

DELHI UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

SELECTED PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE

Selected Plays of Shakespeare

Volume I

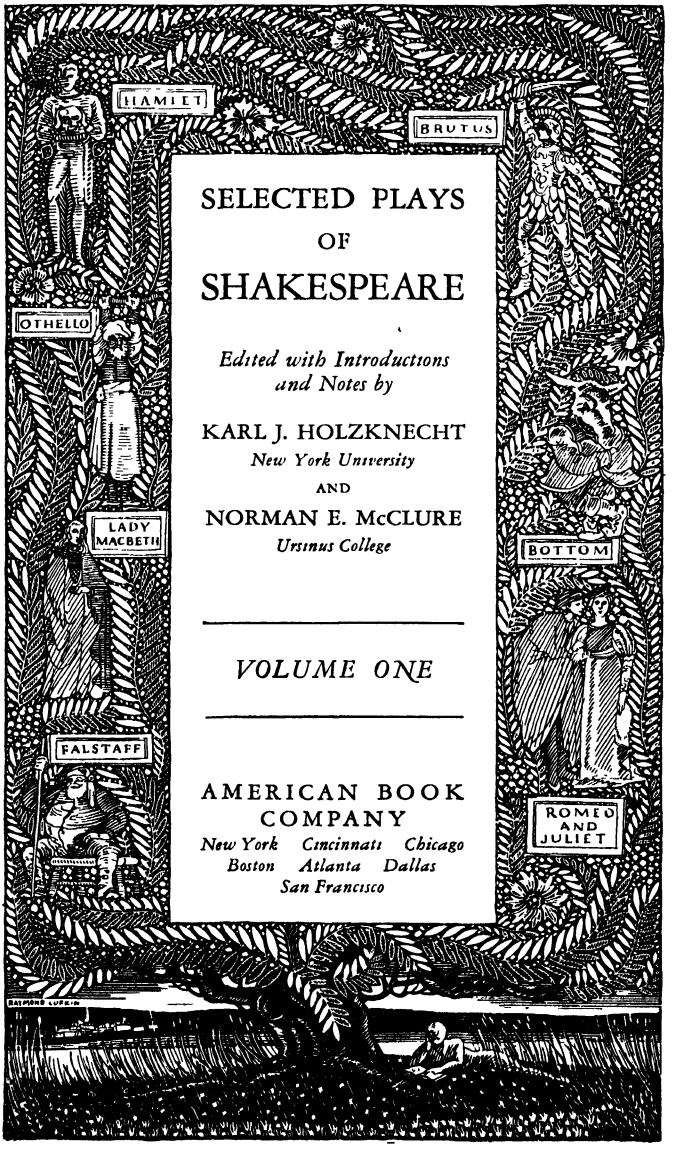
KING RICHARD II
KING HENRY IV, PART I
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
JULIUS CÆSAR
HAMLET
THE WINTER'S TALE

Volume II

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS
ROMEO AND JULIET
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM
KING HENRY V
KING LEAR
ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA
THE TEMPEST

Volume III

KING RICHARD III
AS YOU LIKE IT
TWELFTH NIGHT
OTHELLO
MACBETH
CYMBELINE



SELECTED PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE

Edited with Introductions and Notes by

KARL J. HOLZKNECHT
New York University
AND
NORMAN E. McCLURE
Ursinus College

VOLUME ONE

AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY
New York Cincinnati Chicago
Boston Atlanta Dallas
San Francisco

COPYRIGHT, 1936, BY
AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY
All rights reserved

SHAKESPEARE, I

E. P. 5

MADE IN U. S. A.

PREFACE

The present edition of Shakespeare, designed for the student and the general reader, provides the plays that are usually read in undergraduate college courses. Each volume includes plays that represent not only the several types of drama that Shakespeare wrote, but also the successive stages of his development as a dramatist. Discussion of textual problems and controversial matters has been reduced to a minimum, and the editorial apparatus has been limited to consideration of the plays as drama, to questions of interpretation, and to the elucidation of Elizabethan language. Notes and glossary appear together at the foot of each page, in order that the reader may not need to turn elsewhere in the book for the interpretation of difficult passages, and in order that he may recognize and understand the many words that since Shakespeare's day have changed their meaning but not their form.

The text of the present edition is based upon an independent examination of the more important Quartos and Folios. Universally accepted emendations are, as a rule, admitted without comment, and the punctuation, which in the early editions is of uncertain value, has been modernized. The *dramatis personæ* lists, which have no Shakespearean authority, and which in most modern editions have been merely reprinted from Rowe's edition of 1709, have been rearranged. Further, since nothing but tradition justifies the retention of the spare, formal stage directions found in the early texts or supplied by Rowe, the editors have felt free to amplify the stage directions wherever the reader might have difficulty in following the action. Finally, for the sake of convenience in reference, the standard Globe line-numbering has been adopted, although the prose passages here occupy somewhat less space than in the Globe edition.

The maps of Shakespeare's England and Shakespeare's London mark all of the places mentioned in the plays. Visscher's *View of London and Westminster*, dating from the year of Shakespeare's death, and the other illustrations bring before the reader scenes which Shakespeare knew, or which are closely associated with his plays.

CONTENTS

THE TRAGEDY OF KING RICHARD II
Introduction, 3
Text, 13

KING HENRY IV, PART ONE
Introduction, 111
Text, 119

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
Introduction, 219
Text, 227

THE TRAGEDY OF JULIUS CÆSAR
Introduction, 313
Text, 323

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK
Introduction, 411
Text, 421

THE WINTER'S TALE
Introduction, 563
Text, 571

ILLUSTRATIONS

Westminster Hall, 77
Warkworth Castle, Northumberland, 147
Visscher's View of London and Westminster, 464–465

The Tragedy of King Richard II

Introduction

Historical Background

The character of Richard the Redeless has always puzzled his biographers. Only as to his personal attractiveness is there any agreement. "He was seemly of shape and favor," wrote Holinshed, "and of nature good enough, if the wickedness and naughty demeanor of such as were about him had not altered it. His chance verily was greatly infortunate, which fell into such calamity, that he took it for the best way he could devise to renounce his kingdom, for the which mortal men are accustomed to hazard all they have to attain thereunto." Richard's entire life is full of similar contradictions. To his friends and admirers, he was "that sweet lovely rose" whose beauty could not endure the rough times in which his lot was cast. To his enemies, he was a worthless incompetent who lacked character and manhood, and who failed to fulfill the promise of his youth. The boy of scarcely fourteen who boldly placed himself at the head of Wat Tyler's rebels with the words, "Sirs, what aileth you? Ye shall have no captain but me: I am your king," was in the end deposed, disgraced, and murdered.

To understand Shakespeare's play, some knowledge of the events of Richard's reign before 1398 is essential, a knowledge which Shakespeare's audience probably obtained through other plays dealing with the period. Richard was eleven years old, when, in 1377, at the death of his grandfather, Edward III, he came to the throne of England, and consequently during the first twelve years of his reign he remained more or less under the tutelage of his uncles. Two of these nobles—John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Edmund of Langley, Duke of York—appear as characters in Shakespeare's play, and the ghost of the

third, Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, motivates the opening scenes. Until 1383, when he left England to claim the throne of Castile, John of Gaunt was the most powerful noble in the kingdom, but on his departure his youngest brother, Gloucester, became the leader of a powerful baronial clique which, with varying fortune, was to oppose the young king's every move to the close of his reign. In 1387 Richard fell under the influence of a group of favorites who were disliked by the older nobility. Supported by Parliament, five "Lords Appellant"—headed by Gloucester, and including Henry of Bolingbroke, son of John of Gaunt; Richard Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel; Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick; and Thomas Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham—demanded the dismissal of Richard's advisers, threatened deposition, and forced the appointment of a regency, headed by Gloucester, to regulate for one year the affairs of the young king.

The appointment of this regency was an undisguised attempt to set aside the royal prerogative, and, when the helpless king and his judges declared it an illegal infringement upon his personal power, the "Lords Appellant" laid a charge of treason against the king's friends, routed at Radcot Bridge the armed force they had gathered, and in the following year, 1388, through the "Merciless Parliament" wreaked vengeance upon all who had supported Richard.

The triumph of the Gloucester power, however, was short-lived. In 1389 Richard, now twenty-three, declared himself of age, dismissed his regents, and, outwardly at peace with his enemies, for some years governed his realm with wisdom and success. His policies, particularly his truce with France, were not always popular, and it was apparent that the young monarch was carefully gathering force to establish a legal despotism. Through Sir John Bushy, Sir Henry Green, and Sir William Bagot, Richard gained control of Parliament, and in 1397, having waited ten years for the moment, Richard struck a blow at

his enemies. On the charge that they were plotting against him, Warwick was banished and Gloucester was sent a prisoner to Calais in charge of Thomas Mowbray, the governor. There he died, almost certainly murdered by order of the king. Moreover, a Parliament assembled at Shrewsbury in January, 1398, not only reversed all of the acts of the "Merciless Parliament" of 1388, but also delegated its powers to a committee on which were the king's two friendly uncles, Lancaster and York, his most active partisans, Bushy and Green, and others friendly to his interests. At Shrewsbury, also, Bolingbroke, upon whose shoulders the mantle of his uncle Gloucester had fallen, accused Mowbray, their former associate, of treason, and, as recorded in Act I, scene i, of Shakespeare's play, both were ordered to appear at Windsor to settle their differences before the king. Bolingbroke's charge was, of course, an indirect attack upon Richard himself for the murder of his uncle Gloucester. The king's act in banishing both the accuser and the accused—the last of the "Lords Appellant"—settled an old score of ten years' standing.

Interpretation

It is at this moment of Richard's complete triumph that Shakespeare opens his play, and it is to the closing scenes of this old struggle between the crown and a powerful baronial clique that he devotes his attention. For dramatic reasons, Shakespeare represents this conflict as a duel for power between two individuals, the absolute king and the baronial nominee, Bolingbroke, and the contrast between them is one of the most brilliant in his plays. *Richard II* is essentially a tragedy of character—the piteous fall of a prince who is himself the "author of his proper woe," and the victim of his own tragic weaknesses —insincerity, insolence, blind egotism, and inability or perverse unwillingness to live in a world of fact. In many ways Richard is the most appealing of Shakespeare's English kings, a subtly-

drawn character who in some respects foreshadows the great figures that appear in the later tragedies. His moods of brooding melancholy and his habit of losing himself in passive contemplation mark his kinship with Hamlet. He tends, as Shakespeare's tragic heroes usually do, to identify himself wholly with one habit of mind—a subtle self-deception, a love of self-dramatization. He delights in dramatizing a scene in which he is the principal actor, and, when the tide of events turns against him, he is so struck by the pathos of his plight that he enjoys the spectacle of his tragedy, and abandons himself to playing the role of actor-poet-tragic hero in the distressing scenes that follow. As the play progresses, he becomes less Richard the king, and more and more Richard the poet, invested by Shakespeare with a growing attractiveness that wins our pity.

His weaknesses and his charm are thrown into sharp relief by their contrast with the character of Bolingbroke, the crafty opportunist, watchful, patient, bold, remorseless, unimaginative. Bolingbroke is the man England needs; he is the instrument that Fate uses to remove an unworthy king. In presenting this contrast, Shakespeare's purpose—the dramatist's true purpose—is not to pronounce upon the moral issue between the two men, but to represent character in action—here, of course, within the events he found recorded in history.

Other contrasts in the play are no less brilliant—that of father and son in the old patriot Gaunt, who leaves to Heaven the punishment of a king's crimes (I, ii, 37 ff.), and Bolingbroke, whose ambition spurs him on to do otherwise; that of uncle and nephew when the dying Gaunt speaks plainly to the prodigal young monarch; that of the helplessness of "good old York" and the grim determination of Bolingbroke, the returned exile; and that of the arrogant Richard at Barkloughly Castle who confidently asserts that "not all the water in the rough rude sea can wash the balm from an anointed king" and the completely dejected monarch who realizes that he has scarcely a follower left.

Source

In *Richard II* Shakespeare follows closely his main source for all of his plays dealing with English history, Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (second edition, 1587). For Shakespeare, as for the chroniclers who were the standard historians of the day, history was primarily a play of personal forces and the record of the good deeds and the bad of eminent personages—kings and queens, temporal and ecclesiastical princes, captains and statesmen, proud and powerful nobles. As a dramatist, however, Shakespeare was interested less in kings as rulers than in kings as men facing crises, and Holinshed supplied him with numerous accounts of men placed in exalted positions in which they were compelled before the eyes of the world to make decisions and to embark upon actions which were fateful to many peoples and to unborn posterities. Much of the language and nearly all of the facts for *Richard II* were supplied by Holinshed, but, to make this material truly dramatic, Shakespeare left himself as free as if he had been adapting a piece of fiction. Richard, for instance, in spite of his weakness, is made in the play a more appealing figure than in Holinshed. The selfish and turbulent Gaunt of history, aged only fifty-nine at his death, becomes in the play an ancient inspired patriot, mindful only of England's welfare. There is no historical warrant for the deathbed interview between uncle and nephew, or for the brutal conduct of Richard, whose relations with Gaunt were at the time comparatively cordial. Shakespeare has also given to the conduct of the crafty Bolingbroke a show of justice which makes him appear as the instrument of Fate destined to free England from the rule of a weak monarch. The Duchess of Gloucester, reported dead in II, ii, is for dramatic reasons made to die several years before her time, and the historical Duchess of York at the time of Aumerle's defection was not his real mother, but a stepmother. Again, for obvious dramatic reasons,

Shakespeare represents Richard's queen as a woman, whereas in truth she was but a child of nine, and he attributes to her much of the sweetness of character that belonged to Richard's first queen, Anne of Bohemia. Finally, the scene of the gardeners with its apt political analogy is entirely Shakespeare's invention. These deviations from strict historical accuracy are justified, however, because they give direction to the story, and enhance the effect of the drama.

Relation to Other Shakespearean Plays

Richard II is the first of a tetralogy of dramas dealing with the rise of the House of Lancaster, and this series, in turn, is introductory to another tetralogy (composed earlier in Shakespeare's career) which deals with the civil wars of Lancaster and York resulting from Henry of Bolingbroke's usurpation. The two parts of *Henry IV* are the sequel to *Richard II* and cannot be fully understood without reference to this play. They present the fulfillment of Richard's prophecy (V, i, 55 ff.) of civil bickerings among the king-makers, and show the crown resting uneasily upon the brow of the usurper until all stain is washed away by the selfless patriotism of the conqueror king, Henry V. The three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III* treat of the Bishop of Carlisle's prophecy (IV, i, 137 ff.) that "the blood of English shall manure the ground, and future ages groan for this foul act," until the two houses are united again at the marriage of Henry of Richmond and Elizabeth of York.

Political Significance

Elizabethans saw analogies between the reign of Richard II and that of Elizabeth, especially during the last years of the great Queen when the movement to depose her gave dangerous interest to Richard's abdication. Of this Elizabeth was aware. "I am Richard II; know ye not that?" was her bitter comment after Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, had induced Shakespeare's

company to present the play before his ill-fated rebellion in February, 1601. His purpose, of course, was to stir up sentiment against the Queen, and to remind Londoners that in the past an English king had been forced to abdicate. Richard, indeed, resembles less the shrewd and politic Elizabeth than the febrile and theatrical Essex himself. To Richard and Carlisle, as to Queen Elizabeth and her bishops, the deposition of an anointed king is treason against God and man; to Bolingbroke, as perhaps to Essex and other malcontents in 1601, it is desirable and necessary when a monarch is misled by unworthy advisers, especially while an eager aspirant to the crown awaits.

Relation to the Chronicle Play

Under the comparatively stable government of Queen Elizabeth, and especially after the outburst of patriotic enthusiasm following the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the people of England developed a new pride in their growing greatness and a new interest in their national past. Queen Elizabeth's entire reign had seen an unprecedented increase in historical writing—annals and chronicles, in verse and in prose—and in their wake came, during the fifteen years between the Armada and the death of the great Queen, some two hundred plays dealing with English history and legend, probably one fifth of all the plays produced in England during those years.

Shakespeare's nine English history plays written during the period are of several types. His three plays based on the reign of Henry VI and his *King John* are chronicle plays of the more primitive type, successive episodes linked together with little structural unity. In *Richard III*, though retaining the old chronicle structure, Shakespeare follows Marlowe in building the play around a strong central figure that dominates the action, and in giving the play a force and passion and stridency that are Marlowesque rather than Shakespearean. In the two parts of *Henry IV*, Shakespeare returned to that type of chronicle

play in which there is an underplot of low comedy. *Henry V* is a dramatic epic glorifying a national hero in a series of spectacles or pageants connected by choric prologues. *Richard II* is of yet another type: it is the tragic history or the historical tragedy, a play in which the interest lies, not in incident, but in the character of the hero and his struggle against the forces that eventually overwhelm him. Moreover, *Richard II* differs from the other history plays in its wealth of rhyme, in its poetic delicacy, in its lyricism. One remembers that the play was the product of those early years that produced also the lyrical tragedy, *Romeo and Juliet*, and the lyrical comedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

Richard II must be considered also in relation to the only history play of Shakespeare's greatest predecessor, Christopher Marlowe. Shakespeare's play was written under the influence of Marlowe's *Edward II*, and the two plays reveal interesting similarities. Each play tells the story of an unworthy king who is misled by favorites, and who, after a conflict with rebellious barons, is deposed and murdered. There are inevitably several parallel characters and situations. But there are some resemblances that are not referable to the historical facts on which the plays are based. Shakespeare's memorable deposition scene and his scene representing the brutal murder of the king are obviously reminiscent of the corresponding scenes in Marlowe's play. Shakespeare follows Marlowe in substituting a closely-knit dramatization of history for the formless inconsecutiveness of the chronicle plays of the older type. In other respects, however, the two plays have little in common. They exemplify two contrasting types of tragedy. *Edward II* is a tragedy of incident; retribution follows guilt, and Edward fights against external forces that are too powerful for him to withstand. *Richard II* is a tragedy of character; Richard's character dooms him, and he hardly struggles to avert disaster. Moreover, Marlowe's method of depicting his king is very different from Shake-

speare's. Edward, though possessed of all the superficial graces appropriate to a king, is never, like Richard, an attractive figure. Shakespeare reveals Richard's incapacity as a ruler without making him contemptible or causing him to forfeit our sympathy. Finally, to the dramatic power of Marlowe's play, Shakespeare has added compression, a more penetrating analysis of character, and a poetic delicacy hitherto lacking in the historical play.

Date and Text

Most scholars agree that *Richard II* was written about 1595. Before the publication of the First Folio in 1623, the play had appeared in five editions: 1597 (without the author's name), 1598 (twice), 1608, and 1615, each edition reprinting its predecessor. The deposition scene (IV, i, 154–318), though an integral part of the play, was not printed during Queen Elizabeth's lifetime, doubtless because of political apprehension, and appeared first in the edition of 1608. The First Folio text was based upon the fifth edition with corrected readings from an unknown source, probably a copy of an earlier edition annotated as a prompt-copy by the players. The basis of the present text is the First Folio, with additions from the first edition of 1597.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

RICHARD THE SECOND, King of England, son of the Black Prince, and grandson of Edward III.

ISABELLE, Queen of England.

HENRY OF BOLINGBROKE, Duke of Hereford, and afterwards King Henry IV, son of John of Gaunt, and grandson of Edward III.

JOHN OF GAUNT, Duke of Lancaster, son of Edward III.

EDMUND OF LANGLEY, Duke of York, son of Edward III.

THE DUCHESS OF YORK.

THE DUKE OF AUMERLE, son of the Duke of York.

THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER, widow of Thomas of Wood stock, Duke of Gloucester, son of Edward III.

THOMAS MOWBRAY, Duke of Norfolk.

THE DUKE OF SURREY, Lord Marshal, friend of Aumerle.

LORD FITZWATER, accuser of Aumerle.

