do good deeds on 't. [Exeunt.]

ACT IV

Enter Time, as Chorus.

Time. I, that please some, try all, both joy and terror
Of good and bad, that make and unfold 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 wond'ring. What of her ensues
 I list not prophesy ; 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. [*Exit.*

SCENE I.—*Enter* POLIXENES *and* CAMILLO.

Pol. I pray thee, good Camillo, be no more importunate. 'Tis a sickness denying thee anything, a death to grant this.

Cam. 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.

Pol. 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 call'st him, and reconciled king, my brother, whose loss of his most precious queen and children is even now to be afresh lamented. Say to me, when saw'st 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.

Cam. 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.

Pol. 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 neighbors, is grown into an unspeakable estate.

Cam. 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.

Pol. 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 is 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.

Cam. I willingly obey your command.

Pol. My best Camillo! We must disguise ourselves. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*Enter* AUTOLYCUS, *singing.*

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 hey! the sweet birds, oh, 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-lirra chants—
With hey! with hey! 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!

Enter Clown.

Clown. Let me see: Every 'leven wether—tods; every tod yields—pound and odd shilling; fifteen hundred shorn—what comes the wool to?

Aut. [*Aside.*] If the springe hold, the cock's mine.

Clown. I cannot do it 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 nosegays 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 hornpipes.

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.

Aut. Oh, that ever I was born !

[*Groveling on the ground.*]

Clown. I' the name of me—

Aut. Oh, 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.

Aut. Oh, 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.

Aut. 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 ?

Aut. A footman, sweet sir, a footman.

Clown. Indeed, he should be a footman, by the garments he hath 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.

[*Helping him up.*]

Aut. Oh, good sir, tenderly, oh !

Clown. Alas, poor soul !

Aut. Oh, good sir, softly, good sir. I fear, sir, my shoulder-blade is out.

Clown. How now ? canst stand ?

Aut. Softly, dear sir. [*Picks his pocket.*] Good sir, softly ; you ha' done me a charitable office.

Clown. Dost lack any money ? I have a little money for thee.

Aut. 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 anything I want. Offer me no money, I pray you : that kills my heart.

Clown. What manner of fellow was he that robbed you?

Aut. A fellow, sir, that I have known to go about with trol-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.

Aut. 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 wherein 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.

Aut. 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.

Aut. 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?

Aut. Sweet sir, much better than I was; I can stand and walk. I even will take my leave of you, and pace softly towards my kinsman's.

Clown. Shall I bring thee on the way?

Aut. No, good-faced sir; no, sweet sir.

Clown. Then fare thee well; I must go buy spices for our sheep-shearing.

Aut. Prosper you, sweet sir! [*Exit Clown.*] 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!

[*Sings.*] *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.* [Exit.]

SCENE III.—*Enter* FLORIZEL *and* PERDITA.

Flo. 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.

Per. Sir, my gracious lord,
To chide at your extremes it not becomes me ;
Oh, 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.

Flo. I bless the time
When my good falcon made her flight across
Thy father's ground.

Per. 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. Oh, 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 ?

Flo. 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.

Per. Oh but, dear sir,
 Your resolution cannot hold when 'tis
 Opposed, as it must be, by the power o' the king.
 One of these two must be necessities,
 Which then will speak, that you must change this pur-
 pose
 Or I my life.

Flo. 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 anything 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 anything
 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.

Per. O Lady Fortune,
 Stand you auspicious!

*Enter Shepherd, with POLIXENES and CAMILLO, dis-
 guised; Clown, MOPSA, DORCAS, and others.*

Flo. See, your guests approach;
 Address yourself to entertain them sprightly,
 And let's be red with mirth.

Shep. 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 us 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.

Per. Welcome, sir! [To POLIXENES.]

It is my father's will I should take on me
 The hostess-ship o' the day.—You're welcome, sir!

[To CAMILLO.]

Give me those flowers there, Dorcas.—Reverend sirs,
 For you there's rosemary and rue; these keep
 Seeming, and savour all the winter long:
 Grace and remembrance be to you both,
 And welcome to our shearing!

Pol. Shepherdess
 (A fair one are you), well you fit our ages
 With flowers of winter.

Per. 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 streaked gilliflowers,
 Which some call nature's bastards: of that kind
 Our rustic garden's barren; and I care not
 To get slips of them;—

Pol. Wherefore, gentle maiden,
 Do you neglect them?

Per. —for I have heard it said
 There is an art which, in their piedness, shares
 With great creating nature.

Pol. Say there be;
 Yet nature is made better by no mean
 But nature makes that mean: so o'er 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.

Per. So it is.

Pol. Then make your garden rich in gilliflowers,
And do not call them bastards.

Per. 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, savory, marjoram;
The marigold, that goes to bed with 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 are very welcome.

Cam. I should leave grazing, were I of your flock,
And only live by gazing.

Per. Out, alas!

You'd be so lean that blasts of January
Would blow you through and through.—Now, my fair-
est 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 wagon! 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 Phœbus 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! Oh, these I lack,
To make you garlands of; and my sweet friend,
To strew him o'er and o'er.

Flo.

What? like a corse?



Per. 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.

Flo. 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 ord'ring 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 deeds,
 That all your acts are queens.

Per. O Doricles,
 Your praises are too large ; but that your youth,
 And the true blood which peeps fairly through it,
 Do plainly give you out an unstain'd shepherd,
 With wisdom I might fear, my Doricles,
 You woo'd me the false way.

Flo. 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.

Per. I'll swear for 'em.

Pol. This is the prettiest low-born lass that ever
 Ran on the greensward ; nothing she does or seems
 But smacks of something greater than herself,
 Too noble for this place.

Cam. 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.

Dor. Mopsa must be your mistress : marry, garlic,
 To mend her kissing with.

Mop. Now, in good time!

Clown. Not a word, a word; we stand upon our manners.—

Come, strike up. [*Music.*

[*Here a dance of Shepherds and Shepherdesses.*

Pol. Pray, good shepherd, what fair swain is this which dances with your daughter?

Shep. They call him Doricles, and he 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.

Pol. She dances featly.

Shep. So she does anything, 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.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Oh, master, if you did but hear the peddler at the door you would never dance again after a tabor 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.

Serv. 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 burdens of dildos and fadings; jump her and thump her; and where some stretch-mouth'd 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.

Pol. This is a brave fellow.

Clown. Believe me, thou talkest of an admirable conceited fellow. Has he any unbraided wares?

Serv. He hath ribbons of all the colours i' the rainbow; points, more than all the lawyers in Bohemia can learnedly handle, though they come to him by the gross; inkle, caddisses, cambrics, lawns. Why, he sings them 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.

Per. Forewarn him that he use no scurrilous words in his tunes.

Clown. You have of these peddlers that have more in 'em than you'd think, sister.

Per. Ay, good brother, or go about to think.

Enter AUTOLYCUS, *singing.*

*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, etc.*

Clown. If I were not in love with Mopsa thou shouldst take no money of me; but being enthrall'd as I am, it will also be the bondage of certain ribbons and gloves.

Mop. I was promised them against the feast; but they come not too late now.

Dor. He hath promised you more than that, or there be liars.

Mop. He hath paid you all he promised you. Maybe 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.

Mop. 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?

Aut. And indeed, sir, there are cozeners abroad; therefore it behooves men to be wary.

Clown. Fear not thou, man; thou shalt lose nothing here.

Aut. I hope so, sir; for I have about me many parcels of charge.

Clown. What hast here? ballads?

Mop. Pray now, buy some. I love a ballad in print, a'-life; for then we are sure they are true.

Aut. Here's one to a very doleful tune, How a usurer's wife was brought to bed of twenty money-bags at a burden; and how she longed to eat adders' heads, and toads carbonadoed.

Mop. Is it true, think you?

Aut. Very true; and but a month old.