SIR JOHN BUSHY
SIR HENRY GREEN
SIR WILLIAM BAGOT
} King Richard's supporters in Parliament.

THE EARL OF SALISBURY
SIR STEPHEN SCROOP
THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE
THE ABBOT OF WESTMINSTER
} King Richard's friends and supporters.

HENRY PERCY, Earl of Northumberland.

HENRY PERCY, his son, later called "Hotspur."

LORD WILLOUGHBY
LORD ROSS
} supporters of Henry Bolingbroke.

LORD BERKELEY.

A Welsh Captain, two Gardeners, Ladies attending the Queen, a Keeper, a Groom, Lords, Heralds, Officers, Soldiers, Attendants.

Scene of the Action: England and Wales.
Time: April, 1398, to February, 1400.

The Tragedy of King Richard II

ACT I

SCENE I. *Windsor Castle.*

Enter KING RICHARD *and* JOHN OF GAUNT, *with other* Nobles *and* Attendants.

K. Rich. Old John of Gaunt, time-honour'd Lancaster,
Hast thou, according to thy oath and band,
Brought hither Henry Hereford, thy bold son,
Here to make good the boisterous late appeal,
Which then our leisure would not let us hear,
Against the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?

Gaunt. I have, my liege.

K. Rich. Tell me, moreover, hast thou sounded him
If he appeal the duke on ancient malice,
Or worthily, as a good subject should,
On some known ground of treachery in him?

Gaunt. As near as I could sift him on that argument,
On some apparent danger seen in him
Aim'd at your Highness, no inveterate malice.

K. Rich. Then call them to our presence; face to face,
And frowning brow to brow, ourselves will hear
The accuser and the accused freely speak.
High-stomach'd are they both, and full of ire,
In rage deaf as the sea, hasty as fire.

Enter BOLINGBROKE *and* MOWBRAY.

Boling. Many years of happy days befall
My gracious sovereign, my most loving liege!

[I. i] 1. *Old John of Gaunt* (1340–1399), born at Ghent, fourth son of Edward III. 2. *band:* bond. 4. *late appeal:* recent accusation at Shrewsbury, in January, 1398. This formal assertion the accuser was required to support in trial by combat. 9. *on:* on account of. 10. *worthily:* justifiably. 12. *sift:* examine. *argument:* subject. 13. *apparent danger:* open and dangerous plan. 18. *High-stomach'd:* hot-tempered.

Mow. Each day still better other's happiness,
Until the heavens, envying earth's good hap,
Add an immortal title to your crown!
K. Rich. We thank you both; yet one but flatters us,
As well appeareth by the cause you come,
Namely, to appeal each other of high treason.
Cousin of Hereford, what dost thou object
Against the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?
Boling. First, heaven be the record to my speech!
In the devotion of a subject's love,
Tendering the precious safety of my prince,
And free from other misbegotten hate,
Come I appellant to this princely presence.
Now, Thomas Mowbray, do I turn to thee,
And mark my greeting well; for what I speak
My body shall make good upon this earth,
Or my divine soul answer it in heaven.
Thou art a traitor and a miscreant,
Too good to be so and too bad to live,
Since the more fair and crystal is the sky,
The uglier seem the clouds that in it fly.
Once more, the more to aggravate the note,
With a foul traitor's name stuff I thy throat;
And wish, so please my sovereign, ere I move,
What my tongue speaks my right drawn sword may prove.
Mow. Let not my cold words here accuse my zeal.
'Tis not the trial of a woman's war,
The bitter clamour of two eager tongues,
Can arbitrate this cause betwixt us twain;
The blood is hot that must be cool'd for this.
Yet can I not of such tame patience boast
As to be hush'd and nought at all to say.
First, the fair reverence of your Highness curbs me
From giving reins and spurs to my free speech,

23. *hap:* fortune. 32. *Tendering:* holding dear. 34. *appellant:* as accuser. 40. *Too good:* too high in rank. 43. *aggravate the note:* intensify the reproach. 49. *eager:* sharp, biting.

Which else would post until it had return'd
These terms of treason doubled down his throat.
Setting aside his high blood's royalty,
And let him be no kinsman to my liege,
I do defy him, and I spit at him,
Call him a slanderous coward and a villain;
Which to maintain I would allow him odds,
And meet him, were I tied to run afoot
Even to the frozen ridges of the Alps,
Or any other ground inhabitable
Wherever Englishman durst set his foot.
Mean time let this defend my loyalty—
By all my hopes, most falsely doth he lie.

Boling. [*Throwing down his gauntlet*] Pale trembling coward, there I throw my gage,
Disclaiming here the kindred of the king,
And lay aside my high blood's royalty,
Which fear, not reverence, makes thee to except.
If guilty dread have left thee so much strength
As to take up mine honour's pawn, then stoop.
By that and all the rites of knighthood else,
Will I make good against thee, arm to arm,
What I have spoke, or thou canst worse devise.

Mow. I take it up; and by that sword I swear
Which gently laid my knighthood on my shoulder,
I'll answer thee in any fair degree
Or chivalrous design of knightly trial;
And when I mount, alive may I not light,
If I be traitor or unjustly fight!

K. Rich. What doth our cousin lay to Mowbray's charge?
It must be great that can inherit us
So much as of a thought of ill in him.

56. *post:* hasten. 58. *Setting . . . royalty:* disregarding his royal descent. 63. *tied:* bound, compelled. 65. *inhabitable:* uninhabitable. 69. *gage:* the glove thrown as a pledge to combat. 72. *except:* mention as an objection. 74. *pawn:* gage. 80–1. *I'll . . . trial:* I'll answer your charge in any just way or form of combat approved by the code of chivalry. 85. *inherit:* put in possession of.

Boling. Look what I speak. My life shall prove it true
That Mowbray hath received eight thousand nobles
In name of lendings for your Highness' soldiers,
The which he hath detain'd for lewd employments,
Like a false traitor and injurious villain.
Besides I say and will in battle prove,
Or here or elsewhere to the furthest verge
That ever was survey'd by English eye,
That all the treasons for these eighteen years
Complotted and contrived in this land
Fetch from false Mowbray their first head and spring.
Further I say and further will maintain,
Upon his bad life to make all this good,
That he did plot the Duke of Gloucester's death,
Suggest his soon-believing adversaries,
And consequently, like a traitor coward,
Sluiced out his innocent soul through streams of blood;
Which blood, like sacrificing Abel's, cries—
Even from the tongueless caverns of the earth—
To me for justice and rough chastisement;
And, by the glorious worth of my descent,
This arm shall do it, or this life be spent.

K. Rich. How high a pitch his resolution soars!
Thomas of Norfolk, what say'st thou to this?

Mow. O, let my sovereign turn away his face
And bid his ears a little while be deaf,
Till I have told this slander of his blood,
How God and good men hate so foul a liar.

88. *nobles:* gold coins worth 6s. 8d. 89. *lendings:* "money advanced to soldiers when the regular pay cannot be given" (Onions). 90. *lewd:* vile, dishonest. 91. *injurious:* malicious. 100. *Duke of Gloucester's death.* See Introduction. Bolingbroke's accusation of Mowbray is, of course, an accusation of King Richard also. 101. *Suggest:* incite, tempt. 102. *consequently:* subsequently. 104. *Which . . . cries.* Genesis 4:10—"The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." 109. *pitch:* in falconry, the height of the falcon's flight. 113. *slander of his blood:* disgrace or reproach to his name.

K. Rich. Mowbray, impartial are our eyes and ears.
Were he my brother, nay, my kingdom's heir,
As he is but my father's brother's son,
Now, by my sceptre's awe, I make a vow,
Such neighbour nearness to our sacred blood
Should nothing privilege him, nor partialize
The unstooping firmness of my upright soul.
He is our subject, Mowbray; so art thou.
Free speech and fearless I to thee allow.
Mow. Then, Bolingbroke, as low as to thy heart,
Through the false passage of thy throat, thou liest.
Three parts of that receipt I had for Calais
Disbursed I duly to his Highness' soldiers;
The other part reserved I by consent,
For that my sovereign liege was in my debt
Upon remainder of a dear account,
Since last I went to France to fetch his queen.
Now swallow down that lie. For Gloucester's death—
I slew him not; but to my own disgrace
Neglected my sworn duty in that case.
For you, my noble Lord of Lancaster,
The honourable father to my foe,
Once did I lay an ambush for your life,
A trespass that doth vex my grieved soul;
But ere I last received the sacrament
I did confess it, and exactly begg'd
Your Grace's pardon, and I hope I had it.
This is my fault. As for the rest appeal'd,
It issues from the rancour of a villain,
A recreant and most degenerate traitor,
Which in myself I boldly will defend,
And interchangeably hurl down my gage

126. *receipt:* money received. 130. *Upon . . . account:* for the balance of a heavy debt. 131. *Since last:* i.e., in 1396. 132–134. *For . . . case.* Mowbray hints at the king's guilt in Gloucester's death. In Holinshed he ignores Bolingbroke's accusation. 140. *exactly:* explicitly. 146. *interchangeably:* in turn.

Upon this overweening traitor's foot,
To prove myself a loyal gentleman
Even in the best blood chamber'd in his bosom.
In haste whereof, most heartily I pray
Your Highness to assign our trial day.
K. Rich. Wrath-kindled gentlemen, be ruled by me;
Let's purge this choler without letting blood.
This we prescribe, though no physician;
Deep malice makes too deep incision.
Forget, forgive; conclude and be agreed;
Our doctors say this is no month to bleed.
Good uncle, let this end where it begun;
We'll calm the Duke of Norfolk, you your son.
Gaunt. To be a make-peace shall become my age.
Throw down, my son, the Duke of Norfolk's gage.
K. Rich. And, Norfolk, throw down his.
Gaunt. [*As they both hesitate*] When, Harry, when?
Obedience bids I should not bid again.
K. Rich. Norfolk, throw down, we bid; there is no boot.
Mow. [*Kneeling*] Myself I throw, dread sovereign, at thy foot;
My life thou shalt command, but not my shame.
The one my duty owes; but my fair name,
Despite of Death that lives upon my grave,
To dark dishonour's use thou shalt not have.
I am disgraced, impeach'd, and baffled here,
Pierced to the soul with Slander's venom'd spear,
The which no balm can cure but his heart-blood
Which breathed this poison.
K. Rich. Rage must be withstood;
Give me his gage. Lions make leopards tame.
Mow. Yea, but not change his spots. Take but my shame,

150. *In haste whereof:* to hasten which. 153. *choler:* angry humor. 154–205. Note the use of rhyme. 156. *conclude:* come to an understanding. 164. *boot:* use, advantage. 170. *impeach'd:* discredited. *baffled:* punished as a recreant knight. 174. *Lions make leopards tame.* Lions were quartered on Richard's coat of arms, and the Mowbray arms bore a leopard as crest.

And I resign my gage. My dear dear lord,
The purest treasure mortal times afford
Is spotless reputation; that away,
Men are but gilded loam or painted clay.
A jewel in a ten-times-barr'd-up chest
Is a bold spirit in a loyal breast.
Mine honour is my life; both grow in one;
Take honour from me, and my life is done.
Then, dear my liege, mine honour let me try;
In that I live and for that will I die.

K. Rich. Cousin, throw up your gage. Do you begin.

Boling. O, God defend my soul from such deep sin!
Shall I seem crest-fall'n in my father's sight,
Or with pale beggar-fear impeach my height
Before this out-dared dastard? Ere my tongue
Shall wound my honour with such feeble wrong,
Or sound so base a parle, my teeth shall tear
The slavish motive of recanting fear,
And spit it bleeding in his high disgrace,
Where shame doth harbour—even in Mowbray's face.

[*Exit Gaunt.*

K. Rich. We were not born to sue, but to command;
Which since we cannot do to make you friends,
Be ready, as your lives shall answer it,
At Coventry, upon Saint Lambert's day.
There shall your swords and lances arbitrate
The swelling difference of your settled hate.
Since we can not atone you, we shall see
Justice design the victor's chivalry.
Lord Marshal, command our officers at arms
Be ready to direct these home alarms. [*Exeunt.*

186. *Cousin . . . begin.* Mowbray has refused to obey Richard. 189. *height:* high rank. 190. *out-dared:* cowed. 192. *parle:* trumpet-call for a parley. 193. *motive:* moving organ; here, the tongue. 199. *Saint Lambert's day:* September 17. 202. *atone:* reconcile. 202–3. *we shall . . . chivalry:* we shall see Justice indicate victory for him who deserves it.

SCENE II. *London. The* DUKE OF LANCASTER'S *palace.*

Enter JOHN OF GAUNT *with the* DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER.

Gaunt. Alas, the part I had in Woodstock's blood
Doth more solicit me than your exclaims
To stir against the butchers of his life!
But since correction lieth in those hands
Which made the fault that we cannot correct,
Put we our quarrel to the will of heaven,
Who, when they see the hours ripe on earth,
Will rain hot vengeance on offenders' heads.

Duch. Finds brotherhood in thee no sharper spur?
Hath love in thy old blood no living fire?
Edward's seven sons, whereof thyself art one,
Were as seven vials of his sacred blood,
Or seven fair branches springing from one root.
Some of those seven are dried by nature's course,
Some of those branches by the Destinies cut;
But Thomas, my dear lord, my life, my Gloucester,
One vial full of Edward's sacred blood,
One flourishing branch of his most royal root,
Is crack'd, and all the precious liquor spilt,
Is hack'd down, and his summer leaves all faded,
By Envy's hand and Murder's bloody axe.
Ah, Gaunt, his blood was thine! That bed, that womb,
That metal, that self mould that fashion'd thee
Made him a man; and though thou livest and breathest,
Yet art thou slain in him. Thou dost consent
In some large measure to thy father's death,
In that thou seest thy wretched brother die,
Who was the model of thy father's life.
Call it not patience, Gaunt; it is despair.
In suffering thus thy brother to be slaughter'd,
Thou showest the naked pathway to thy life,
Teaching stern Murder how to butcher thee.

[ii] 2. *exclaims:* exclamations. 4. *those hands:* i.e., Richard's. See lines 37–41. 23. *self:* selfsame. 28. *model:* copy.

That which in mean men we entitle patience
Is pale cold cowardice in noble breasts.
What shall I say? To safeguard thine own life,
The best way is to venge my Gloucester's death.
Gaunt. God's is the quarrel; for God's substitute,
His deputy anointed in His sight,
Hath caused his death; the which if wrongfully,
Let heaven revenge; for I may never lift
An angry arm against His minister.
Duch. Where then, alas, may I complain myself?
Gaunt. To God, the widow's champion and defense.
Duch. Why, then, I will. Farewell, old Gaunt.
Thou goest to Coventry, there to behold
Our cousin Hereford and fell Mowbray fight.
O, sit my husband's wrongs on Hereford's spear,
That it may enter butcher Mowbray's breast!
Or, if misfortune miss the first career,
Be Mowbray's sins so heavy in his bosom
That they may break his foaming courser's back,
And throw the rider headlong in the lists,
A caitiff recreant to my cousin Hereford!
Farewell, old Gaunt; thy sometimes brother's wife
With her companion Grief must end her life.
Gaunt. Sister, farewell; I must to Coventry.
As much good stay with thee as go with me!

33. *mean:* of low birth. 37–41. *God's . . . minister.* The idea here expressed by John of Gaunt that kingship by Divine Right implied responsibility to High Heaven is one to which Shakespeare frequently recurs in the history plays and elsewhere. Bolingbroke and other rebels make the serious mistake, which John of Gaunt here warns against, of assuming the right of judging and correcting the king. The subtle distinction between the king as erring man and kingship as a divine office is made in more than one Shakespearean play, notably *King John.* Cf. *Richard II,* III, ii, 54 ff.; III, iii, 16 ff., 73 ff.; IV, i, 121 ff. 46. *cousin.* The term was then used less explicitly than now. She was Bolingbroke's aunt by marriage and his sister-in-law. *fell:* fierce. 49. *career:* gallop at full speed in the tourney or combat. 53. *caitiff:* cowardly, contemptible. 54. *sometimes:* late.

Duch. Yet one word more. Grief boundeth where it falls,
Not with the empty hollowness, but weight.
I take my leave before I have begun,
For sorrow ends not when it seemeth done.
Commend me to thy brother, Edmund York.
Lo, this is all. Nay, yet depart not so;
Though this be all, do not so quickly go—
I shall remember more. Bid him—ah, what?—
With all good speed at Plashy visit me.
Alack, and what shall good old York there see
But empty lodgings and unfurnish'd walls,
Unpeopled offices, untrodden stones?
And what hear there for welcome but my groans?
Therefore commend me; let him not come there
To seek out Sorrow that dwells everywhere.
Desolate, desolate, will I hence and die.
The last leave of thee takes my weeping eye. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The lists at Coventry.*

Enter the Lord Marshal *and the* DUKE OF AUMERLE.

Mar. My Lord Aumerle, is Harry Hereford arm'd?
Aum. Yea, at all points, and longs to enter in.
Mar. The Duke of Norfolk, sprightfully and bold,
Stays but the summons of the appellant's trumpet.
Aum. Why, then, the champions are prepared, and stay
For nothing but his Majesty's approach.

The trumpets sound, and the KING *enters with his nobles,* GAUNT, BUSHY, BAGOT, GREEN, *and others. When they are set, enter* MOWBRAY *in arms, defendant, with a* Herald.

K. Rich. Marshal, demand of yonder champion
The cause of his arrival here in arms.

58. *boundeth:* reboundeth. 62. *Edmund York:* Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, fifth son of Edward III. 66. *Plashy:* her seat in Essex. 69. *offices:* kitchens and servants' quarters.

[iii] The events of this scene occurred in September, 1398, five months after those of Scene I. 3. *sprightfully:* with spirit.

Ask him his name, and orderly proceed
To swear him in the justice of his cause.
Mar. In God's name and the king's, say who thou art
And why thou comest thus knightly clad in arms,
Against what man thou comest, and what's thy quarrel.
Speak truly, on thy knighthood and thy oath;
As so defend thee heaven and thy valour!
Mow. My name is Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk,
Who hither come engaged by my oath—
Which God defend a knight should violate!—
Both to defend my loyalty and truth
To God, my king, and my succeeding issue,
Against the Duke of Hereford that appeals me;
And, by the grace of God and this mine arm,
To prove him, in defending of myself,
A traitor to my God, my king, and me;
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!

The trumpets sound. Enter BOLINGBROKE, *appellant, in armour, with a* Herald.

K. Rich. Marshal, ask yonder knight in arms,
Both who he is and why he cometh hither
Thus plated in habiliments of war,
And formally, according to our law,
Depose him in the justice of his cause.
Mar. What is thy name, and wherefore comest thou hither,
Before King Richard in his royal lists?
Against whom comest thou, and what's thy quarrel?
Speak like a true knight, so defend thee heaven!
Boling. Harry of Hereford, Lancaster, and Derby
Am I, who ready here do stand in arms,
To prove, by God's grace and my body's valour,
In lists, on Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk,
That he is a traitor, foul and dangerous,

18. *defend:* forbid. 28. *plated:* clad in armor. 30. *Depose:* examine under oath.