Dor. Bless me from marrying a usurer!

Aut. Here's the midwife's name to 't, one Mistress Taleporter; and five or six honest wives that were present. Why should I carry lies abroad?

Mop. Pray you now, buy it.

Clown. Come on, lay it by. And let's first see more ballads; we'll buy the other things anon.

Aut. Here's another ballad, of a fish that appeared upon the coast on Wednesday, the fourscore 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.

Dor. Is it true too, think you?

Aut. Five justices' hands at it; and witnesses more than my pack will hold.

Clown. Lay it by too. Another.

Aut. This is a merry ballad, but a very pretty one.

Mop. Let's have some merry ones.

Aut. 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.

Mop. We can both sing it; if thou'lt bear a part, thou shalt hear; 'tis in three parts.

Dor. We had the tune on 't a month ago.

Aut. I can bear my part; you must know 'tis my occupation. Have at it with you.

SONG.

- A.* Get you hence, for I must go;
Where, it fits not you to know.
D. Whither? *M.* Oh, whither? *D.* Whither?
M. It becomes thy oath full well,
Thou to me thy secrets tell;
D. Me too, let me go thither.
- M.* Or thou go'st to the grange or mill;
D. If to either, thou dost ill.
A. Neither. *D.* What, neither? *A.* Neither.
D. Thou hast sworn my love to be:
M. Thou hast sworn it more to me:
Then, whither go'st? say, whither?

Clown. We'll have this song sung out anon by ourselves. My father and the gentleman are in sad talk, and we'll not trouble them. Come, bring away thy

pack after me. Wenches, I'll buy for you both. Peddler, let's have the first choice.—Follow me, girls.

Aut. [*Aside.*] 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 fin'st, fin'st wear-a?
Come to the peddler;
Money's a medler,
That doth utter all men's ware-a.*

[*Exeunt* Clown, AUTOLYCUS, DORCAS, and MOPSA.]

Enter a Servant.

Serv. 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.

Shep. Away! we'll none on 't; here has been too much homely foolery already. I know, sir, we weary you.

Pol. You weary those that refresh us. Pray, let's see these four threes of herdsmen.

Serv. 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 squire.

Shep. Leave your prating; since these good men are pleased, let them come in; but quickly now.

Serv. Why, they stay at door, sir. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter Servant, with twelve rustics habited like satyrs.
They dance, and then exeunt.

Pol. Oh, 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. [*Aside.*]—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 peddler's silken treasury, and have pour'd it
To her acceptance; you have let him go,
And nothing mated 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.

Flo. 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. Oh, 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.

Pol. 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.

Flo. Do, and be witness to 't.

Pol. And this my neighbour too?

Flo. 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.

Pol. Fairly offer'd.

Cam. This shows a sound affection.

Shep. But, my daughter,
Say you the like to him ?

Per. 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.

Shep. 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.

Flo. Oh, 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.

Shep. Come, your hand ;
And, daughter, yours.

Pol. Soft, swain, awhile, 'beseech you.
Have you a father ?

Flo. I have. But what of him ?

Pol. Knows he of this ?

Flo. He neither does nor shall.

Pol. 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 bedrid ? and again does nothing
But what he did, being childish ?

Flo. No, good sir ;
He hath his health, and ampler strength, indeed,
Than most have of his age.

Pol. 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.

Flo. 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.

Pol. Let him know 't.

Flo. He shall not.

Pol. Prithee, let him.

Flo. No, he must not.

Shep. Let him, my son ; he shall not need to grieve
At knowing of thy choice.

Flo. Come, come, he must not.
Mark our contract.

Pol. [*Discovering himself.*] 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 cop'st with—

Shep. Oh, my heart !

Pol. I'll have thy beauty scratch'd with briars, 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. [Exit.

Per. 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, begone?
[To FLORIZEL.

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 further,
But milk my ewes, and weep.

Cam. Why, how now, father?
Speak, ere thou diest.

Shep. I cannot speak, nor think,
Nor dare to know that which I know.—Oh, sir,
[To FLORIZEL.

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.—Oh, cursed wretch!
[To PERDITA.

That knew'st this was the prince, and wouldst advent-
ure
To mingle faith with him.—Undone! undone!
If I might die within this hour, I have lived
To die when I desire. [Exit.

Flo. 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.

Cam. 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.

Flo. I not purpose it.

I think, Camillo.

Cam. Even he, my lord.

Per. How often have I told you 'twould be thus?
How often said my dignity would last
But till 'twere known?

Flo. 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.

Cam. Be advised.

Flo. 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.

Cam. This is desperate, sir.

Flo. 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 seas hide
In unknown fathoms, will I break my oath
To this my fair beloved. Therefore, I pray you,
As you have e'er 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.

Cam. Oh, my lord,

I would your spirit were easier for advice
Or stronger for your need.

Flo.

Hark, Perdita.—

[*Takes her aside.*

I'll hear you by-and-by.

[*To CAMILLO.*

Cam.

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.

Flo.

Now, good Camillo,
I am so fraught with curious business that
I leave out ceremony.

[*Going.*

Cam.

Sir, I think

You have heard of my poor services, i' the love
That I have borne your father?

Flo.

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.

Cam.

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 forfend! your ruin), marry her;
And (with my best endeavours, in your absence)
Your discontenting father strive to qualify,
And bring him up to liking.

Flo.

How, Camillo,
May this, almost a miracle, be done?
That I may call thee something more than man,
And, after that, trust to thee.

Cam. Have you thought on
A place whereto you'll go?

Flo. 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.

Cam. 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.

Flo. Worthy Camillo,
What colour for my visitation shall I
Hold up before him?

Cam. 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.

Flo. I am bound to you.
There is some sap in this.

Cam. A course 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.

Per. One of these is true :
 I think affliction may subdue the cheek,
 But not take in the mind.

Cam. Yea, say you so ?
 There shall not, at your father's house, these seven
 years
 Be born another such.

Flo. My good Camillo,
 She is as forward of her breeding as
 I' the rear of birth.

Cam. I cannot say 'tis pity
 She lacks instructions ; for she seems a mistress
 To most that teach.

Per. Your pardon, sir, for this ;
 I'll blush you thanks.

Flo. My prettiest Perdita.—
 But oh, 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 furnished like Bohemia's son,
 Nor shall appear in Sicilia—

Cam. 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.
 [*They talk aside.*]

Enter AUTOLYCUS.

Aut. 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 cod-piece of a purse; I would 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 whoobub 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, FLORIZEL, and PERDITA come forward.]

Cam. Nay, but my letters, by this means being there So soon as you arrive, shall clear that doubt.

Flo. And those that you'll procure from King Leontes—

Cam. Shall satisfy your father.

Per

Happy be you!

All that you speak shows fair.

Cam.

Who have we here?

[Seeing AUTOLYCUS.]

We'll make an instrument of this; omit

Nothing may give us aid.

Aut. [Aside.] If they have overheard me now—why, hanging.

Cam. How now, good fellow? Why shakest thou so? Fear not, man; here's no harm intended to thee.

Aut. I am a poor fellow, sir.

Cam. 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 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.

Aut. I am a poor fellow, sir. [*Aside.*] I know ye well enough.

Cam. Nay, prithee, despatch, the gentleman is half flayed already.

Aut. Are you in earnest, sir? [*Aside.*] I smell the trick on 't.

Flo. Despatch, I prithee.

Aut. Indeed, I have had earnest; but I cannot with conscience take it.

Cam. Unbuckle, unbuckle.—

[FLORIZEL and AUTOLYCUS exchange garments.]

Fortunate mistress, let my prophecy
Come home to you. 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 you) to shipboard
Get undescried.

Per. I see the play so lies
That I must bear a part.

Cam. No remedy.—
Have you done there?

Flo. Should I now meet my father
He would not call me son.