To God of heaven, King Richard, and to me;
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!
Mar. On pain of death, no person be so bold
Or daring-hardy as to touch the lists,
Except the marshal and such officers
Appointed to direct these fair designs.
Boling. Lord Marshal, let me kiss my sovereign's hand,
And bow my knee before his Majesty;
For Mowbray and myself are like two men
That vow a long and weary pilgrimage.
Then let us take a ceremonious leave
And loving farewell of our several friends.
Mar. The appellant in all duty greets your Highness,
And craves to kiss your hand and take his leave.
K. Rich. We will descend and fold him in our arms.
Cousin of Hereford, as thy cause is right,
So be thy fortune in this royal fight!
Farewell, my blood; which if today thou shed,
Lament we may, but not revenge thee dead.
Boling. O, let no noble eye profane a tear
For me, if I be gored with Mowbray's spear.
As confident as is the falcon's flight
Against a bird, do I with Mowbray fight.
My loving lord, I take my leave of you; [*To the Lord Marshal.*
Of you, my noble cousin, Lord Aumerle;
Not sick, although I have to do with death,
But lusty, young, and cheerly drawing breath.
Lo, as at English feasts, so I regreet [*To Gaunt.*
The daintiest last, to make the end most sweet.
O thou, the earthly author of my blood,
Whose youthful spirit, in me regenerate,
Doth with a twofold vigour lift me up
To reach at victory above my head,
Add proof unto mine armour with thy prayers,
And with thy blessings steel my lance's point

55–68. Note the use of rhyme. 59. *profane:* be profaned by. 67. *regreet:* salute. 73. *proof:* impenetrability.

That it may enter Mowbray's waxen coat,
And furbish new the name of John a Gaunt,
Even in the lusty haviour of his son.
Gaunt. God in thy good cause make thee prosperous!
Be swift like lightning in the execution;
And let thy blows, doubly redoubled,
Fall like amazing thunder on the casque
Of thy adverse pernicious enemy.
Rouse up thy youthful blood, be valiant, and live.
Boling. Mine innocency and Saint George to thrive!
Mow. However God or Fortune cast my lot,
There lives or dies, true to King Richard's throne,
A loyal, just, and upright gentleman.
Never did captive with a freer heart
Cast off his chains of bondage and embrace
His golden uncontroll'd enfranchisement,
More than my dancing soul doth celebrate
This feast of battle with mine adversary.
Most mighty liege, and my companion peers,
Take from my mouth the wish of happy years.
As gentle and as jocund as to jest
Go I to fight; Truth hath a quiet breast.
K. Rich. Farewell, my lord; securely I espy
Virtue with valour couched in thine eye.
Order the trial, marshal, and begin.
Mar. Harry of Hereford, Lancaster, and Derby,
Receive thy lance; and God defend the right!
Boling. Strong as a tower in hope, I cry amen.
Mar. Go bear this lance to Thomas, Duke of Norfolk.
First Her. Harry of Hereford, Lancaster, and Derby,
Stands here for God, his sovereign, and himself,
On pain to be found false and recreant,

75. *waxen:* penetrable. 81. *amazing:* bewildering. 84. *to thrive:* help me to succeed. 90. *enfranchisement:* release. 95. *to jest:* to act in a play. 97. *securely:* confidently. 98. *couched:* lying hidden. 99. *Order:* take charge of. 106. *recreant:* unfaithful to duty or pledge.

To prove the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray,
A traitor to his God, his king, and him;
And dares him to set forward to the fight.
Sec. Her. Here standeth Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk,
On pain to be found false and recreant,
Both to defend himself and to approve
Henry of Hereford, Lancaster, and Derby,
To God, his sovereign, and to him disloyal;
Courageously and with a free desire
Attending but the signal to begin.
Mar. Sound, trumpets; and set forward, combatants.
[*As a charge is sounded,* KING RICHARD *suddenly signals the proceedings to cease.*]
Stay! The king hath thrown his warder down.
K. Rich. Let them lay by their helmets and their spears,
And both return back to their chairs again.
Withdraw with us; and let the trumpets sound
While we return these dukes what we decree. [*A long flourish.*
Draw near,
And list what with our council we have done.
For that our kingdom's earth should not be soil'd
With that dear blood which it hath fostered;
And for our eyes do hate the dire aspect
Of civil wounds plough'd up with neighbours' sword;
And for we think the eagle-winged pride
Of sky-aspiring and ambitious thoughts,
With rival-hating envy, set on you
To wake our peace, which in our country's cradle
Draws the sweet infant breath of gentle sleep,
Which so roused up with boisterous untuned drums,

112. *approve:* prove. 116. *Attending:* awaiting. 118. *warder:* staff. Neither Holinshed nor Shakespeare explains Richard's motive. Froissart attributes his action to his fear of Bolingbroke's popularity. 122. *While:* until. *return:* say in answer to. 123–43. Richard's speech is confused, perhaps intentionally. 125. *For that:* in order that. 127, 129. *for:* because. 129–33. Omitted in F_1. 131. *envy:* enmity, malice. 134. *Which.* The antecedent may be *aspect* (127) or *pride* (129).

With harsh-resounding trumpets' dreadful bray,
And grating shock of wrathful iron arms,
Might from our quiet confines fright fair Peace
And make us wade even in our kindred's blood;
Therefore, we banish you our territories.
You, cousin Hereford, upon pain of life,
Till twice five summers have enrich'd our fields
Shall not regreet our fair dominions,
But tread the stranger paths of banishment.
Boling. Your will be done. This must my comfort be:
That sun that warms you here shall shine on me,
And those his golden beams to you here lent
Shall point on me and gild my banishment.
K. Rich. Norfolk, for thee remains a heavier doom,
Which I with some unwillingness pronounce:
The sly, slow hours shall not determinate
The dateless limit of thy dear exile;
The hopeless word of "never to return"
Breathe I against thee, upon pain of life.
Mow. A heavy sentence, my most sovereign liege,
And all unlook'd for from your Highness' mouth.
A dearer merit, not so deep a maim
As to be cast forth in the common air,
Have I deserved at your Highness' hands.
The language I have learn'd these forty years,
My native English, now I must forego;
And now my tongue's use is to me no more
Than an unstringed viol or a harp,
Or like a cunning instrument cased up,
Or, being open, put into his hands
That knows no touch to tune the harmony.
Within my mouth you have engaol'd my tongue,
Doubly portcullis'd with my teeth and lips;

143. *stranger:* foreign. 147. *point on:* aim at. 150. *sly:* stealthy. *determinate:* set a limit to. 151. *dear:* grievous. 156. *dearer merit:* better recompense. *maim:* disabling blow. 163. *cunning:* requiring a skillful player.

And dull, unfeeling, barren Ignorance
Is made my gaoler to attend on me.
I am too old to fawn upon a nurse,
Too far in years to be a pupil now.
What is thy sentence then but speechless death,
Which robs my tongue from breathing native breath?
K. Rich. It boots thee not to be compassionate;
After our sentence plaining comes too late.
Mow. Then thus I turn me from my country's light,
To dwell in solemn shades of endless night.
K. Rich. Return again, and take an oath with thee.
Lay on our royal sword your banish'd hands;
Swear by the duty that you owe to God—
Our part therein we banish with yourselves—
To keep the oath that we administer:
You never shall—so help you truth and God!—
Embrace each other's love in banishment;
Nor never look upon each other's face;
Nor never write, regreet, nor reconcile
This louring tempest of your home-bred hate;
Nor never by advised purpose meet
To plot, contrive, or complot any ill
'Gainst us, our state, our subjects, or our land.
Boling. I swear.
Mow. And I, to keep all this.
Boling. Norfolk, so far as to mine enemy—
By this time, had the king permitted us,
One of our souls had wander'd in the air,
Banish'd this frail sepulchre of our flesh,
As now our flesh is banish'd from this land.
Confess thy treasons ere thou fly the realm;
Since thou hast far to go, bear not along
The clogging burden of a guilty soul.
Mow. No, Bolingbroke; if ever I were traitor,

174. *boots:* avails. *compassionate:* self-pitying. 175. *plaining:* complaining. 184. *Embrace . . . love:* become friends. 186. *regreet:* salute.

My name be blotted from the book of life,
And I from heaven banish'd as from hence!
But what thou art, God, thou, and I do know;
And all too soon, I fear, the king shall rue.
Farewell, my liege. Now no way can I stray;
Save back to England, all the world's my way. [*Exit.*

K. Rich. Uncle, even in the glasses of thine eyes
I see thy grieved heart. Thy sad aspect
Hath from the number of his banish'd years
Pluck'd four away. [*To Bolingbroke.*] Six frozen winters spent,
Return with welcome home from banishment.

Boling. How long a time lies in one little word!
Four lagging winters and four wanton springs
End in a word: such is the breath of kings.

Gaunt. I thank my liege that in regard of me
He shortens four years of my son's exile;
But little vantage shall I reap thereby;
For, ere the six years that he hath to spend
Can change their moons and bring their times about,
My oil-dried lamp and time-bewasted light
Shall be extinct with age and endless night;
My inch of taper will be burnt and done,
And blindfold Death not let me see my son.

K. Rich. Why, uncle, thou hast many years to live.

Gaunt. But not a minute, king, that thou canst give.
Shorten my days thou canst with sullen sorrow,
And pluck nights from me, but not lend a morrow.
Thou canst help Time to furrow me with age,
But stop no wrinkle in his pilgrimage.
Thy word is current with him for my death,
But dead, thy kingdom cannot buy my breath.

K. Rich. Thy son is banish'd upon good advice,

206. *stray:* lose myself. 208. *glasses:* mirrors, eyeballs. 214. *wanton:* luxuriant. 221–52. Note the use of rhyme. 227. *sullen:* melancholy. 231. *current.* Time accepts the king's word as one accepts current coin. 233. *upon good advice:* after due consideration.

Whereto thy tongue a party-verdict gave.
Why at our justice seem'st thou then to lour?
Gaunt. Things sweet to taste prove in digestion sour.
You urged me as a judge; but I had rather
You would have bid me argue like a father.
O, had it been a stranger, not my child,
To smooth his fault I should have been more mild.
A partial slander sought I to avoid,
And in the sentence my own life destroy'd.
Alas, I look'd when some of you should say
I was too strict to make mine own away;
But you gave leave to my unwilling tongue
Against my will to do myself this wrong.
K. Rich. Cousin, farewell; and, uncle, bid him so.
Six years we banish him, and he shall go.
[*Flourish. Exeunt King Richard and train.*
Aum. Cousin, farewell! What presence must not know,
From where you do remain let paper show.
Mar. My lord, no leave take I; for I will ride,
As far as land will let me, by your side.
Gaunt. O, to what purpose dost thou hoard thy words,
That thou return'st no greeting to thy friends?
Boling. I have too few to take my leave of you,
When the tongue's office should be prodigal
To breathe the abundant dolour of the heart.
Gaunt. Thy grief is but thy absence for a time.
Boling. Joy absent, grief is present for that time.
Gaunt. What is six winters? They are quickly gone.
Boling. To men in joy; but grief makes one hour ten.
Gaunt. Call it a travel that thou takest for pleasure.
Boling. My heart will sigh when I miscall it so,
Which finds it an enforced pilgrimage.
Gaunt. The sullen passage of thy weary steps

234. *party-verdict:* share in a joint verdict. 239–42. Omitted in F_1. 241. *partial slander:* slanderous charge of partiality. 243. *look'd:* looked for. 249. *presence:* the presence-chamber at court. 257. *abundant dolour:* overflowing grief. 265. *sullen:* sorrowful.

Esteem as foil wherein thou art to set
The precious jewel of thy home return.
Boling. Nay, rather, every tedious stride I make
Will but remember me what a deal of world
I wander from the jewels that I love.
Must I not serve a long apprenticehood
To foreign passages, and in the end,
Having my freedom, boast of nothing else
But that I was a journeyman to Grief?
Gaunt. All places that the eye of heaven visits
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.
Teach thy necessity to reason thus;
There is no virtue like necessity.
Think not the king did banish thee,
But thou the king. Woe doth the heavier sit,
Where it perceives it is but faintly borne.
Go, say I sent thee forth to purchase honour
And not the king exiled thee; or suppose
Devouring pestilence hangs in our air
And thou art flying to a fresher clime.
Look, what thy soul holds dear, imagine it
To lie that way thou go'st, not whence thou comest.
Suppose the singing birds musicians,
The grass whereon thou tread'st the presence strew'd,
The flowers fair ladies, and thy steps no more
Than a delightful measure or a dance;
For gnarling sorrow hath less power to bite
The man that mocks at it and sets it light.
Boling. O, who can hold a fire in his hand
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?

266. *foil:* setting of a jewel; hence, that which makes more attractive by contrast. 268–93. Omitted in F_1. 269. *remember:* remind. 270. *wander:* wander over. 272. *passages:* wanderings. 274. *journeyman.* Even after serving in exile his apprenticeship to Grief, he will, as journeyman, continue to serve Grief as master. 281. *faintly:* faintheartedly. 289. *presence strew'd:* the king's presence-chamber strewn with rushes. 291. *measure:* stately dance. 292. *gnarling:* snarling. 293. *sets it light:* regards it lightly.

Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite
By bare imagination of a feast?
Or wallow naked in December snow
By thinking on fantastic summer's heat?
O, no! the apprehension of the good
Gives but the greater feeling to the worse.
Fell Sorrow's tooth doth never rankle more
Than when he bites, but lanceth not the sore.
Gaunt. Come, come, my son, I'll bring thee on thy way;
Had I thy youth and cause, I would not stay.
Boling. Then, England's ground, farewell; sweet soil, adieu;
My mother, and my nurse, that bears me yet!
Where'er I wander, boast of this I can,
Though banish'd, yet a trueborn Englishman. [*Exeunt.*

Scene iv. *London. The court.*

Enter the King, Bagot, *and* Green *at one door*, Aumerle *at another. The* King's *companions call his attention to the arrival of* Aumerle.

K. Rich. We did observe. Cousin Aumerle,
How far brought you high Hereford on his way?
Aum. I brought high Hereford, if you call him so,
But to the next highway, and there I left him.
K. Rich. And say, what store of parting tears were shed?
Aum. Faith, none for me; except the northeast wind,
Which then blew bitterly against our faces,
Awaked the sleeping rheum, and so by chance
Did grace our hollow parting with a tear.
K. Rich. What said our cousin when you parted with him?
Aum. "Farewell!"

299. *fantastic:* imaginary. 300. *apprehension:* idea, product of imagination. 302. *rankle:* cause to fester. 305. *stay:* delay.

[iv] 1. *Cousin Aumerle:* Edward, Duke of Aumerle, son of the Duke of York. 2. *high:* arrogant. 8. *rheum:* moisture, tears.

And, for my heart disdained that my tongue
Should so profane the word, that taught me craft
To counterfeit oppression of such grief
That words seem'd buried in my sorrow's grave.
Marry, would the word "farewell" have lengthen'd hours
And added years to his short banishment,
He should have had a volume of farewells;
But since it would not, he had none of me.
K. Rich. He is our cousin, cousin; but 'tis doubt,
When time shall call him home from banishment,
Whether our kinsman come to see his friends.
Ourself and Bushy, Bagot here, and Green
Observed his courtship to the common people,
How he did seem to dive into their hearts
With humble and familiar courtesy,
What reverence he did throw away on slaves,
Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles
And patient underbearing of his fortune,
As 'twere to banish their affects with him.
Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench;
A brace of draymen bid God speed him well
And had the tribute of his supple knee,
With "Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends,"
As were our England in reversion his,
And he our subjects' next degree in hope.
Green. Well, he is gone; and with him go these thoughts.
Now for the rebels which stand out in Ireland,
Expedient manage must be made, my liege,
Ere further leisure yield them further means
For their advantage and your Highness' loss.
K. Rich. We will ourself in person to this war;
And, for our coffers, with too great a court

12–13. *for . . . word.* This clause is the antecedent of *that* (13). 14. *counterfeit:* dissemble. 29. *underbearing:* enduring. 30. *affects:* things most loved; or, perhaps, kind feelings. 32. *brace:* couple. 35. *reversion:* right of future possession. 39. *Expedient manage:* expeditious arrangement.

And liberal largess, are grown somewhat light,
We are enforced to farm our royal realm;
The revenue whereof shall furnish us
For our affairs in hand. If that come short,
Our substitutes at home shall have blank charters;
Whereto, when they shall know what men are rich,
They shall subscribe them for large sums of gold
And send them after to supply our wants;
For we will make for Ireland presently.

Enter BUSHY.

Bushy, what news?

Bushy. Old John of Gaunt is grievous sick, my lord,
Suddenly taken; and hath sent post haste
To entreat your Majesty to visit him.

K. Rich. Where lies he?

Bushy. At Ely House.

K. Rich. Now put it, God, in the physician's mind
To help him to his grave immediately!
The lining of his coffers shall make coats
To deck our soldiers for these Irish wars.
Come, gentlemen, let's all go visit him.
Pray God we may make haste, and come too late!

All. Amen. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I. *London. Ely House.*

JOHN OF GAUNT *on his sick-bed, attended by the* DUKE OF YORK *and others.*

Gaunt. Will the king come, that I may breathe my last
In wholesome counsel to his unstaid youth?

45. *farm:* sell to the highest bidder the right to collect taxes. 48. *blank charters:* acknowledgments of indebtedness, with blank spaces for the names of the parties and the sum that each was to advance. 50. *subscribe them for:* write them down for. 52. *presently:* at once. 58. *Ely House:* the London palace of the Bishop of Ely.
[II. i] 2. *unstaid:* thoughtless, rash.

York. Vex not yourself, nor strive not with your breath,
For all in vain comes counsel to his ear.
Gaunt. O, but they say the tongues of dying men
Enforce attention like deep harmony.
Where words are scarce, they are seldom spent in vain,
For they breathe truth that breathe their words in pain.
He that no more must say is listen'd more
Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose.
More are men's ends mark'd than their lives before.
The setting sun, and music at the close,
As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last,
Writ in remembrance more than things long past.
Though Richard my life's counsel would not hear,
My death's sad tale may yet undeaf his ear.
York. No; it is stopp'd with other flattering sounds,
As praises, of whose taste the wise are fond,
Lascivious metres, to whose venom sound
The open ear of youth doth always listen;
Report of fashions in proud Italy,
Whose manners still our tardy, apish nation
Limps after in base imitation.
Where doth the world thrust forth a vanity—
So it be new, there's no respect how vile—
That is not quickly buzz'd into his ears?
Then all too late comes counsel to be heard,
Where will doth mutiny with wit's regard.
Direct not him whose way himself will choose;
'Tis breath thou lack'st, and that breath wilt thou lose.
Gaunt. Methinks I am a prophet new inspired
And thus expiring do foretell of him:
His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last,
For violent fires soon burn out themselves;

10. *glose:* flatter. 12. *close:* harmonious concluding chords. 16. *My death's sad tale:* my solemn dying speech. 21. *proud Italy.* Many sixteenth-century Englishmen deplored the growing influence of Italian manners. 22. *still:* always. 25. *respect:* heed. 28. *mutiny:* quarrel. *wit's regard:* the mind's thoughtful consideration.

Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short;
He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes;
With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder;
Light Vanity, insatiate cormorant,
Consuming means, soon preys upon itself.
This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth,
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,
For Christian service and true chivalry,
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son,
This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,
Dear for her reputation through the world,
Is now leased out—I die pronouncing it—
Like to a tenement or pelting farm.
England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,
With inky blots, and rotten parchment bonds.
That England, that was wont to conquer others,
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.
Ah, would the scandal vanish with my life,
How happy then were my ensuing death!

38. *cormorant:* a gluttonous bird. 44. *infection:* pollution, plague. 52. *by:* on account of. 55. *Jewry:* Palestine. 60. *tenement:* small holding. *pelting:* paltry.

Enter KING RICHARD *and* QUEEN, AUMERLE, BUSHY, GREEN, BAGOT, ROSS, *and* WILLOUGHBY.