Cam. Nay, you shall have
No hat.—Come, lady, come.—Farewell, my friend.

Aut. Adieu, sir.

Flo. Oh, Perdita, what have we twain forgot?
Pray you, a word. [*They converse apart.*]

Cam. [*Aside.*] What I do next shall be to tell the
king
Of this escape, and whither they are bound;
Wherein, my hope is, I shall so prevail



To force him after: in whose company
I shall review Sicilia, for whose sight
I have a woman's longing.

Flo. Fortune speed us!

Thus we set on, Camillo, to the sea-side.

Cam. The swifter speed the better.

[*Exeunt* FLORIZEL, PERDITA, and CAMILLO.]

Aut. 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 anything 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 not a piece of honesty to acquaint the king withal, I would do 't. I hold it the more knavery to conceal it; and therein am I constant to my profession.

Enter Clown and Shepherd.

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.

Shep. Nay, but hear me.

Clown. Nay, but hear me.

Shep. 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 with her: those secret things, all but what she has with her. This being done, let the law go whistle; I warrant you.

Shep. 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 not how much an ounce.

Aut. [*Aside.*] Very wisely, puppies!

Shep. Well, let us to the king; there is that in this fardel will make him scratch his beard.

Aut. I know not what impediment this complaint may be to the flight of my master.

Clown. 'Pray heartily he be at palace.

Aut. Though I am not naturally honest, I am so sometimes by chance. Let me pocket up my peddler's excrement. [*Takes off his false beard.*] How now, rustics? whither are you bound?

Shep. To the palace, an it like your worship.

Aut. 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 anything that is fitting to be known, discover.

Clown. We are but plain fellows, sir.

Aut. 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.

Shep. Are you a courtier, an it like you, sir?

Aut. Whether it like me or no, I am a courtier. See'st 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-odour from me? Reflect I not on thy baseness court-contempt? Think'st thou, for that I insinuate, or toze from thee thy business, I am therefore no courtier? I am courtier cap-a-pie, and one that will either push on or pluck back thy business there: whereupon I command thee to open thy affair.

Shep. My business, sir, is to the king.

Aut. What advocate hast thou to him?

Shep. I know not, an it like you.

Clown. Advocate's the court word for a pheasant ; say you have none.

Shep. None, sir ; I have no pheasant, cock, nor hen.

Aut. How blessed are we that are not simple men !
Yet nature might have made me as these are,
Therefore I'll not disdain.

Clown. This cannot but be a great courtier.

Shep. 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.

Aut. The fardel there ? what's i' the fardel ? Wherefore that box ?

Shep. 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.

Aut. Age, thou hast lost thy labour.

Shep. Why, sir ?

Aut. The king is not at the palacè ; he is gone aboard a new ship to purge melancholy and air himself. For if thou be'st capable of things serious, thou must know the king is full of grief.

Shep. So 'tis said, sir, about his son, that should have married a shepherd's daughter.

Aut. 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 ?

Aut. 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 it like you, sir?

Aut. 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 vitæ, 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 behalves; 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.

Shep. An it 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.

Aut. After I have done what I promised.

Shep. Ay, sir.

Aut. 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.

Aut. Oh, 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.

Aut. 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 blessed in this man, as I may say, even blessed.

Shep. Let's before, as he bids us; he was provided to do us good. [*Exeunt Shepherd and Clown.*]

Aut. 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. [*Exit.*]

ACT V

SCENE I.—*Enter* LEONTES, CLEOMENES, DION, PAULINA, and others.

Cleo. Sir, you have done enough, and have perform'd
A saintlike 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.

Leon. 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.

Paul. 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.

Leon. I think so. Kill'd!
She I kill'd? I did so: but thou strik'st me
Sorely to say I did; it is as bitter
Upon thy tongue as in my thought. Now, good now,
Say so but seldom.

Cleo. 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.

Paul. 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 dame; 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?

Paul. 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 tenour 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:
[To LEONTES.

The crown will find an heir. Great Alexander
Left his to the worthiest; so his successor
Was like to be the best.