York. The king is come. Deal mildly with his youth;
For young hot colts being raged do rage the more.
Queen. How fares our noble uncle, Lancaster?
K. Rich. What comfort, man? How is't with aged Gaunt?
Gaunt. O, how that name befits my composition!
Old Gaunt indeed, and gaunt in being old!
Within me Grief hath kept a tedious fast;
And who abstains from meat that is not gaunt?
For sleeping England long time have I watch'd;
Watching breeds leanness, leanness is all gaunt.
The pleasure that some fathers feed upon,
Is my strict fast; I mean my children's looks;
And therein fasting, hast thou made me gaunt.
Gaunt am I for the grave, gaunt as a grave,
Whose hollow womb inherits nought but bones.
K. Rich. Can sick men play so nicely with their names?
Gaunt. No, misery makes sport to mock itself.
Since thou dost seek to kill my name in me,
I mock my name, great king, to flatter thee.
K. Rich. Should dying men flatter with those that live?
Gaunt. No, no, men living flatter those that die.
K. Rich. Thou, now a-dying, say'st thou flatterest me.
Gaunt. O, no! thou diest, though I the sicker be.
K. Rich. I am in health, I breathe, and see thee ill.
Gaunt. Now He that made me knows I see thee ill;
Ill in myself to see, and in thee seeing ill.
Thy death-bed is no lesser than thy land
Wherein thou liest in reputation sick;
And thou, too careless patient as thou art,
Commit'st thy anointed body to the cure
Of those physicians that first wounded thee.
A thousand flatterers sit within thy crown,
Whose compass is no bigger than thy head;

70. *raged:* enraged. 73. *composition:* state of health. 77. *watch'd:* lain awake. 83. *inherits:* holds. 84. *nicely:* triflingly.

And yet, incaged in so small a verge,
The waste is no whit lesser than thy land.
O, had thy grandsire with a prophet's eye
Seen how his son's son should destroy his sons,
From forth thy reach he would have laid thy shame,
Deposing thee before thou wert possess'd,
Which art possess'd now to depose thyself.
Why, cousin, wert thou regent of the world,
It were a shame to let this land by lease;
But for thy world enjoying but this land,
Is it not more than shame to shame it so?
Landlord of England art thou now, not king;
Thy state of law is bondslave to the law;
And thou—

K. Rich. A lunatic, lean-witted fool,
Presuming on an ague's privilege,
Darest with thy frozen admonition
Make pale our cheek, chasing the royal blood
With fury from his native residence.
Now, by my seat's right royal majesty,
Wert thou not brother to great Edward's son,
This tongue that runs so roundly in thy head
Should run thy head from thy unreverent shoulders.

Gaunt. O, spare me not, my brother Edward's son,
For that I was his father Edward's son.
That blood already, like the pelican,
Hast thou tapp'd out and drunkenly caroused.
My brother Gloucester, plain, well-meaning soul—
Whom fair befall in heaven 'mongst happy souls!—

102. *verge:* circle. Here there is allusion to the legal sense of *verge*, the extent of the king's court, formerly twelve miles in radius. 103. *waste.* Here there is reference to the legal sense "destruction of houses, woods, lands, etc., done by the tenant to the prejudice of the heir" (Onions). 107, 108. *possess'd:* (a) put in possession, (b) seized by a spirit of evil or madness. 114. *state of law:* legal status as king. 122. *roundly:* freely. 126. *pelican:* an allusion to the then current belief that the pelican fed its young with its blood. 129. *Whom fair befall:* to whom may good come!

May be a precedent and witness good
That thou respect'st not spilling Edward's blood.
Join with the present sickness that I have;
And thy unkindness be like crooked age,
To crop at once a too long wither'd flower.
Live in thy shame, but die not shame with thee!
These words hereafter thy tormentors be!
Convey me to my bed, then to my grave;
Love they to live that love and honour have.
[*His attendants bear him out.*

K. Rich. And let them die that age and sullens have;
For both hast thou, and both become the grave.

York. I do beseech your Majesty, impute his words
To wayward sickliness and age in him.
He loves you, on my life, and holds you dear
As Harry Duke of Hereford, were he here.

K. Rich. Right, you say true. As Hereford's love, so his;
As theirs, so mine; and all be as it is.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND.

North. My liege, old Gaunt commends him to your Majesty.

K. Rich. What says he?

North. Nay, nothing; all is said.
His tongue is now a stringless instrument;
Words, life, and all, old Lancaster hath spent.

York. Be York the next that must be bankrupt so!
Though death be poor, it ends a mortal woe.

K. Rich. The ripest fruit first falls, and so doth he;
His time is spent, our pilgrimage must be.
So much for that. Now for our Irish wars.
We must supplant those rough, rug-headed kerns,
Which live like venom where no venom else

131. *respect'st not:* hast no scruples about. 139. *sullens:* peevishness. 140. *become:* be fit. 144. *As Harry:* i.e., as he does Harry. Richard purposely misinterprets York's words. 156. *rug-headed kerns:* rough-haired Irish soldiers. 157. *no venom else:* an allusion to the fact that there are no snakes in Ireland.

But only they have privilege to live.
And for these great affairs do ask some charge,
Towards our assistance we do seize to us
The plate, coin, revenues, and moveables,
Whereof our uncle Gaunt did stand possess'd.
York. How long shall I be patient? Ah, how long
Shall tender duty make me suffer wrong?
Not Gloucester's death, nor Hereford's banishment,
Not Gaunt's rebukes, nor England's private wrongs,
Nor the prevention of poor Bolingbroke
About his marriage, nor my own disgrace,
Have ever made me sour my patient cheek,
Or bend one wrinkle on my sovereign's face.
I am the last of noble Edward's sons,
Of whom thy father, Prince of Wales, was first.
In war was never lion raged more fierce,
In peace was never gentle lamb more mild,
Than was that young and princely gentleman.
His face thou hast, for even so look'd he,
Accomplish'd with the number of thy hours;
But when he frown'd, it was against the French
And not against his friends. His noble hand
Did win what he did spend and spent not that
Which his triumphant father's hand had won.
His hands were guilty of no kindred blood,
But bloody with the enemies of his kin.
O Richard! York is too far gone with grief,
Or else he never would compare between.
K. Rich. Why, uncle, what's the matter?
York. O my liege,
Pardon me, if you please; if not, I, pleased

166. ***Gaunt's rebukes:*** rebukes given to Gaunt. 167–8. ***prevention . . . marriage.*** This is Shakespeare's only reference to Richard's interference with Bolingbroke's intended marriage, during his exile, with a cousin of Charles VI, King of France. According to Holinshed, Richard sent Salisbury to prevent the marriage. 173. ***lion raged:*** lion that raged. 177. ***Accomplish'd . . . hours:*** at your age. 185. ***compare between:*** draw comparisons.

Not to be pardon'd, am content withal.
Seek you to seize and gripe into your hands
The royalties and rights of banish'd Hereford?
Is not Gaunt dead, and doth not Hereford live?
Was not Gaunt just, and is not Harry true?
Did not the one deserve to have an heir?
Is not his heir a well-deserving son?
Take Hereford's rights away, and take from Time
His charters and his customary rights;
Let not tomorrow then ensue today;
Be not thyself; for how art thou a king
But by fair sequence and succession?
Now, afore God—God forbid I say true!—
If you do wrongfully seize Hereford's rights,
Call in the letters patent that he hath
By his attorneys-general to sue
His livery, and deny his offer'd homage,
You pluck a thousand dangers on your head,
You lose a thousand well-disposed hearts
And prick my tender patience to those thoughts
Which honour and allegiance cannot think.

K. Rich. Think what you will, we seize into our hands
His plate, his goods, his money, and his lands.

York. I'll not be by the while. My liege, farewell!
What will ensue hereof, there's none can tell;
But by bad courses may be understood
That their events can never fall out good. [*Exit.*

K. Rich. Go, Bushy, to the Earl of Wiltshire straight.
Bid him repair to us to Ely House
To see this business. Tomorrow next
We will for Ireland; and 'tis time, I trow;

190. *royalties:* privileges of a member of the royal family. 202. *Call in the letters patent:* recall Bolingbroke's right to *sue his livery*, i.e., "to institute suit to obtain possession of lands which are in the hands of the court of wards" (Onions). 203. *attorneys-general:* deputies, legal substitutes. 214. *events:* outcome. 215. *Earl of Wiltshire:* William Scrope, Lord Treasurer of England. 217. *see:* see to. 218. *I trow:* I dare say.

And we create, in absence of ourself,
Our uncle York lord governor of England;
For he is just and always loved us well.
Come on, our queen; tomorrow must we part.
Be merry, for our time of stay is short.

[*Flourish. Exeunt King, Queen, Aumerle, Bushy, Green, and Bagot.*

North. Well, lords, the Duke of Lancaster is dead.

Ross. And living too; for now his son is duke.

Willo. Barely in title, not in revenues.

North. Richly in both, if Justice had her right.

Ross. My heart is great; but it must break with silence,
Ere 't be disburden'd with a liberal tongue.

North. Nay, speak thy mind; and let him ne'er speak more
That speaks thy words again to do thee harm!

Willo. Tends that thou wouldst speak to the Duke of Hereford?
If it be so, out with it boldly, man;
Quick is mine ear to hear of good towards him.

Ross. No good at all that I can do for him;
Unless you call it good to pity him,
Bereft and gelded of his patrimony.

North. Now, afore God, 'tis shame such wrongs are borne
In him, a royal prince, and many moe
Of noble blood in this declining land.
The king is not himself, but basely led
By flatterers; and what they will inform,
Merely in hate, 'gainst any of us all,
That will the king severely prosecute
'Gainst us, our lives, our children, and our heirs.

Ross. The commons hath he pill'd with grievous taxes,
And quite lost their hearts; the nobles hath he fined
For ancient quarrels, and quite lost their hearts.

228. *great:* burdened. 229. *liberal:* unrestrained. 239. *moe:* more. 241. *basely led.* Richard's unworthy favorites were of humble birth. 242. *inform:* charge officially. 243. *Merely in hate* entirely from hate. 246. *pill'd:* robbed.

Willo. And daily new exactions are devised,
As blanks, benevolences, and I wot not what.
But what, o' God's name, doth become of this?
North. Wars have not wasted it, for warr'd he hath not,
But basely yielded upon compromise
That which his noble ancestors achieved with blows.
More hath he spent in peace than they in wars.
Ross. The Earl of Wiltshire hath the realm in farm.
Willo. The king's grown bankrupt, like a broken man.
North. Reproach and dissolution hangeth over him.
Ross. He hath not money for these Irish wars,
His burdenous taxations notwithstanding,
But by the robbing of the banish'd duke.
North. His noble kinsman! Most degenerate king!
But, lords, we hear this fearful tempest sing,
Yet seek no shelter to avoid the storm;
We see the wind sit sore upon our sails,
And yet we strike not, but securely perish.
Ross. We see the very wreck that we must suffer;
And unavoided is the danger now,
For suffering so the causes of our wreck.
North. Not so; even through the hollow eyes of Death
I spy Life peering; but I dare not say
How near the tidings of our comfort is.
Willo. Nay, let us share thy thoughts, as thou dost ours.
Ross. Be confident to speak, Northumberland.
We three are but thyself; and, speaking so,
Thy words are but as thoughts; therefore, be bold.
North. Then thus: I have from Port le Blanc, a bay
In Brittany, received intelligence

250. *blanks, benevolences:* blank charters and forced loans. See I, iv, 48. 253. *basely yielded:* an allusion to Richard's unpopular peace with France. In 1397 Brest and Cherbourg had been restored to France upon payment of the ransom for which they had been held since 1378. 256. *in farm.* See I, iv, 45. 265. *sit sore:* press hard. 266. *strike:* lower sail. *securely:* overconfidently. 267. *wreck:* destruction. 268. *unavoided:* inevitable. 269. *suffering:* bearing patiently.

That Harry Duke of Hereford, Rainold Lord Cobham,
. 280
That late broke from the Duke of Exeter,
His brother, Archbishop late of Canterbury,
Sir Thomas Erpingham, Sir John Ramston,
Sir John Norbery, Sir Robert Waterton, and Francis Quoint,
All these well furnish'd by the Duke of Bretagne
With eight tall ships, three thousand men of war,
Are making hither with all due expedience
And shortly mean to touch our northern shore.
Perhaps they had ere this, but that they stay
The first departing of the king for Ireland. 290
If then we shall shake off our slavish yoke,
Imp out our drooping country's broken wing,
Redeem from broking pawn the blemish'd crown,
Wipe off the dust that hides our sceptre's gilt,
And make high majesty look like itself,
Away with me in post to Ravenspurgh;
But if you faint, as fearing to do so,
Stay and be secret, and myself will go.

Ross. To horse, to horse! Urge doubts to them that fear.

Willo. Hold out my horse, and I will first be there. 300

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Windsor Castle.*

Enter QUEEN, BUSHY, *and* BAGOT.

Bushy. Madam, your Majesty is too much sad.
You promised, when you parted with the king,

280. Malone, believing that a line is missing here, suggests, "The son of Richard, Earl of Arundel." Holinshed states that Thomas, son of Richard, Earl of Arundel, escaped from the Duke of Exeter and went to his uncle, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury. 286. *tall:* excellent. 287. *expedience:* speed. 289. *stay:* await. 290. *first:* prior. 292. *Imp out:* patch out, a term from falconry meaning to engraft feathers in the injured wing of the falcon. 293. *broking pawn:* security held by a broker. 296. *post:* haste. *Ravenspurgh:* a port at the mouth of the Humber. 300. *Hold out my horse:* if my horse hold out.

To lay aside life-harming heaviness
And entertain a cheerful disposition.

Queen. To please the king I did; to please myself
I cannot do it; yet I know no cause
Why I should welcome such a guest as Grief,
Save bidding farewell to so sweet a guest
As my sweet Richard. Yet again, methinks,
Some unborn Sorrow, ripe in Fortune's womb,
Is coming towards me, and my inward soul
With nothing trembles. At some thing it grieves,
More than with parting from my lord the king.

Bushy. Each substance of a grief hath twenty shadows,
Which shows like Grief itself, but is not so;
For Sorrow's eye, glazed with blinding tears,
Divides one thing entire to many objects,
Like perspectives, which rightly gazed upon
Show nothing but confusion, eyed awry
Distinguish form; so your sweet Majesty,
Looking awry upon your lord's departure,
Find shapes of grief, more than himself, to wail;
Which, look'd on as it is, is nought but shadows
Of what it is not. Then, thrice-gracious queen,
More than your lord's departure weep not. More's not seen;
Or if it be, 'tis with false sorrow's eye,
Which for things true weeps things imaginary.

Queen. It may be so; but yet my inward soul
Persuades me it is otherwise. Howe'er it be,
I cannot but be sad—so heavy sad
As, though on thinking on no thought I think,
Makes me with heavy nothing faint and shrink.

Bushy. 'Tis nothing but conceit, my gracious lady.

[ii] 4. *disposition:* mood. 15. *shows:* appears. 17. *to:* into. 18. *perspectives:* pictures or figures "constructed so as to appear distorted except from one particular point of view" (Onions). 20. *Distinguish form:* make the form distinct. 31. *As . . think:* as though in thinking I fix my thoughts on nothing. 33. *conceit:* imagination.

Queen. 'Tis nothing less; Conceit is still derived
From some forefather Grief; mine is not so,
For nothing hath begot my something grief.
Or something hath the nothing that I grieve.
'Tis in reversion that I do possess;
But what it is, that is not yet known; what
I cannot name; 'tis nameless woe, I wot.

Enter GREEN.

Green. God save your Majesty! And well met, gentlemen!
I hope the king is not yet shipp'd for Ireland.
Queen. Why hopest thou so? 'Tis better hope he is;
For his designs crave haste, his haste good hope.
Then wherefore dost thou hope he is not shipp'd?
Green. That he, our hope, might have retired his power,
And driven into despair an enemy's hope,
Who strongly hath set footing in this land.
The banish'd Bolingbroke repeals himself,
And with uplifted arms is safe arrived
At Ravenspurgh.
Queen. Now God in heaven forbid!
Green. Ah, madam, 'tis too true; and, that is worse,
The Lord Northumberland, his son young Henry Percy,
The Lords of Ross, Beaumond, and Willoughby,
With all their powerful friends, are fled to him.
Bushy. Why have you not proclaim'd Northumberland
And all the rest revolted faction traitors?
Green. We have; whereupon the Earl of Worcester
Hath broke his staff, resign'd his stewardship,
And all the household servants fled with him
To Bolingbroke.
Queen. So, Green, thou art the midwife to my woe,
And Bolingbroke my sorrow's dismal heir.

34–5. *conceit . . . grief:* imagined grief always comes from earlier grief. 38. *reversion:* prospect of future possession. 40. *wot:* know. 46. *retired his power:* withdrawn his army. 49. *repeals:* recalls from exile. 59. *broke his staff:* broken his staff of office, in token of his resignation as Lord High Steward.

Now hath my soul brought forth her prodigy,
And I, a gasping, new-deliver'd mother,
Have woe to woe, sorrow to sorrow join'd.
Bushy. Despair not, madam.
Queen. Who shall hinder me?
I will despair, and be at enmity
With cozening Hope. He is a flatterer,
A parasite, a keeper back of Death,
Who gently would dissolve the bands of life,
Which false Hope lingers in extremity.

Enter YORK.

Green. Here comes the Duke of York.
Queen. With signs of war about his aged neck.
O, full of careful business are his looks!
Uncle, for God's sake, speak comfortable words.
York. Should I do so, I should belie my thoughts.
Comfort's in heaven; and we are on the earth,
Where nothing lives but crosses, cares, and grief.
Your husband, he is gone to save far off,
Whilst others come to make him lose at home.
Here am I left to underprop his land,
Who, weak with age, cannot support myself.
Now comes the sick hour that his surfeit made;
Now shall he try his friends that flatter'd him.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My lord, your son was gone before I came.
York. He was? Why, so! Go all which way it will!
The nobles they are fled; the commons they are cold,
And will, I fear, revolt on Hereford's side.
Sirrah, get thee to Plashy, to my sister Gloucester;

64. *prodigy:* monstrous birth. 69. *cozening:* cheating. 72. *lingers:* causes to linger. 74. *signs of war.* York is in armor. 75. *careful:* anxious. 76. *comfortable:* comforting. 77. Omitted in F1. 79. *crosses:* misfortunes. 86. *your son:* the Duke of Aumerle, who had accompanied Richard to Ireland.

Bid her send me presently a thousand pound.
Hold, take my ring.
Serv. My lord, I had forgot to tell your lordship,
Today, as I came by, I called there—
But I shall grieve you to report the rest.
York. What is't, knave?
Serv. An hour before I came, the duchess died.
York. God for his mercy! What a tide of woes
Comes rushing on this woeful land at once!
I know not what to do. I would to God,
So my untruth had not provoked him to it,
The king had cut off my head with my brother's.
What, are there no posts dispatch'd for Ireland?
How shall we do for money for these wars?
Come, sister—cousin, I would say—pray, pardon me.
Go, fellow, get thee home, provide some carts
And bring away the armour that is there. [*Exit Servant.*
Gentlemen, will you go muster men?
If I know how or which way to order these affairs
Thus thrust disorderly into my hands,
Never believe me. Both are my kinsmen:
The one is my sovereign, whom both my oath
And duty bids defend; the other again
Is my kinsman, whom the king hath wrong'd,
Whom conscience and my kindred bids to right.
Well, somewhat we must do. Come, cousin, I'll
Dispose of you.
Gentlemen, go, muster up your men,
And meet me presently at Berkeley.
I should to Plashy too,
But time will not permit. All is uneven,
And everything is left at six and seven.
[*Exeunt York and Queen.*
Bushy. The wind sits fair for news to go to Ireland,

96. *knave:* a familiar term in addressing servants. 101. *untruth:* disloyalty. 115. *kindred:* kinship. 119. *Berkeley:* Berkeley Castle on the Severn, in Gloucestershire. 121. *uneven:* disordered.