Leon. Good Paulina—
Who hast the memory of Hermione,
I know, in honour—oh, 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—

Paul. And left them
More rich for what they yielded.

Leon. 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 offenders now appear), soul-vex'd,
Begin, And why to me?

Paul. Had she such power,
She had just cause.

Leon. She had; and would incense me
To murder her I married.

Paul. 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.

Leon. Stars, very stars,
And all eyes else dead coals! Fear thou no wife;
I'll have no wife, Paulina.

Paul. Will you swear
Never to marry but by my free leave?

Leon. Never, Paulina; so be bless'd my spirit.

Paul. Then, good my lords, bear witness to his oath.

Cleo. You tempt him overmuch.

Paul. Unless another
As like Hermione as is her picture
Affront his eye.

Cleo. Good madam—

Paul. 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.

Leon. My true Paulina,
 We shall not marry till thou bid'st us.

Paul. That
 Shall be when your first queen's again in breath;
 Never till then.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. 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.

Leon. 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?

Gent. But few,
 And those but mean.

Leon. His princess, say you, with him?

Gent. Ay; the most peerless piece of earth, I
 think,
 That e'er the sun shone bright on.

Paul. 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
 Flowed with her beauty once; 'tis shrewdly ebb'd
 To say you have seen a better.

Gent. 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 such a creature,
Would she begin a sect, might quench the zeal
Of all professors else; make proselytes
Of who she but bid follow.

Paul. How? not women?

Gent. Women will love her that she is a woman
More worth than any man; men, that she is
The rarest of all women.

Leon. Go, Cleomenes;
Yourself, assisted with your honour'd friends,
Bring them to our embracement.—Still 'tis strange
[*Exeunt* CLEOMENES, Lords, and Gentlemen.
He thus should steal upon us.

Paul. 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.

Leon. Prithee, no more; 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.—

Re-enter CLEOMENES, *with* FLORIZEL, PERDITA, *and* Attendants.

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!—Oh, 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.

Flo. 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.

Leon. Oh, 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?

Flo. Good my lord,
She came from Libya.

Leon. Where the warlike Smalus,
That noble honour'd lord, is fear'd and loved?

Flo. 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.

Leon. 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 bless'd
 (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 ?

Enter a Lord.

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.

Leon. Where's Bohemia. Speak.

Lord. Here in the city ; I now came from him.
 I speak amazedly ; and it becomes
 My marvel and my message. To your court
 Whiles he was hast'ning (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.

Flo. Camillo has betrayed 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.

Leon. 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.

Per. Oh, my poor father!—
The heavens sets spies upon us, will not have
Our contract celebrated.

Leon. You are married?

Flo. 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.

Lcon. My lord,
Is this the daughter of a king?

Flo. She is,
When once she is my wife.

Leon. 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.

Flo. 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.

Leon. Would he do so, I'd beg your precious mistress,
Which he counts but a trifle.

Paul. 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.

Leon. I thought of her,
Even in these looks I made.—But your petition
[To FLORIZEL.

Is yet unanswer'd. I will to your father.
Your honour not o'erthrown by your desires,
I am a 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.
[Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*Enter* AUTOLYCUS *and a Gentleman.*

Aut. 'Beseech you, sir, were you present at this relation?

1 Gent. 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.

Aut. I would most gladly know the issue of it.

1 Gent. 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.

Enter another Gentleman.

Here comes a gentleman that, happily, knows more. The news, Rogero?

2 Gent. 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.

Enter a third Gentleman.

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?

3 Gent. 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, 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?

2 *Gent.* No.

3 *Gent.* 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 countenance 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, Oh, 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.

2 *Gent.* What, pray you, became of Antigonus, that carried hence the child?

3 *Gent.* 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.

1 *Gent.* What became of his bark and his followers?

3 *Gent.* 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 oh, the noble com-

bat 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.

1 *Gent.* The dignity of this act was worth the audience of kings and princes, for by such was it acted.

3 *Gent.* 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 it (bravely confessed, and lamented by the king), how attentiveness wounded his daughter, till, from one sign of dour 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 it, the woe had been universal.

1 *Gent.* Are they returned to the court?

3 *Gent.* 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.

2 *Gent.* 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?

1 *Gent.* 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. [*Exeunt Gentlemen.*]

Aut. 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, over-fond of the shepherd's daughter (so he then took her to be), who began to be much seasick, 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.

Enter Shepherd and Clown.

Here come those I have done good to against my will, and already appearing in the blossoms of their fortune.

Shep. Come, boy; I am past more 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.

Aut. I know you are now, sir, a gentleman born.

Clown. Ay, and have been so any time these four hours.

Shep. 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 gentlemanlike tears that ever we shed.

Shep. We may live, son, to shed many more.

Clown. Ay, or else 'twere hard luck, being in so preposterous estate as we are.

Aut. 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.



Shep. 'Prithee, son, do ; for we must be gentle, now we are gentlemen.

Clown. Thou wilt amend thy life ?

Aut. 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.

Shep. 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.

Shep. 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, and would'st be a tall fellow of thy hands.

Aut. 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.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Enter* LEONTES, POLIXENES, FLORIZEL, PERDITA, CAMILLO, PAULINA, Lords, *and* Attendants.

Leon. Oh, grave and good Paulina, the great comfort

That I have had of thee !

Paul. What, sovereign sir,
I did not well, I meant well. All my services
You have paid home ; but that you have vouchsafed
With your crowned 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.

Leon. Oh, 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.

Paul. 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.
[PAULINA draws back a curtain and discovers
a statue.

I like your silence, it the more shows off
Your wonder. But yet speak; first, you, my liege.
Comes it not something near?

Leon. 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.

Pol. Oh, not by much.

Paul. So much the more our carver's excellence,
Which lets go by some sixteen years, and makes her
As she lived now.

Leon. As now she might have done
So much to my good comfort, as it is
Now piercing to my soul. Oh, 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?—Oh, 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.

Per. 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.

Paul. Oh, patience ;
 The statue is but newly fix'd, the colour's
 Not dry.

Cam. 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.

Pol. 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.

Paul. 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.

Leon. Do not draw the curtain.

Paul. No longer shall you gaze on 't, lest your fancy
 May think anon it moves.

Leon. 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?

Pol. Masterly done.
 The very life seems warm upon her lip.

Leon. The fixture of her eye has motion in 't,
 As we are mock'd with art.

Paul. I'll draw the curtain ;
 My lord's almost so far transported that
 He'll think anon it lives.

Leon. Oh, 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.

Paul. I am sorry, sir, I have thus far stirr'd you ;
but
I could afflict you further.

Leon. 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.

Paul. 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 ?

Leon. No, not these twenty years.

Per. So long could I
Stand by, a looker-on.

Paul. 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.

Leon. 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.

Paul. It is required
You do awake your faith. Then all stand still,
Or those that think it is unlawful business
I am about, let them depart.

Leon. Proceed ;
No foot shall stir.

Paul. Music ; awake her ; strike. [*Music.*
'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.

[*HERMIONE comes down from the pedestal.*

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.

Leon. Oh, she's warm ! [*Embracing her.*
 If this be magic, let it be an art
 Lawful as eating.

Pol. She embraces him.

Cam. She hangs about his neck ;
 If she pertain to life, let her speak too.

Pol. Ay, and make 't manifest where she has lived
 Or how stolen from the dead.

Paul. 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.

[*Presenting PERDITA, who kneels to HERMIONE.*

Her. 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.

Paul. 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.

Leon. Oh, 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 your son-in-law,
And son unto the king (whom Heaven's directing),
Is troth-plight to your daughter. Good Paulina,
Lead us from hence; where we may leisurely
Each one demand, and answer to his part
Perform'd in this wide gap of time, since first
We were dissever'd. Hastily lead away. [*Exeunt.*

THE END



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