But none returns. For us to levy power
Proportionable to the enemy
Is all unpossible.
Green. Besides, our nearness to the king in love
Is near the hate of those love not the king.
Bagot. And that's the wavering commons, for their love
Lies in their purses; and whoso empties them
By so much fills their hearts with deadly hate.
Bushy. Wherein the king stands generally condemn'd.
Bagot. If judgment lie in them, then so do we,
Because we ever have been near the king.
Green. Well, I will for refuge straight to Bristol Castle;
The Earl of Wiltshire is already there.
Bushy. Thither will I with you; for little office
The hateful commons will perform for us,
Except like curs to tear us all to pieces.
Will you go along with us?
Bagot. No; I will to Ireland to his Majesty.
Farewell! If heart's presages be not vain,
We three here part that ne'er shall meet again.
Bushy. That's as York thrives to beat back Bolingbroke.
Green. Alas, poor duke! The task he undertakes
Is numbering sands and drinking oceans dry.
Where one on his side fights, thousands will fly.
Farewell at once, for once, for all, and ever.
Bushy. Well, we may meet again.
Bagot. I fear me, never.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The wilds in Gloucestershire.*

Enter BOLINGBROKE *and* NORTHUMBERLAND, *with Forces.*

Boling. How far is it, my lord, to Berkeley now?
North. Believe me, noble lord,

125. *Proportionable:* proportionate. 128. *those love:* those that love. 138. *hateful:* hostile.

I am a stranger here in Gloucestershire.
These high wild hills and rough uneven ways
Draws out our miles, and makes them wearisome;
And yet your fair discourse hath been as sugar,
Making the hard way sweet and delectable.
But I bethink me what a weary way
From Ravenspurgh to Cotswold will be found
In Ross and Willoughby, wanting your company,
Which, I protest, hath very much beguiled
The tediousness and process of my travel.
But theirs is sweetened with the hope to have
The present benefit which I possess;
And hope to joy is little less in joy
Than hope enjoy'd. By this the weary lords
Shall make their way seem short, as mine hath done
By sight of what I have, your noble company.
Boling. Of much less value is my company
Than your good words. But who comes here?

Enter Henry Percy.

North. It is my son, young Harry Percy,
Sent from my brother Worcester, whencesoever.
Harry, how fares your uncle?
Percy. I had thought, my lord, to have learn'd his health of you.
North. Why, is he not with the queen?
Percy. No, my good lord; he hath forsook the court,
Broken his staff of office, and dispersed
The household of the king.
North. What was his reason?
He was not so resolved when last we spake together.
Percy. Because your lordship was proclaimed traitor.
But he, my lord, is gone to Ravenspurgh,
To offer service to the Duke of Hereford,

[iii] 9. *Cotswold:* the Cotswold hills in Gloucestershire. 12. *tediousness and process:* tedious course. 22. *whencesoever:* from wherever he may be.

And sent me over by Berkeley, to discover
What power the Duke of York had levied there;
Then with directions to repair to Ravenspurgh.
North. Have you forgot the Duke of Hereford, boy?
Percy. No, my good lord, for that is not forgot
Which ne'er I did remember. To my knowledge,
I never in my life did look on him.
North. Then learn to know him now; this is the duke.
Percy. My gracious lord, I tender you my service,
Such as it is, being tender, raw, and young,
Which elder days shall ripen and confirm
To more approved service and desert.
Boling. I thank thee, gentle Percy; and be sure
I count myself in nothing else so happy
As in a soul remembering my good friends;
And, as my fortune ripens with thy love,
It shall be still thy true love's recompense.
My heart this covenant makes; my hand thus seals it.
North. How far is it to Berkeley? And what stir
Keeps good old York there with his men of war?
Percy. There stands the castle, by yon tuft of trees,
Mann'd with three hundred men, as I have heard;
And in it are the Lords of York, Berkeley, and Seymour;
None else of name and noble estimate.

Enter ROSS *and* WILLOUGHBY.

North. Here come the Lords of Ross and Willoughby,
Bloody with spurring, fiery-red with haste.
Boling. Welcome, my lords. I wot your love pursues
A banish'd traitor. All my treasury
Is yet but unfelt thanks, which more enrich'd
Shall be your love and labour's recompense.
Ross. Your presence makes us rich, most noble lord.
Willo. And far surmounts our labour to attain it.
Boling. Evermore thanks, the exchequer of the poor,

42. *young.* Henry Percy, "Hotspur," was thirty-five years old.
44. *approved:* tested. 61. *unfelt:* not expressed in deeds.

Which, till my infant fortune comes to years,
Stands for my bounty. But who comes here?

Enter BERKELEY.

North. It is my Lord of Berkeley, as I guess.
Berk. My Lord of Hereford, my message is to you.
Boling. My lord, my answer is—to Lancaster;
And I am come to seek that name in England;
And I must find that title in your tongue,
Before I make reply to aught you say.
Berk. Mistake me not, my lord; 'tis not my meaning
To raze one title of your honour out.
To you, my lord, I come, what lord you will,
From the most gracious regent of this land,
The Duke of York, to know what pricks you on
To take advantage of the absent time
And fright our native peace with self-borne arms.

Enter YORK *attended.*

Boling. I shall not need transport my words by you;
Here comes his Grace in person.
My noble uncle! [*Kneels.*
York. Show me thy humble heart, and not thy knee,
Whose duty is deceiveable and false.
Boling. My gracious uncle—
York. Tut, tut!
Grace me no grace, nor uncle me no uncle.
I am no traitor's uncle; and that word "grace"
In an ungracious mouth is but profane.
Why have those banish'd and forbidden legs
Dared once to touch a dust of England's ground?
But then more "why?" Why have they dared to march
So many miles upon her peaceful bosom,
Frighting her pale-faced villages with war

75. *raze:* erase. 79. *absent time:* the time of Richard's absence. 80. *native:* proper, natural. *self-borne:* borne for oneself. 84. *deceiveable:* deceitful.

And ostentation of despised arms?
Comest thou because the anointed king is hence?
Why, foolish boy, the king is left behind,
And in my loyal bosom lies his power.
Were I but now the lord of such hot youth
As when brave Gaunt, thy father, and myself
Rescued the Black Prince, that young Mars of men,
From forth the ranks of many thousand French,
O, then how quickly should this arm of mine,
Now prisoner to the palsy, chastise thee
And minister correction to thy fault!
Boling. My gracious uncle, let me know my fault.
On what condition stands it and wherein?
York. Even in condition of the worst degree,
In gross rebellion and detested treason.
Thou art a banish'd man, and here art come
Before the expiration of thy time,
In braving arms against thy sovereign.
Boling. As I was banish'd, I was banish'd Hereford;
But as I come, I come for Lancaster.
And, noble uncle, I beseech your Grace
Look on my wrongs with an indifferent eye.
You are my father, for methinks in you
I see old Gaunt alive. O, then, my father,
Will you permit that I shall stand condemn'd
A wandering vagabond, my rights and royalties
Pluck'd from my arms perforce and given away
To upstart unthrifts? Wherefore was I born?
If that my cousin king be King of England,
It must be granted I am Duke of Lancaster.
You have a son, Aumerle, my noble cousin;
Had you first died, and he been thus trod down,
He should have found his uncle Gaunt a father,
To rouse his wrongs and chase them to the bay.

112. *braving:* defiant. 114. *for Lancaster:* as Duke of Lancaster. 116. *indifferent:* impartial. 122. *unthrifts:* spendthrifts. 128. *wrongs:* evil acts. *to the bay:* to the last extremity.

I am denied to sue my livery here,
And yet my letters-patent give me leave.
My father's goods are all distrain'd and sold,
And these and all are all amiss employ'd.
What would you have me do? I am a subject,
And I challenge law. Attorneys are denied me;
And therefore personally I lay my claim
To my inheritance of free descent.
North. The noble duke hath been too much abused.
Ross. It stands your Grace upon to do him right.
Willo. Base men by his endowments are made great.
York. My lords of England, let me tell you this:
I have had feeling of my cousin's wrongs
And labour'd all I could to do him right;
But in this kind to come, in braving arms,
Be his own carver and cut out his way,
To find out right with wrong, it may not be;
And you that do abet him in this kind
Cherish rebellion and are rebels all.
North. The noble duke hath sworn his coming is
But for his own; and for the right of that
We all have strongly sworn to give him aid;
And let him ne'er see joy that breaks that oath!
York. Well, well, I see the issue of these arms.
I cannot mend it, I must needs confess,
Because my power is weak and all ill left.
But if I could, by Him that gave me life,
I would attach you all and make you stoop
Unto the sovereign mercy of the king;
But since I cannot, be it known to you
I do remain as neuter. So, fare you well;

129. *sue my livery*. See II, i, 202–4. 131. *distrain'd:* seized by legal process. 134. *challenge:* claim. 136. *free:* honorable, direct. 138. *stands . . . upon:* is incumbent upon. 139. Low-born favorites are made wealthy by his wealth. 143. *kind:* manner. 152. *issue:* outcome. 154. *ill left:* left with insufficient troops. 156. *attach:* arrest.

Unless you please to enter in the castle
And there repose you for this night.
Boling. An offer, uncle, that we will accept.
But we must win your Grace to go with us
To Bristol Castle, which they say is held
By Bushy, Bagot, and their complices,
The caterpillars of the commonwealth,
Which I have sworn to weed and pluck away.
York. It may be I will go with you; but yet I'll pause,
For I am loath to break our country's laws.
Nor friends nor foes, to me welcome you are.
Things past redress are now with me past care. [*Exeunt*

SCENE IV. *A camp in Wales.*

Enter SALISBURY *and a* Welsh Captain.

Cap. My Lord of Salisbury, we have stay'd ten days,
And hardly kept our countrymen together,
And yet we hear no tidings from the king;
Therefore we will disperse ourselves. Farewell.
Sal. Stay yet another day, thou trusty Welshman.
The king reposeth all his confidence in thee.
Cap. 'Tis thought the king is dead; we will not stay.
The bay-trees in our country are all wither'd,
And meteors fright the fixed stars of heaven;
The pale-faced moon looks bloody on the earth,
And lean-look'd prophets whisper fearful change;
Rich men look sad, and ruffians dance and leap,
The one in fear to lose what they enjoy,
The other to enjoy by rage and war.
These signs forerun the death or fall of kings.
Farewell! Our countrymen are gone and fled,
As well assured Richard, their king, is dead. [*Exit.*
Sal. Ah, Richard, with the eyes of heavy mind
I see thy glory like a shooting star

165. *Bagot.* He had gone to Ireland. See II, ii, 141. *complices:* accomplices.

Fall to the base earth from the firmament.
Thy sun sets weeping in the lowly west,
Witnessing storms to come, woe, and unrest.
Thy friends are fled to wait upon thy foes,
And crossly to thy good all fortune goes. [*Exit.*

ACT III

Scene I. Bolingbroke's *camp at Bristol.*

Enter Bolingbroke, York, Northumberland, Ross, Percy, *and* Willoughby, *with* Bushy *and* Green, *prisoners.*

Boling. Bring forth these men.
Bushy and Green, I will not vex your souls—
Since presently your souls must part your bodies—
With too much urging your pernicious lives,
For 'twere no charity; yet, to wash your blood
From off my hands, here in the view of men
I will unfold some causes of your deaths.
You have misled a prince, a royal king,
A happy gentleman in blood and lineaments,
By you unhappied and disfigured clean.
You have in manner with your sinful hours
Made a divorce betwixt his queen and him,
Broke the possession of a royal bed,
And stain'd the beauty of a fair queen's cheeks
With tears drawn from her eyes by your foul wrongs.
Myself, a prince by fortune of my birth,
Near to the king in blood, and near in love
Till you did make him misinterpret me,
Have stoop'd my neck under your injuries,
And sigh'd my English breath in foreign clouds,

[iv] 22. *Witnessing:* giving evidence of. 24. *crossly:* adversely.
[III. i] 3. *presently:* at once. *part:* depart from. 4. *urging:* emphasizing. 9. *happy:* fortunate. 10. *clean:* completely. 11. *in manner:* in a way. 12. *Made a divorce.* This charge has no foundation in fact; but see V, i, 71 ff.

Eating the bitter bread of banishment;
Whilst you have fed upon my signories,
Dispark'd my parks and fell'd my forest woods,
From my own windows torn my household coat,
Razed out my imprese, leaving me no sign,
Save men's opinions and my living blood,
To show the world I am a gentleman.
This and much more, much more than twice all this,
Condemns you to the death. See them deliver'd over
To execution and the hand of death.

Bushy. More welcome is the stroke of death to me
Than Bolingbroke to England. Lords, farewell!

Green. My comfort is that heaven will take our souls
And plague injustice with the pains of hell.

Boling. My Lord Northumberland, see them dispatch'd.

[*Exeunt Northumberland and others, with the prisoners.*

Uncle, you say the queen is at your house;
For God's sake, fairly let her be entreated;
Tell her I send to her my kind commends.
Take special care my greetings be deliver'd.

York. A gentleman of mine I have dispatch'd
With letters of your love to her at large.

Boling. Thanks, gentle uncle. Come, lords, away,
To fight with Glendower and his complices;
Awhile to work, and after holiday. [*Exeunt.*

22. *signories:* lordships, estates. 23. *Dispark'd:* torn down the enclosures. 24. *my household coat:* coat of arms emblazoned on stained or painted windows. 25. *imprese:* emblematic design. 35. *dispatch'd:* killed. 37. *entreated:* treated. 38. *commends:* compliments. 41. *love:* respect. 43. *Glendower.* Owen Glendower was not then in arms against Bolingbroke. The line may have been interpolated.

Scene II. *The coast of Wales. A castle in view.*

Drums: flourish and colours. Enter King Richard, *the* Bishop of Carlisle, Aumerle, *and Soldiers.*

K. Rich. Barkloughly Castle call they this at hand?
Aum. Yea, my lord. How brooks your Grace the air,
After your late tossing on the breaking seas?
K. Rich. Needs must I like it well; I weep for joy
To stand upon my kingdom once again.
Dear earth, I do salute thee with my hand,
Though rebels wound thee with their horses' hoofs.
As a long-parted mother with her child
Plays fondly with her tears and smiles in meeting,
So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee, my earth,
And do thee favours with my royal hands.
Feed not thy sovereign's foe, my gentle earth,
Nor with thy sweets comfort his ravenous sense;
But let thy spiders, that suck up thy venom,
And heavy-gaited toads lie in their way,
Doing annoyance to the treacherous feet
Which with usurping steps do trample thee.
Yield stinging nettles to mine enemies;
And when they from thy bosom pluck a flower,
Guard it, I pray thee, with a lurking adder
Whose double tongue may with a mortal touch
Throw death upon thy sovereign's enemies.
Mock not my senseless conjuration, lords.
This earth shall have a feeling and these stones
Prove armed soldiers, ere her native king
Shall falter under foul rebellion's arms.
Car. Fear not, my lord; that Power that made you king
Hath power to keep you king in spite of all.

[ii] 1. *Barkloughly:* Harlech, a fortress in Wales. 2. *brooks:* enjoys. 4. *I weep for joy.* Shakespeare intended this display of love for England to win the sympathy of the audience for Richard. 15. *heavy-gaited:* slow-paced. 21. *double:* forked. 23. *senseless conjuration:* adjuration of senseless things. 25. *native:* entitled (to the crown) by birth.

The means that heaven yields must be embraced,
And not neglected; else, if heaven would,
And we will not, heaven's offer we refuse,
The proffer'd means of succour and redress.
Aum. He means, my lord, that we are too remiss;
Whilst Bolingbroke, through our security,
Grows strong and great in substance and in power.
K. Rich. Discomfortable cousin! Know'st thou not
That when the searching eye of heaven is hid
Behind the globe that lights the lower world,
Then thieves and robbers range abroad unseen
In murders and in outrage, boldly here;
But when from under this terrestrial ball
He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines
And darts his light through every guilty hole,
Then murders, treasons, and detested sins,
The cloak of night being pluck'd from off their backs,
Stand bare and naked, trembling at themselves?
So when this thief, this traitor, Bolingbroke,
Who all this while hath revell'd in the night
Whilst we were wandering with the antipodes,
Shall see us rising in our throne, the east,
His treasons will sit blushing in his face,
Not able to endure the sight of day,
But self-affrighted tremble at his sin.
Not all the water in the rough rude sea
Can wash the balm from an anointed king;
The breath of worldly men cannot depose
The deputy elected by the Lord.
For every man that Bolingbroke hath press'd
To lift shrewd steel against our golden crown,
God for his Richard hath in heavenly pay

29–32. Omitted in F_1. 34. ***security:*** false confidence, carelessness. 36. ***Discomfortable:*** discouraging. 38. ***that . . . world.*** This clause modifies ***eye.*** 49. Omitted in F_1. ***antipodes:*** inhabitants of the other hemisphere. 55. ***balm:*** consecrated oil used in consecrating a king. 58. ***press'd:*** impressed, forced into the ranks. 59. ***shrewd:*** evil, destructive.

A glorious angel; then, if angels fight,
Weak men must fall, for Heaven still guards the right.

Enter Salisbury.

Welcome, my lord. How far off lies your power?
Sal. Nor near nor farther off, my gracious lord,
Than this weak arm. Discomfort guides my tongue
And bids me speak of nothing but despair.
One day too late, I fear me, noble lord,
Hath clouded all thy happy days on earth.
O, call back yesterday, bid time return,
And thou shalt have twelve thousand fighting men!
Today, today, unhappy day, too late,
O'erthrows thy joys, friends, fortune, and thy state;
For all the Welshmen, hearing thou wert dead,
Are gone to Bolingbroke, dispersed, and fled.
Aum. Comfort, my liege; why looks your Grace so pale?
K. Rich. But now the blood of twenty thousand men
Did triumph in my face, and they are fled;
And, till so much blood thither come again,
Have I not reason to look pale and dead?
All souls that will be safe fly from my side,
For time hath set a blot upon my pride.
Aum. Comfort, my liege; remember who you are.
K. Rich. I had forgot myself. Am I not king?
Awake, thou coward majesty! Thou sleepest.
Is not the king's name twenty thousand names?
Arm, arm, my name! A puny subject strikes
At thy great glory. Look not to the ground,
Ye favourites of a king; are we not high?
High be our thoughts! I know my uncle York
Hath power enough to serve our turn. But who comes here?

Enter Scroop.

Scroop. More health and happiness betide my liege
Than can my care-tuned tongue deliver him!

63. ***power:*** army. 64. ***near:*** nearer. 65. ***discomfort:*** discouragement. 92. ***deliver him:*** utter to him.

K. Rich. Mine ear is open and my heart prepared.
The worst is worldly loss thou canst unfold.
Say, is my kingdom lost? Why, 'twas my care;
And what loss is it to be rid of care?
Strives Bolingbroke to be as great as we?
Greater he shall not be; if he serve God,
We'll serve Him too and be his fellow so.
Revolt our subjects? That we cannot mend;
They break their faith to God as well as us.
Cry woe, destruction, ruin, and decay;
The worst is death, and Death will have his day.
Scroop. Glad am I that your Highness is so arm'd
To bear the tidings of calamity.
Like an unseasonable stormy day,
Which makes the silver rivers drown their shores,
As if the world were all dissolved to tears,
So high above his limits swells the rage
Of Bolingbroke, covering your fearful land
With hard bright steel and hearts harder than steel.
White-beards have arm'd their thin and hairless scalps
Against thy Majesty; boys, with women's voices,
Strive to speak big and clap their female joints
In stiff unwieldy arms against thy crown;
Thy very beadsmen learn to bend their bows
Of double-fatal yew against thy state;
Yea, distaff-women manage rusty bills
Against thy seat; both young and old rebel,
And all goes worse than I have power to tell.
K. Rich. Too well, too well thou tell'st a tale so ill.
Where is the Earl of Wiltshire? Where is Bagot?
What is become of Bushy, where is Green,

99. *fellow:* equal. 102. *cry:* proclaim. 114. *clap:* put vigorously. *female:* weak. 115. *arms:* armor. 116. *beadsmen:* men paid or endowed to pray for others. 117. *double-fatal:* doubly fatal (since the leaves and berries were used for poison, and the wood was used for bows). 118. *manage:* wield. *bills:* long-handled axes with spearheads. 119. *seat:* throne.

That they have let the dangerous enemy
Measure our confines with such peaceful steps?
If we prevail, their heads shall pay for it.
I warrant they have made peace with Bolingbroke.
Scroop. Peace have they made with him indeed, my lord.
K. Rich. O villains, vipers, damn'd without redemption!
Dogs, easily won to fawn on any man!
Snakes, in my heart-blood warm'd, that sting my heart!
Three Judases, each one thrice worse than Judas!
Would they make peace? Terrible hell make war
Upon their spotted souls for this offense!
Scroop. Sweet love, I see, changing his property,
Turns to the sourest and most deadly hate.
Again uncurse their souls; their peace is made
With heads, and not with hands. Those whom you curse
Have felt the worst of death's destroying wound
And lie full low, graved in the hollow ground.
Aum. Is Bushy, Green, and the Earl of Wiltshire dead?
Scroop. Ay, all of them at Bristol lost their heads.
Aum. Where is the duke my father with his power?
K. Rich. No matter where; of comfort no man speak.
Let's talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs;
Make dust our paper and with rainy eyes
Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth.
Let's choose executors and talk of wills;
And yet not so, for what can we bequeath
Save our deposed bodies to the ground?
Our lands, our lives, and all are Bolingbroke's,
And nothing can we call our own but death
And that small model of the barren earth
Which serves as paste and cover to our bones.
For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground
And tell sad stories of the death of kings:

125. *confines:* territories. *peaceful:* unresisted. 135. *property:* nature. 153. *model:* mold, image. Samuel Johnson states that Shakespeare, by the phrase *paste and cover*, suggests piecrust, that is, the earth that surrounds one in the grave.

How some have been deposed; some slain in war;
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed;
Some poison'd by their wives; some sleeping kill'd;
All murder'd: for within the hollow crown
That rounds the mortal temples of a king
Keeps Death his court and there the antic sits,
Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
To monarchize, be fear'd, and kill with looks,
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
As if this flesh which walls about our life
Were brass impregnable; and humour'd thus
Comes at the last and with a little pin
Bores through his castle wall, and—farewell king!
[*He removes his crown and his followers uncover.*
Cover your heads and mock not flesh and blood
With solemn reverence. Throw away respect,
Tradition, form, and ceremonious duty,
For you have but mistook me all this while.
I live with bread like you, feel want,
Taste grief, need friends: subjected thus,
How can you say to me, I am a king?

Car. My lord, wise men ne'er sit and wail their woes,
But presently prevent the ways to wail.
To fear the foe, since fear oppresseth strength,
Gives in your weakness strength unto your foe,
And so your follies fight against yourself.
Fear, and be slain; no worse can come to fight;
And fight and die is death destroying death,
Where fearing dying pays death servile breath.

162. *antic:* grotesque figure. 163. *Scoffing his state:* mocking his splendor. 166. *self and vain conceit:* selfish and vain imagination. 168. *humour'd:* having satisfied his (Death's) whim, or perhaps "indulged" (referring to the king). 176. *subjected thus:* i.e., subject to grief, want, etc. 182. Omitted in F_1. 183. *to fight:* by fighting. 183–5. *Fear . . . breath:* fear death, and you will be slain; to die fighting can be no worse; indeed, to die fighting is a victory over death.

Aum. My father hath a power; inquire of him,
And learn to make a body of a limb.
K. Rich. Thou chidest me well. Proud Bolingbroke, I come
To change blows with thee for our day of doom.
This ague fit of fear is over-blown;
An easy task it is to win our own.
Say, Scroop, where lies our uncle with his power?
Speak sweetly, man, although thy looks be sour.
Scroop. Men judge by the complexion of the sky
The state and inclination of the day;
So may you by my dull and heavy eye,
My tongue hath but a heavier tale to say.
I play the torturer, by small and small
To lengthen out the worst that must be spoken.
Your uncle York is join'd with Bolingbroke,
And all your northern castles yielded up,
And all your southern gentlemen in arms
Upon his party.
K. Rich. Thou hast said enough. [*To Aumerle.*
Beshrew thee, cousin, which didst lead me forth
Of that sweet way I was in to despair!
What say you now? What comfort have we now?
By heaven, I'll hate him everlastingly
That bids me be of comfort any more.
Go to Flint Castle; there I'll pine away;
A king, woe's slave, shall kingly woe obey.
That power I have, discharge; and let them go
To ear the land that hath some hope to grow,
For I have none. Let no man speak again
To alter this, for counsel is but vain.
Aum. My liege, one word.
K. Rich. He does me double wrong
That wounds me with the flatteries of his tongue.

189. *change:* exchange. 190. *over-blown:* past. 198. *by small and small:* little by little. 203. *party:* side. 204. *Beshrew thee:* a mild curse. 209. *Flint Castle:* in North Wales. Richard actually went to Conway Castle. 212. *ear:* plow. *grow:* produce fruit.

Discharge my followers; let them hence away,
From Richard's night to Bolingbroke's fair day. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Wales. Before Flint Castle.*

Enter BOLINGBROKE, YORK, NORTHUMBERLAND, Attendants, *and Forces, with drum and colours.*

Boling. So that by this intelligence we learn
The Welshmen are dispersed, and Salisbury
Is gone to meet the king, who lately landed
With some few private friends upon this coast.
North. The news is very fair and good, my lord.
Richard not far from hence hath hid his head.
York. It would beseem the Lord Northumberland
To say "King Richard." Alack the heavy day
When such a sacred king should hide his head.
North. Your Grace mistakes; only to be brief,
Left I his title out.
York. The time hath been,
Would you have been so brief with him, he would
Have been so brief with you, to shorten you,
For taking so the head, your whole head's length.
Boling. Mistake not, uncle, further than you should.
York. Take not, good cousin, further than you should,
Lest you mistake the heavens are o'er our heads.
Boling. I know it, uncle, and oppose not myself
Against their will. But who comes here?

Enter PERCY.

Welcome, Harry. What, will not this castle yield?
Percy. The castle royally is mann'd, my lord,
Against thy entrance.
Boling. Royally!
Why, it contains no king?

[iii] 1. ***intelligence:*** news. 14. ***taking so the head:*** taking precedence by omitting the title. 16–17. ***Take . . . heads.*** This is the keynote of the play. 17. ***mistake:*** i.e., forget.

Percy. Yes, my good lord,
It doth contain a king; King Richard lies
Within the limits of yon lime and stone;
And with him are the Lord Aumerle, Lord Salisbury,
Sir Stephen Scroop, besides a clergyman
Of holy reverence—who, I cannot learn.
North. O, belike it is the Bishop of Carlisle.
Boling. Noble lord, [*To Northumberland.*
Go to the rude ribs of that ancient castle;
Through brazen trumpet send the breath of parley
Into his ruin'd ears, and thus deliver:
Henry Bolingbroke
On both his knees doth kiss King Richard's hand
And sends allegiance and true faith of heart
To his most royal person, hither come
Even at his feet to lay my arms and power,
Provided that my banishment repeal'd
And lands restor'd again be freely granted.
If not, I'll use the advantage of my power
And lay the summer's dust with showers of blood
Rain'd from the wounds of slaughter'd Englishmen;
The which, how far off from the mind of Bolingbroke
It is, such crimson tempest should bedrench
The fresh green lap of fair King Richard's land,
My stooping duty tenderly shall show.
Go, signify as much, while here we march
Upon the grassy carpet of this plain.
Let's march without the noise of threatening drum,
That from this castle's tatter'd battlements
Our fair appointments may be well perused.
Methinks King Richard and myself should meet
With no less terror than the elements
Of fire and water, when their thundering shock
At meeting tears the cloudy cheeks of heaven.
Be he the fire, I'll be the yielding water;
The rage be his, whilst on the earth I rain

34. *deliver:* announce. 53. *perused:* examined carefully.

My waters—on the earth, and not on him.
March on, and mark King Richard how he looks.

Parle without, and answer within. Then a flourish. KING RICHARD, *the* BISHOP OF CARLISLE, AUMERLE, SCROOP, *and* SALISBURY *appear on the walls.*

See, see, King Richard doth himself appear,
As doth the blushing discontented sun
From out the fiery portal of the east,
When he perceives the envious clouds are bent
To dim his glory and to stain the track
Of his bright passage to the occident.
York. Yet looks he like a king. Behold, his eye,
As bright as is the eagle's, lightens forth
Controlling majesty. Alack, alack, for woe,
That any harm should stain so fair a show!
K. Rich. We are amazed; and thus long have we stood
[*To Northumberland.*
To watch the fearful bending of thy knee,
Because we thought ourself thy lawful king;
And if we be, how dare thy joints forget
To pay their awful duty to our presence?
If we be not, show us the hand of God
That hath dismiss'd us from our stewardship;
For well we know, no hand of blood and bone
Can gripe the sacred handle of our sceptre,
Unless he do profane, steal, or usurp.
And though you think that all, as you have done,
Have torn their souls by turning them from us,
And we are barren and bereft of friends;
Yet know, my master, God omnipotent,
Is mustering in his clouds on our behalf
Armies of pestilence; and they shall strike

S. D. ***Parle:*** trumpet-signal for a parley. 69. ***lightens:*** flashes. 70. ***Controlling:*** overpowering. 73. ***fearful:*** apprehensive. 76. ***awful:*** reverential. 81. ***profane:*** commit sacrilege. 83. ***torn their souls:*** injured their souls by treason.

Your children yet unborn and unbegot,
That lift your vassal hands against my head
And threat the glory of my precious crown.
Tell Bolingbroke—for yond methinks he stands—
That every stride he makes upon my land
Is dangerous treason. He is come to open
The purple testament of bleeding war;
But ere the crown he looks for live in peace,
Ten thousand bloody crowns of mothers' sons
Shall ill become the flower of England's face,
Change the complexion of her maid-pale peace
To scarlet indignation and bedew
Her pastures' grass with faithful English blood.

North. The king of heaven forbid our lord the king
Should so with civil and uncivil arms
Be rush'd upon! Thy thrice noble cousin
Harry Bolingbroke doth humbly kiss thy hand;
And by the honourable tomb he swears,
That stands upon your royal grandsire's bones,
And by the royalties of both your bloods,
Currents that spring from one most gracious head,
And by the buried hand of warlike Gaunt,
And by the worth and honour of himself,
Comprising all that may be sworn or said,
His coming hither hath no further scope
Than for his lineal royalties and to beg
Enfranchisement immediate on his knees;
Which on thy royal party granted once,
His glittering arms he will commend to rust,
His barbed steeds to stables, and his heart
To faithful service of your Majesty.

94. *purple testament:* bloodstained will, or will that brings bloodshed to England. 97. *flower of England's face:* the blooming face of England. 98. *maid-pale:* pale as a girl. 102. *civil:* domestic. *uncivil:* barbarous, violent. 106. *your . . . grandsire's:* Edward III's. 113. *lineal royalties:* rights due to descent. 114. *Enfranchisement:* restoration of rights as an English citizen. 116. *commend:* give over. 117. *barbed:* armed.

This swears he, as he is a prince, is just;
And, as I am a gentleman, I credit him.
K. Rich. Northumberland, say thus the king returns:
His noble cousin is right welcome hither;
And all the number of his fair demands
Shall be accomplish'd without contradiction.
With all the gracious utterance thou hast
Speak to his gentle hearing kind commends.
We do debase ourselves, cousin, do we not, [*To Aumerle.*
To look so poorly and to speak so fair?
Shall we call back Northumberland, and send
Defiance to the traitor, and so die?
Aum. No, good my lord; let's fight with gentle words
Till time lend friends, and friends their helpful swords.
K. Rich. O God, O God! that e'er this tongue of mine,
That laid the sentence of dread banishment
On yon proud man, should take it off again
With words of sooth! O that I were as great
As is my grief, or lesser than my name!
Or that I could forget what I have been,
Or not remember what I must be now!
Swell'st thou, proud heart? I'll give thee scope to beat,
Since foes have scope to beat both thee and me.
Aum. Northumberland comes back from Bolingbroke.
K. Rich. What must the king do now? Must he submit?
The king shall do it. Must he be deposed?
The king shall be contented. Must he lose
The name of king? O' God's name, let it go.
I'll give my jewels for a set of beads,
My gorgeous palace for a hermitage,
My gay apparel for an almsman's gown,
My figured goblets for a dish of wood,
My sceptre for a palmer's walking-staff,

120. *credit:* believe. 121. *returns:* answers. 126. *commends:* commendations, compliments. 136. *sooth:* flattery. 140. *give thee scope:* give thee free play. 147. *set of beads:* rosary. 151. *palmer:* a religious votary who bore a palm branch as a token of his having been to the Holy Land.

My subjects for a pair of carved saints,
And my large kingdom for a little grave,
A little little grave, an obscure grave;
Or I'll be buried in the king's highway,
Some way of common trade, where subjects' feet
May hourly trample on their sovereign's head;
For on my heart they tread now whilst I live;
And buried once, why not upon my head?
Aumerle, thou weep'st, my tender-hearted cousin!
We'll make foul weather with despised tears;
Our sighs and they shall lodge the summer corn,
And make a dearth in this revolting land.
Or shall we play the wantons with our woes,
And make some pretty match with shedding tears?
As thus, to drop them still upon one place,
Till they have fretted us a pair of graves
Within the earth; and, therein laid—there lies
Two kinsmen digg'd their graves with weeping eyes.
Would not this ill do well? Well, well, I see
I talk but idly, and you laugh at me.
Most mighty prince, my Lord Northumberland,
What says King Bolingbroke? Will his Majesty
Give Richard leave to live till Richard die?
You make a leg, and Bolingbroke says ay.

North. My lord, in the base court he doth attend
To speak with you; may it please you to come down.

K. Rich. Down, down I come; like glistering Phaethon,
Wanting the manage of unruly jades.
In the base court? Base court, where kings grow base,
To come at traitors' calls and do them grace.
In the base court? Come down? Down, court! Down, king!
For night-owls shriek where mounting larks should sing.

[*Exeunt from above.*

156. *trade:* traffic. 162. *lodge:* beat down. *corn:* grain. 164. *play the wantons:* trifle. 166. *still:* always. 167. *fretted:* worn away. 175. *make a leg:* make an obeisance. 176. *base court:* lower or outer court of a castle. 178. *Phaethon:* son of Apollo. He lost control of the Sun's horses and fell to earth.

Boling. What says his Majesty?
North. Sorrow and grief of heart
Makes him speak fondly, like a frantic man:
Yet he is come.

Enter KING RICHARD *and his attendants below.*

Boling. Stand all apart,
And show fair duty to his Majesty. [*He kneels down.*
My gracious lord—
K. Rich. Fair cousin, you debase your princely knee
To make the base earth proud with kissing it.
Me rather had my heart might feel your love
Than my unpleas'd eye see your courtesy.
Up, cousin, up; your heart is up, I know,
Thus high at least, although your knee be low.
[*He touches his crown.*
Boling. My gracious lord, I come but for mine own.
K. Rich. Your own is yours, and I am yours, and all.
Boling. So far be mine, my most redoubted lord,
As my true service shall deserve your love.
K. Rich. Well you deserve; they well deserve to have,
That know the strong'st and surest way to get.
Uncle, give me your hands; nay, dry your eyes;
Tears show their love, but want their remedies.
Cousin, I am too young to be your father,
Though you are old enough to be my heir.
What you will have, I'll give, and willing too;
For do we must what force will have us do.
Set on towards London, cousin, is it so?
Boling. Yea, my good lord.
K. Rich. Then I must not say no.
[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

185. *fondly:* foolishly. 192. *Me rather had:* I had rather. 203. *want:* lack. 204. *too . . . father.* Richard and Bolingbroke were of about the same age.

Scene iv. *Langley. The* Duke of York's *garden.*

Enter the Queen *and two* Ladies.

Queen. What sport shall we devise here in this garden,
To drive away the heavy thought of care?
Lady. Madam, we'll play at bowls.
Queen. 'Twill make me think the world is full of rubs,
And that my fortune runs against the bias.
Lady. Madam, we'll dance.
Queen. My legs can keep no measure in delight,
When my poor heart no measure keeps in grief;
Therefore, no dancing, girl; some other sport.
Lady. Madam, we'll tell tales.
Queen. Of sorrow or of joy?
Lady. Of either, madam.
Queen. Of neither, girl;
For if of joy, being altogether wanting,
It doth remember me the more of sorrow;
Or if of grief, being altogether had,
It adds more sorrow to my want of joy;
For what I have I need not to repeat,
And what I want it boots not to complain.
Lady. Madam, I'll sing.
Queen. 'Tis well that thou hast cause;
But thou shouldst please me better, wouldst thou weep.
Lady. I could weep, madam, would it do you good.
Queen. And I could sing, would weeping do me good,
And never borrow any tear of thee.

[iv] There is nothing in Holinshed to suggest this scene. 4. *rubs:* in the game of bowls, natural obstructions or inequalities in the green that keep the bowl from a straight course. 5. *bias:* in bowls, the protruding side of the bowl that causes it to take an oblique course. 7, 8. *measure:* (a) time to music, (b) moderation, (c) stately dance. 14. *remember:* remind. 15. *being altogether had:* possessing me completely. 18. *boots:* helps. 22. *And . . . good:* if my troubles were so light as to be helped by weeping, I could sing.

Enter a Gardener *and two* Servants.

But stay, here come the gardeners.
Let's step into the shadow of these trees.
My wretchedness unto a row of pins,
They'll talk of state; for every one doth so
Against a change; woe is forerun with woe.
[*Queen and Ladies retire.*

Gard. Go, bind thou up yon dangling apricocks,
Which, like unruly children, make their sire
Stoop with oppression of their prodigal weight;
Give some supportance to the bending twigs.
Go thou, and, like an executioner,
Cut off the heads of too fast growing sprays,
That look too lofty in our commonwealth;
All must be even in our government.
You thus employ'd, I will go root away
The noisome weeds, which without profit suck
The soil's fertility from wholesome flowers.

Serv. Why should we in the compass of a pale
Keep law and form and due proportion,
Showing, as in a model, our firm estate,
When our sea-walled garden, the whole land,
Is full of weeds, her fairest flowers choked up,
Her fruit-trees all unpruned, her hedges ruin'd,
Her knots disorder'd, and her wholesome herbs
Swarming with caterpillars?

Gard. Hold thy peace.
He that hath suffer'd this disorder'd spring
Hath now himself met with the fall of leaf.
The weeds which his broad-spreading leaves did shelter,

26. *My . . . pins:* I will wager my woe against things of no value. 27. *state:* the commonwealth. 28. *Against:* before. *forerun with:* preceded by. 35. *look too lofty:* aspire too high. 36. *even:* uniform. *our government:* domain under our control. 40. *pale:* enclosure. 42. *model:* plan on a small scale. *estate:* condition. 46. *knots:* flower-beds laid out in intricate design. 48. *suffer'd:* allowed.

That seem'd in eating him to hold him up,
Are pluck'd up root and all by Bolingbroke;
I mean the Earl of Wiltshire, Bushy, Green.
Serv. What, are they dead?
Gard. They are; and Bolingbroke
Hath seized the wasteful king. O, what pity is it
That he had not so trimm'd and dress'd his land
As we this garden! We at time of year
Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit-trees,
Lest, being over-proud in sap and blood,
With too much riches it confound itself;
Had he done so to great and growing men,
They might have lived to bear and he to taste
Their fruits of duty. Superfluous branches
We lop away, that bearing boughs may live;
Had he done so, himself had borne the crown,
Which waste of idle hours hath quite thrown down.
Serv. What, think you then the king shall be deposed?
Gard. Depress'd he is already, and deposed
'Tis doubt he will be. Letters came last night
To a dear friend of the good Duke of York's,
That tell black tidings.
Queen. O, I am press'd to death through want of speaking!
[*Coming forward.*
Thou, old Adam's likeness, set to dress this garden,
How dares thy harsh rude tongue sound this unpleasing news?
What Eve, what serpent, hath suggested thee
To make a second fall of cursed man?
Why dost thou say King Richard is deposed?
Darest thou, thou little better thing than earth,
Divine his downfall? Say where, when, and how,
Camest thou by this ill tidings? Speak, thou wretch.
Gard. Pardon me, madam; little joy have I

57. *time:* proper season. 60. *confound:* destroy. 69. *doubt:* fear. 72. *press'd to death.* Heavy weights were placed on the chest of a prisoner who refused to plead. 75. *suggested:* tempted. 79. *Divine:* foretell.

To breathe this news; yet what I say is true.
King Richard, he is in the mighty hold
Of Bolingbroke. Their fortunes both are weigh'd.
In your lord's scale is nothing but himself,
And some few vanities that make him light;
But in the balance of great Bolingbroke,
Besides himself, are all the English peers,
And with that odds he weighs King Richard down.
Post you to London, and you will find it so;
I speak no more than every one doth know.

Queen. Nimble Mischance, that art so light of foot,
Doth not thy embassage belong to me,
And am I last that knows it? O, thou think'st
To serve me last, that I may longest keep
Thy sorrow in my breast. Come, ladies, go
To meet at London London's king in woe.
What, was I born to this, that my sad look
Should grace the triumph of great Bolingbroke?
Gardener, for telling me these news of woe,
Pray God the plants thou graft'st may never grow.

[*Exeunt Queen and Ladies.*

Gard. Poor queen! So that thy state might be no worse,
I would my skill were subject to thy curse.
Here did she fall a tear; here in this place
I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace.
Rue, even for ruth, here shortly shall be seen,
In the remembrance of a weeping queen. [*Exeunt.*

83. *hold:* grasp. 93. *embassage:* errand. 104. *fall:* let drop. 105. *rue:* a plant symbolic of repentance or of sorrow. 106. *ruth:* pity.

ACT IV

Scene I. *Westminster Hall.*

Enter, as to the Parliament, Bolingbroke, Aumerle, Surrey, Northumberland, Percy, Fitzwater, *the* Bishop of Carlisle, *the* Abbot of Westminster, *and another* Lord, Herald, Officers, *and* Bagot.

Boling. Call forth Bagot.
Now, Bagot, freely speak thy mind;
What thou dost know of noble Gloucester's death,
Who wrought it with the king, and who perform'd
The bloody office of his timeless end.
Bagot. Then set before my face the Lord Aumerle.
Boling. Cousin, stand forth, and look upon that man.
Bagot. My Lord Aumerle, I know your daring tongue
Scorns to unsay what once it hath deliver'd.
In that dead time when Gloucester's death was plotted,
I heard you say, "Is not my arm of length,
That reacheth from the restful English court
As far as Calais, to mine uncle's head?"
Amongst much other talk, that very time,
I heard you say that you had rather refuse
The offer of an hundred thousand crowns
Than Bolingbroke's return to England;
Adding, withal, how blest this land would be
In this your cousin's death.
Aum. Princes and noble lords,
What answer shall I make to this base man?
Shall I so much dishonour my fair stars,
On equal terms to give him chastisement?
Either I must, or have mine honour soil'd

[IV. i] 1. *Call forth Bagot.* Bolingbroke, by thus promptly bringing up the question of Gloucester's death, adds a show of right to his usurpation. Cf. I, i, 100 ff. 4. *wrought . . . king:* influenced the king to do it, or helped the king to accomplish it. 5. *timeless:* untimely. 10. *dead:* deadly. 21. *my fair stars:* my fortune fixed by the stars (his royal blood and exalted rank).



Photograph by The Times (*London*)

WESTMINSTER HALL

With the attainder of his slanderous lips.
There is my gage, the manual seal of death,
That marks thee out for hell. I say thou liest,
And will maintain what thou hast said is false
In thy heart-blood, though being all too base
To stain the temper of my knightly sword.
Boling. Bagot, forbear; thou shalt not take it up.
Aum. Excepting one, I would he were the best
In all this presence that hath moved me so.
Fitz. If that thy valour stand on sympathy,
There is my gage, Aumerle, in gage to thine.
By that fair sun which shows me where thou stand'st,
I heard thee say, and vauntingly thou spakest it,
That thou wert cause of noble Gloucester's death.
If thou deny'st it twenty times, thou liest;
And I will turn thy falsehood to thy heart,
Where it was forged, with my rapier's point.
Aum. Thou darest not, coward, live to see that day.
Fitz. Now, by my soul, I would it were this hour.
Aum. Fitzwater, thou art damn'd to hell for this.
Percy. Aumerle, thou liest; his honour is as true
In this appeal as thou art all unjust;
And that thou art so, there I throw my gage,
To prove it on thee to the extremest point
Of mortal breathing. Seize it, if thou darest.
Aum. An if I do not, may my hands rot off
And never brandish more revengeful steel
Over the glittering helmet of my foe!
Another Lord. I task the earth to the like, forsworn Aumerle;
And spur thee on with full as many lies
As may be holloa'd in thy treacherous ear

24. *attainder:* dishonoring accusation. 25. *manual seal:* seal worn on the hand in a ring. 33. *sympathy:* equality of blood or rank. 34. *gage:* gauntlet. *in gage:* pledged. 52–9. Omitted in F_1. 52. *I . . . like:* I make a similar demand upon the earth (by throwing down a gauntlet). 53. *full as many lies:* giving the lie as many times.

From sun to sun. There is my honour's pawn;
Engage it to the trial, if thou darest.
Aum. Who sets me else? By heaven, I'll throw at all!
I have a thousand spirits in one breast,
To answer twenty thousand such as you.
Surrey. My Lord Fitzwater, I do remember well
The very time Aumerle and you did talk.
Fitz. 'Tis very true; you were in presence then;
And you can witness with me this is true.
Surrey. As false, by heaven, as heaven itself is true.
Fitz. Surrey, thou liest.
Surrey. Dishonourable boy!
That lie shall lie so heavy on my sword,
That it shall render vengeance and revenge
Till thou the lie-giver and that lie do lie
In earth as quiet as thy father's skull;
In proof whereof, there is my honour's pawn;
Engage it to the trial, if thou darest.
Fitz. How fondly dost thou spur a forward horse!
If I dare eat, or drink, or breathe, or live,
I dare meet Surrey in a wilderness,
And spit upon him, whilst I say he lies,
And lies, and lies. There is my bond of faith,
To tie thee to my strong correction.
As I intend to thrive in this new world,
Aumerle is guilty of my true appeal;
Besides, I heard the banish'd Norfolk say
That thou, Aumerle, didst send two of thy men
To execute the noble duke at Calais.
Aum. Some honest Christian trust me with a gage
That Norfolk lies. Here do I throw down this,
If he may be repeal'd, to try his honour.

55. *pawn:* pledge. 56. *Engage:* take up (a challenge). 57. *Who sets me else:* who else challenges me? *Set*, a dicing term, means to set up a stake against the one casting the dice. 65. *boy:* here a term of insult. 72. *fondly:* foolishly. *forward:* eager. 77. *tie:* obligate. 78. *world:* era. 79. *appeal:* accusation involving a challenge. 85. *repeal'd:* recalled from banishment. *try:* prove.

Boling. These differences shall all rest under gage
Till Norfolk be repeal'd. Repeal'd he shall be,
And, though mine enemy, restored again
To all his lands and signories. When he's return'd,
Against Aumerle we will enforce his trial.
Car. That honourable day shall ne'er be seen.
Many a time hath banish'd Norfolk fought
For Jesu Christ in glorious Christian field,
Streaming the ensign of the Christian cross
Against black pagans, Turks, and Saracens;
And, toil'd with works of war, retired himself
To Italy; and there at Venice gave
His body to that pleasant country's earth,
And his pure soul unto his captain Christ,
Under whose colours he had fought so long.
Boling. Why, bishop, is Norfolk dead?
Car. As surely as I live, my lord.
Boling. Sweet peace conduct his sweet soul to the bosom
Of good old Abraham! Lords appellants,
Your differences shall all rest under gage
Till we assign you to your days of trial.

Enter York, *attended.*

York. Great Duke of Lancaster, I come to thee
From plume-pluck'd Richard; who with willing soul
Adopts thee heir, and his high sceptre yields
To the possession of thy royal hand.
Ascend his throne, descending now from him;
And long live Henry, fourth of that name!
Boling. In God's name, I'll ascend the regal throne.
Car. Marry, God forbid!

86. ***rest under gage:*** await decision. 96. ***toil'd:*** worn out. 104. ***Lords appellants:*** lords who appear as formal accusers. As soon as the investigation of Gloucester's death has served the purpose that Bolingbroke intends, namely, of causing suspicion of guilt to rest on Aumerle, he gladly dismisses the subject without bringing Aumerle to trial. 108. ***plume-pluck'd:*** humbled.

Worst in this royal presence may I speak,
Yet best beseeming me to speak the truth.
Would God that any in this noble presence
Were enough noble to be upright judge
Of noble Richard! Then true noblesse would
Learn him forbearance from so foul a wrong.
What subject can give sentence on his king?
And who sits here that is not Richard's subject?
Thieves are not judged but they are by to hear,
Although apparent guilt be seen in them;
And shall the figure of God's majesty,
His captain, steward, deputy-elect,
Anointed, crowned, planted many years,
Be judged by subject and inferior breath,
And he himself not present? O, forfend it, God,
That in a Christian climate souls refined
Should show so heinous, black, obscene a deed!
I speak to subjects, and a subject speaks,
Stirr'd up by God, thus boldly for his king.
My Lord of Hereford here, whom you call king,
Is a foul traitor to proud Hereford's king;
And if you crown him, let me prophesy:
The blood of English shall manure the ground,
And future ages groan for this foul act.
Peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels,
And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars
Shall kin with kin and kind with kind confound.
Disorder, horror, fear, and mutiny
Shall here inhabit, and this land be call'd
The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls.

115–16. *Worst . . . truth:* though the lowest in rank here, I must, as a bishop, speak the truth. 119. *noblesse:* nobility. 120. *Learn:* teach. 123. *judged but:* condemned unless. 124. *apparent:* obvious. 125. *figure:* symbol. 130. *climate:* region. 136–47. Carlisle's prophecy concerns the Wars of the Roses, to which Shakespeare devoted another tetralogy, *1, 2, 3 Henry VI*, and *Richard III*. 141. *kind:* family. *confound:* "mingle indistinguishably" (Onions). 144. *Golgotha:* the hill of the Crucifixion, near Jerusalem.

O, if you raise this house against this house,
It will the woefullest division prove
That ever fell upon this cursed earth.
Prevent it, resist it, let it not be so,
Lest child, child's children, cry against you "woe!"
North. Well have you argued, sir; and, for your pains,
Of capital treason we arrest you here.
My Lord of Westminster, be it your charge
To keep him safely till his day of trial.
May it please you, lords, to grant the commons' suit?
Boling. Fetch hither Richard, that in common view
He may surrender; so we shall proceed
Without suspicion.
York. I will be his conduct. [*Exit.*
Boling. Lords, you that here are under our arrest,
Procure your sureties for your days of answer.
Little are we beholding to your love,
And little look'd for at your helping hands.

Re-enter York, *with* Richard, *and* Officers *bearing the regalia.*

K. Rich. Alack, why am I sent for to a king,
Before I have shook off the regal thoughts
Wherewith I reign'd? I hardly yet have learn'd
To insinuate, flatter, bow, and bend my knee.
Give Sorrow leave awhile to tutor me
To this submission. Yet I well remember
The favours of these men. Were they not mine?
Did they not sometime cry, "All hail!" to me?
So Judas did to Christ; but He, in twelve,
Found truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand, none.
God save the king! Will no man say amen?
Am I both priest and clerk? Well then, amen.

145. *raise:* rouse. 154–318. First printed in the fourth quarto (1608). The deposition scene lacks historical basis. Richard signed in the Tower an act of abdication. 157. *conduct:* guide. 159. *sureties:* bail. 165. *insinuate:* ingratiate myself. 168. *favours:* faces. 169. *sometime:* formerly.

God save the king! although I be not he;
And yet, amen, if heaven do think him me.
To do what service am I sent for hither?
York. To do that office of thine own good will
Which tired majesty did make thee offer,
The resignation of thy state and crown
To Henry Bolingbroke.
K. Rich. Give me the crown. Here, cousin, seize the crown;
Here, cousin; [*They hold it between them.*
On this side my hand, and on that side yours.
Now is this golden crown like a deep well
That owes two buckets, filling one another,
The emptier ever dancing in the air,
The other down, unseen, and full of water:
That bucket down and full of tears am I,
Drinking my griefs, whilst you mount up on high.
Boling. I thought you had been willing to resign.
K. Rich. My crown I am; but still my griefs are mine.
You may my glories and my state depose,
But not my griefs; still am I king of those.
Boling. Part of your cares you give me with your crown.
K. Rich. Your cares set up do not pluck my cares down.
My care is loss of care, by old care done;
Your care is gain of care, by new care won.
The cares I give I have, though given away;
They tend the crown, yet still with me they stay.
Boling. Are you contented to resign the crown?
K. Rich. Ay, no; no, ay; for I must nothing be;
Therefore no no, for I resign to thee.
Now mark me, how I will undo myself.
I give this heavy weight from off my head
And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand,
The pride of kingly sway from out my heart.

185. *owes:* owns. 188–99. Note the use of rhyme. 195. *cares.* In the puns that follow, *care* has three meanings: responsibility, task, grief. 199. *tend:* accompany. 201–2. *Ay* is I. But since I resign and am nothing, *ay* means *no.*

With mine own tears I wash away my balm,
With mine own hands I give away my crown,
With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,
With mine own breath release all duteous oaths.
All pomp and majesty I do forswear;
My manors, rents, revenues I forego;
My acts, decrees, and statutes I deny.
God pardon all oaths that are broke to me!
God keep all vows unbroke are made to thee!
Make me, that nothing have, with nothing grieved,
And thou with all pleased, that hast all achieved!
Long mayst thou live in Richard's seat to sit,
And soon lie Richard in an earthy pit!
God save King Harry, unking'd Richard says,
And send him many years of sunshine days!
What more remains?

North. No more, but that you read [*Offering a paper.*
These accusations and these grievous crimes
Committed by your person and your followers
Against the state and profit of this land;
That, by confessing them, the souls of men
May deem that you are worthily deposed.

K. Rich. Must I do so? And must I ravel out
My weaved-up folly? Gentle Northumberland,
If thy offenses were upon record,
Would it not shame thee in so fair a troop
To read a lecture of them? If thou wouldst,
There shouldst thou find one heinous article,
Containing the deposing of a king
And cracking the strong warrant of an oath,
Mark'd with a blot, damn'd in the book of heaven.
Nay, all of you that stand and look upon,
Whilst that my wretchedness doth bait myself,

207. *balm:* consecrated oil used in coronations. 210. *release:* surrender. 225. *state and profit:* settled order and prosperity. 228. *ravel out:* unravel. 238. *bait:* worry, torment (as the dogs do the bear in the sport of bearbaiting).

Though some of you with Pilate wash your hands
Showing an outward pity, yet you Pilates
Have here deliver'd me to my sour cross,
And water cannot wash away your sin.
North. My lord, dispatch; read o'er these articles.
K. Rich. Mine eyes are full of tears, I cannot see;
And yet salt water blinds them not so much
But they can see a sort of traitors here.
Nay, if I turn mine eyes upon myself,
I find myself a traitor with the rest;
For I have given here my soul's consent
To undeck the pompous body of a king;
Made glory base, a sovereignty a slave,
Proud majesty a subject, state a peasant.
North. My lord—
K. Rich. No lord of thine, thou haught insulting man,
Nor no man's lord. I have no name, no title,
No, not that name was given me at the font,
But 'tis usurp'd. Alack the heavy day,
That I have worn so many winters out,
And know not now what name to call myself!
O that I were a mockery king of snow,
Standing before the sun of Bolingbroke,
To melt myself away in water-drops!
Good king, great king, and yet not greatly good,
An if my word be sterling yet in England,
Let it command a mirror hither straight,
That it may show me what a face I have,
Since it is bankrupt of his majesty.
Boling. Go some of you and fetch a looking-glass.
[*Exit an attendant.*
North. Read o'er this paper while the glass doth come.
K. Rich. Fiend, thou torment'st me ere I come to hell!

239. ***with . . . hands.*** See Matthew 27:24. 241. ***sour:*** harsh. 243. ***dispatch:*** hasten. 246. ***sort:*** company. 250. ***pompous:*** magnificent. 252. ***state:*** grandeur. 254. ***haught:*** haughty. 260. ***mockery:*** mock. 264. ***be sterling:*** pass current.

Boling. Urge it no more, my Lord Northumberland.
North. The commons will not then be satisfied.
K. Rich. They shall be satisfied. I'll read enough,
When I do see the very book indeed
Where all my sins are writ, and that's myself.

Re-enter Attendant, *with a glass.*

Give me the glass, and therein will I read.
No deeper wrinkles yet? Hath Sorrow struck
So many blows upon this face of mine,
And made no deeper wounds? O flattering glass,
Like to my followers in prosperity,
Thou dost beguile me! Was this face the face
That every day under his household roof
Did keep ten thousand men? Was this the face
That, like the sun, did make beholders wink?
Was this the face that faced so many follies,
And was at last out-faced by Bolingbroke?
A brittle glory shineth in this face;
As brittle as the glory is the face,
[*Dashes the glass against the ground.*
For there it is, crack'd in a hundred shivers.
Mark, silent king, the moral of this sport,
How soon my sorrow hath destroy'd my face.
Boling. The shadow of your sorrow hath destroy'd
The shadow of your face.
K. Rich. Say that again.
The shadow of my sorrow! Ha! let's see.
'Tis very true, my grief lies all within;
And these external manners of laments
Are merely shadows to the unseen grief
That swells with silence in the tortured soul.

281. *beguile:* deceive. *Was this face the face.* Probably a reminiscence of the famous lines in Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus:* "Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships, And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?" 284. *wink:* close their eyes. 285. *faced:* braved. 293. *shadow:* reflection.

There lies the substance; and I thank thee, king,
For thy great bounty, that not only givest
Me cause to wail but teachest me the way
How to lament the cause. I'll beg one boon,
And then be gone and trouble you no more.
Shall I obtain it?
Boling. Name it, fair cousin.
K. Rich. "Fair cousin"? I am greater than a king;
For when I was a king, my flatterers
Were then but subjects; being now a subject,
I have a king here to my flatterer.
Being so great, I have no need to beg.
Boling. Yet ask.
K. Rich. And shall I have?
Boling. You shall.
K. Rich. Then give me leave to go.
Boling. Whither?
K. Rich. Whither you will, so I were from your sights.
Boling. Go, some of you convey him to the Tower.
K. Rich. O, good! Convey? Conveyers are you all,
That rise thus nimbly by a true king's fall.
[*Exeunt King Richard, some Lords, and a Guard.*
Boling. On Wednesday next we solemnly set down
Our coronation. Lords, prepare yourselves.
[*Exeunt all except the Bishop of Carlisle, the Abbot of Westminster, and Aumerle.*
Abbot. A woeful pageant have we here beheld.
Car. The woe's to come; the children yet unborn
Shall feel this day as sharp to them as thorn.
Aum. You holy clergymen, is there no plot
To rid the realm of this pernicious blot?
Abbot. My lord,
Before I freely speak my mind herein,
You shall not only take the sacrament
To bury mine intents, but also to effect
Whatever I shall happen to devise.

308. *to:* as. 316, 317. *convey:* (a) escort, (b) steal.

I see your brows are full of discontent,
Your hearts of sorrow, and your eyes of tears.
Come home with me to supper; and I'll lay
A plot shall show us all a merry day. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I. *London. A street leading to the Tower.*

Enter QUEEN *and* Ladies.

Queen. This way the king will come; this is the way
To Julius Cæsar's ill-erected tower,
To whose flint bosom my condemned lord
Is doom'd a prisoner by proud Bolingbroke.
Here let us rest, if this rebellious earth
Have any resting for her true king's queen.

Enter RICHARD *and* Guard.

But soft, but see, or rather do not see,
My fair rose wither; yet look up, behold,
That you in pity may dissolve to dew,
And wash him fresh again with true-love tears.
Ah, thou, the model where old Troy did stand,
Thou map of honour, thou King Richard's tomb,
And not King Richard; thou most beauteous inn,
Why should hard-favour'd Grief be lodged in thee,
When Triumph is become an alehouse guest?

K. Rich. Join not with Grief, fair woman; do not so,
To make my end too sudden. Learn, good soul,
To think our former state a happy dream;

[V. i] There is no basis in fact for this account of the meeting of Richard and the Queen. After Richard left for Ireland they did not meet again. 2. *ill-erected:* erected for evil purposes. The Tower was built, not by Julius Cæsar, but by William the Conqueror. 11. *model . . . stand:* image of what once was glorious. 12. *map*: mere outline. 14. *hard-favour'd:* ugly-featured. 15. *When . . . guest:* when victory comes to Bolingbroke, a mere *alehouse*, not a *most beauteous inn*.

From which awaked, the truth of what we are
Shows us but this. I am sworn brother, sweet,
To grim Necessity, and he and I
Will keep a league till death. Hie thee to France
And cloister thee in some religious house.
Our holy lives must win a new world's crown,
Which our profane hours here have stricken down.
Queen. What, is my Richard both in shape and mind
Transform'd and weaken'd? Hath Bolingbroke deposed
Thine intellect? Hath he been in thy heart?
The lion dying thrusteth forth his paw,
And wounds the earth, if nothing else, with rage
To be o'erpower'd; and wilt thou, pupil-like,
Take thy correction mildly, kiss the rod,
And fawn on rage with base humility,
Which art a lion and a king of beasts?
K. Rich. A king of beasts, indeed; if aught but beasts,
I had been still a happy king of men.
Good sometime queen, prepare thee hence for France.
Think I am dead and that even here thou takest,
As from my death-bed, thy last living leave.
In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire
With good old folks and let them tell thee tales
Of woeful ages long ago betid;
And ere thou bid good night, to quit their griefs,
Tell thou the lamentable tale of me
And send the hearers weeping to their beds.
For why, the senseless brands will sympathize
The heavy accent of thy moving tongue
And in compassion weep the fire out;
And some will mourn in ashes, some coal-black,
For the deposing of a rightful king.

23. *religious house:* convent. 24. *new world's:* heaven's. 25. *profane:* of this world. 28. *Hath . . . heart:* hath he stolen thy courage? 31. *To be:* at being. 34. *Which.* The reference is to Richard. 41–2. *tales . . . betid:* tales of ages long past. 43. *quit their griefs:* repay their sad tales. 46. *For why:* because. *sympathize:* have sympathy for.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND *and others.*

North. My lord, the mind of Bolingbroke is changed;
You must to Pomfret, not unto the Tower.
And, madam, there is order ta'en for you;
With all swift speed you must away to France.
K. Rich. Northumberland, thou ladder wherewithal
The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne,
The time shall not be many hours of age
More than it is, ere foul sin gathering head
Shall break into corruption. Thou shalt think,
Though he divide the realm and give thee half,
It is too little, helping him to all;
And he shall think that thou, which know'st the way
To plant unrightful kings, wilt know again,
Being ne'er so little urged, another way
To pluck him headlong from the usurped throne.
The love of wicked men converts to fear;
That fear to hate, and hate turns one or both
To worthy danger and deserved death.
North. My guilt be on my head, and there an end.
Take leave and part, for you must part forthwith.
K. Rich. Doubly divorced! Bad men, you violate
A twofold marriage, 'twixt my crown and me,
And then betwixt me and my married wife.
Let me unkiss the oath 'twixt thee and me;
And yet not so, for with a kiss 'twas made.
Part us, Northumberland; I towards the north,
Where shivering cold and sickness pines the clime;
My wife to France; from whence, set forth in pomp,
She came adorned hither like sweet May,
Sent back like Hallowmas or short'st of day.

52. *Pomfret:* the modern Pontefract, an ancient stronghold near York. 53. *order ta'en:* arrangement made. 61. *helping him:* since you have helped him. 66. *converts:* changes. 68. *worthy:* merited. 74. *unkiss:* undo with a kiss. 77. *pines:* distresses. 80. *Hallowmas:* All Saints' Day, November 1.

Queen. And must we be divided? Must we part?
K. Rich. Ay, hand from hand, my love, and heart from heart.
Queen. Banish us both and send the king with me.
North. That were some love but little policy.
Queen. Then whither he goes, thither let me go.
K. Rich. So two, together weeping, make one woe.
Weep thou for me in France, I for thee here;
Better far off than near, be ne'er the near.
Go, count thy way with sighs, I mine with groans.
Queen. So longest way shall have the longest moans.
K. Rich. Twice for one step I'll groan, the way being short,
And piece the way out with a heavy heart.
Come, come, in wooing sorrow let's be brief,
Since, wedding it, there is such length in grief.
One kiss shall stop our mouths, and dumbly part;
Thus give I mine, and thus take I thy heart. [*They kiss.*
Queen. Give me mine own again; 'twere no good part
To take on me to keep and kill thy heart. [*They kiss again.*
So, now I have mine own again, be gone,
That I may strive to kill it with a groan.
K. Rich. We make Woe wanton with this fond delay.
Once more, adieu; the rest let Sorrow say. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *London. The* DUKE OF YORK'S *palace.*

Enter YORK *and his* DUCHESS.

Duch. My lord, you told me you would tell the rest,
When weeping made you break the story off,
Of our two cousins coming into London.
York. Where did I leave?
Duch. At that sad stop, my lord,
Where rude misgovern'd hands from windows' tops
Threw dust and rubbish on King Richard's head.

88. *Better . . . the near:* better be far from each other, if we be never nearer than enforced separation permits. *Near* is the old comparative of *nigh.* 101. *wanton:* unrestrained. *fond:* foolish.

[ii] This scene records happenings entirely imaginary. 3. *two cousins:* Richard and Bolingbroke. 4. *leave:* pause.

York. Then, as I said, the duke, great Bolingbroke,
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed
Which his aspiring rider seem'd to know,
With slow but stately pace kept on his course,
Whilst all tongues cried, "God save thee, Bolingbroke!"
You would have thought the very windows spake,
So many greedy looks of young and old
Through casements darted their desiring eyes
Upon his visage, and that all the walls
With painted imagery had said at once,
"Jesu preserve thee! Welcome, Bolingbroke!"
Whilst he, from the one side to the other turning,
Bareheaded, lower than his proud steed's neck,
Bespake them thus: "I thank you, countrymen."
And thus still doing, thus he pass'd along.

Duch. Alack, poor Richard! Where rode he the whilst?

York. As in a theatre, the eyes of men,
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious;
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes
Did scowl on gentle Richard. No man cried, "God save him!"
No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home;
But dust was thrown upon his sacred head;
Which with such gentle sorrow he shook off,
His face still combating with tears and smiles,
The badges of his grief and patience,
That had not God, for some strong purpose, steel'd
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted
And barbarism itself have pitied him.
But heaven hath a hand in these events,
To whose high will we bound our calm contents.
To Bolingbroke are we sworn subjects now,
Whose state and honour I for aye allow.

Duch. Here comes my son Aumerle.

20. ***Bespake:*** addressed. 25. ***idly:*** casually. 38. ***we . . . contents:*** we limit our desires. 40. ***allow:*** acknowledge.

York. Aumerle that was;
But that is lost for being Richard's friend,
And, madam, you must call him Rutland now.
I am in Parliament pledge for his truth
And lasting fealty to the new-made king.

Enter AUMERLE.

Duch. Welcome, my son! Who are the violets now
That strew the green lap of the new-come spring?
Aum. Madam, I know not, nor I greatly care not.
God knows I had as lief be none as one.
York. Well, bear you well in this new spring of time,
Lest you be cropp'd before you come to prime.
What news from Oxford? Hold those justs and triumphs?
Aum. For aught I know, my lord, they do.
York. You will be there, I know.
Aum. If God prevent not, I purpose so.
York. What seal is that, that hangs without thy bosom?
Yea, look'st thou pale? Let me see the writing.
Aum. My lord, 'tis nothing.
York. No matter, then, who see it.
I will be satisfied; let me see the writing.
Aum. I do beseech your Grace to pardon me.
It is a matter of small consequence,
Which for some reasons I would not have seen.
York. Which for some reasons, sir, I mean to see.
I fear, I fear—
Duch. What should you fear?
'Tis nothing but some bond, that he is enter'd into
For gay apparel 'gainst the triumph day.
York. Bound to himself! What doth he with a bond
That he is bound to? Wife, thou art a fool.
Boy, let me see the writing.

41. *Aumerle that was.* Because of Bagot's disclosures (IV, i, 1–90), Henry IV's first Parliament had deprived him of the title of Duke of Aumerle (Albemarle). He retained the title of Earl of Rutland. 46–7. *Who . . . spring:* who are the new king's favorites? 52. *justs:* jousts. *triumphs:* public festivities. 56. *without:* outside.

Aum. I do beseech you, pardon me. I may not show it.
York. I will be satisfied. Let me see it, I say.
[*He plucks it out of his bosom and reads it.*
Treason! Foul treason! Villain! Traitor! Slave!
Duch. What is the matter, my lord?
York. Ho! who is within there?

Enter a Servant.

Saddle my horse.
God for his mercy, what treachery is here!
Duch. Why, what is it, my lord?
York. Give me my boots, I say; saddle my horse.
[*Exit Servant.*
Now, by mine honour, by my life, by my troth,
I will appeach the villain.
Duch. What is the matter?
York. Peace, foolish woman.
Duch. I will not peace. What is the matter, Aumerle?
Aum. Good mother, be content; it is no more
Than my poor life must answer.
Duch. Thy life answer!
York. Bring me my boots; I will unto the king.

Re-enter Servant *with boots.*

Duch. Strike him, Aumerle. Poor boy, thou art amazed.
Hence, villain! Never more come in my sight.
York. Give me my boots, I say.
Duch. Why, York, what wilt thou do?
Wilt thou not hide the trespass of thine own?
Have we more sons? Or are we like to have?
Is not my teeming date drunk up with time?
And wilt thou pluck my fair son from mine age,
And rob me of a happy mother's name?
Is he not like thee? Is he not thine own?

79. *appeach:* accuse. 82. *content:* calm. 85. *Strike him:* i.e., the servant. *amazed:* bewildered. 90. *Have we more sons?* Actually, she was Aumerle's stepmother. 91. *teeming date:* period of childbearing.

York. Thou fond, mad woman,
Wilt thou conceal this dark conspiracy?
A dozen of them here have ta'en the sacrament,
And interchangeably set down their hands,
To kill the king at Oxford.
Duch. He shall be none;
We'll keep him here; then what is that to him?
York. Away, fond woman! Were he twenty times my son,
I would appeach him.
Duch. Hadst thou groan'd for him
As I have done, thou wouldst be more pitiful.
But now I know thy mind; thou dost suspect
That I have been disloyal to thy bed,
And that he is a bastard, not thy son.
Sweet York, sweet husband, be not of that mind.
He is as like thee as a man may be,
Not like to me, or any of my kin,
And yet I love him.
York. Make way, unruly woman! [*Exit.*
Duch. After, Aumerle! Mount thee upon his horse;
Spur post, and get before him to the king,
And beg thy pardon ere he do accuse thee.
I'll not be long behind; though I be old,
I doubt not but to ride as fast as York.
And never will I rise up from the ground
Till Bolingbroke have pardon'd thee. Away, be gone!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Windsor Castle.*

Enter BOLINGBROKE, PERCY, *and other* Lords.

Boling. Can no man tell me of my unthrifty son?
'Tis full three months since I did see him last.

98. *And . . . hands:* each signed a pledge to each of the others. 112. *post:* in haste.

[iii] 1–22. Prince Hal was then only twelve years old. His waywardness and the "sparks of better hope" that his father sees are dealt with in the later plays of the series. 1. *unthrifty:* worthless.

If any plague hang over us, 'tis he.
I would to God, my lords, he might be found.
Inquire at London, 'mongst the taverns there,
For there, they say, he daily doth frequent,
With unrestrained loose companions,
Even such, they say, as stand in narrow lanes,
And beat our watch, and rob our passengers;
Which he, young wanton and effeminate boy,
Takes on the point of honour to support
So dissolute a crew.

Percy. My lord, some two days since I saw the prince,
And told him of those triumphs held at Oxford.

Boling. And what said the gallant?

Percy. His answer was, he would unto the stews,
And from the common'st creature pluck a glove,
And wear it as a favour; and with that
He would unhorse the lustiest challenger.

Boling. As dissolute as desperate; yet through both
I see some sparks of better hope, which elder years
May happily bring forth. But who comes here?

Enter AUMERLE, *hastily.*

Aum. Where is the king?

Boling. What means our cousin, that he stares and looks
So wildly?

Aum. God save your Grace! I do beseech your Majesty,
To have some conference with your Grace alone.

Boling. Withdraw yourselves, and leave us here alone.
[*Exeunt Percy and Lords.*
What is the matter with our cousin now?

Aum. For ever may my knees grow to the earth, [*He kneels.*
My tongue cleave to my roof within my mouth,
Unless a pardon ere I rise or speak.

7. *unrestrained:* lawless. *companions:* often a term of contempt. 9. *watch:* constables. *passengers:* those who pass by. 10. *wanton:* spoilt or pampered child. 16. *stews:* brothels. 20. *desperate:* reckless. 22. *happily:* perhaps.

Boling. Intended or committed was this fault?
If on the first, how heinous e'er it be,
To win thy after-love I pardon thee.
Aum. Then give me leave that I may turn the key,
That no man enter till my tale be done.
Boling. Have thy desire. [*Aumerle locks the door.*
York. [*Within*] My liege, beware! Look to thyself!
Thou hast a traitor in thy presence there.
Boling. Villain, I'll make thee safe. [*Drawing.*
Aum. Stay thy revengeful hand; thou hast no cause to fear.
York. [*Within*] Open the door, secure, foolhardy king;
Shall I for love speak treason to thy face?
Open the door, or I will break it open.

Enter YORK.

Boling. What is the matter, uncle? Speak;
Recover breath; tell us how near is danger,
That we may arm us to encounter it.
York. Peruse this writing here, and thou shalt know
The treason that my haste forbids me show.
Aum. Remember, as thou read'st, thy promise pass'd.
I do repent me; read not my name there.
My heart is not confederate with my hand.
York. It was, villain, ere thy hand did set it down.
I tore it from the traitor's bosom, king;
Fear, and not love, begets his penitence.
Forget to pity him, lest thy pity prove
A serpent that will sting thee to the heart.
Boling. O heinous, strong, and bold conspiracy!
O loyal father of a treacherous son!
Thou sheer, immaculate, and silver fountain,
From whence this stream through muddy passages
Hath held his current and defiled himself!
Thy overflow of good converts to bad,
And thy abundant goodness shall excuse
This deadly blot in thy digressing son.

43. *secure:* unsuspecting. 61. *sheer:* pure. 66. *digressing:* erring.

York. So shall my virtue be his vice's bawd;
And he shall spend mine honour with his shame,
As thriftless sons their scraping fathers' gold.
Mine honour lives when his dishonour dies,
Or my shamed life in his dishonour lies.
Thou kill'st me in his life; giving him breath,
The traitor lives, the true man's put to death.
Duch. [*Within*] What ho, my liege! For God's sake, let me in.
Boling. What shrill-voiced suppliant makes this eager cry?
Duch. [*Within*] A woman, and thy aunt, great king; 'tis I.
Speak with me, pity me, open the door!
A beggar begs that never begg'd before.
Boling. Our scene is alter'd from a serious thing,
And now changed to *The Beggar and the King.*
My dangerous cousin, let your mother in;
I know she is come to pray for your foul sin.
York. If thou do pardon, whosoever pray,
More sins for this forgiveness prosper may.
This fester'd joint cut off, the rest rest sound;
This let alone will all the rest confound.

Enter Duchess.

Duch. O king, believe not this hard-hearted man!
Love loving not itself none other can.
York. Thou frantic woman, what dost thou make here?
Shall thy old dugs once more a traitor rear?
Duch. Sweet York, be patient. Hear me, gentle liege.
[*Kneels.*
Boling. Rise up, good aunt.
Duch. Not yet, I thee beseech.
For ever will I walk upon my knees,

70–136. Note the use of rhyme. 80. *The Beggar and the King:* one of Shakespeare's several allusions to the ballad of King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid. 86. *confound:* destroy. 88. *Love . . . can.* If York does not love his own son, he can love no one else, not even you, the King. 89. *make:* do.

And never see day that the happy sees,
Till thou give joy; until thou bid me joy,
By pardoning Rutland, my transgressing boy.
Aum. Unto my mother's prayers I bend my knee. [*Kneels.*
York. Against them both my true joints bended be. [*Kneels.*
Ill mayst thou thrive, if thou grant any grace!
Duch. Pleads he in earnest? Look upon his face;
His eyes do drop no tears; his prayers are in jest;
His words come from his mouth, ours from our breast.
He prays but faintly and would be denied;
We pray with heart and soul and all beside.
His weary joints would gladly rise, I know;
Our knees shall kneel till to the ground they grow.
His prayers are full of false hypocrisy;
Ours of true zeal and deep integrity.
Our prayers do out-pray his; then let them have
That mercy which true prayer ought to have.
Boling. Good aunt, stand up.
Duch. Nay, do not say, "Stand up";
Say, "Pardon," first, and afterwards, "Stand up."
An if I were thy nurse, thy tongue to teach,
"Pardon" should be the first word of thy speech.
I never long'd to hear a word till now.
Say, "Pardon," king; let pity teach thee how.
The word is short, but not so short as sweet;
No word like "pardon" for kings' mouths so meet.
York. Speak it in French, king; say, "Pardonnez moy."
Duch. Dost thou teach pardon pardon to destroy?
Ah, my sour husband, my hard-hearted lord,
That set'st the word itself against the word!
Speak "pardon" as 'tis current in our land;
The chopping French we do not understand.
Thine eye begins to speak; set thy tongue there;
Or in thy piteous heart plant thou thine ear;

97. *Unto:* in addition to. 99. Omitted in F_1. *grace:* mercy. 119. *Pardonnez moy:* a polite refusal, "Pardon me, no!" 124. *chopping:* "changing the meanings of words" (Onions).

That hearing how our plaints and prayers do pierce,
Pity may move thee "pardon" to rehearse.
Boling. Good aunt, stand up.
Duch. I do not sue to stand;
Pardon is all the suit I have in hand.
Boling. I pardon him, as God shall pardon me.
Duch. O happy vantage of a kneeling knee!
Yet am I sick for fear; speak it again.
Twice saying "pardon" doth not pardon twain,
But makes one pardon strong.
Boling. With all my heart
I pardon him.
Duch. A god on earth thou art.
Boling. But for our trusty brother-in-law and the abbot,
With all the rest of that consorted crew,
Destruction straight shall dog them at the heels.
Good uncle, help to order several powers
To Oxford, or where'er these traitors are.
They shall not live within this world, I swear,
But I will have them, if I once know where.
Uncle, farewell: and, cousin [too], adieu!
Your mother well hath pray'd, and prove you true.
Duch. Come, my old son. I pray God make thee new.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene iv. *Windsor Castle.*

Enter Exton *and* Servant.

Exton. Didst thou not mark the king, what words he spake?
"Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?"
Was it not so?
Serv. These were his very words.

128. ***rehearse:*** pronounce aloud. 137. ***brother-in-law:*** John, Earl of Huntingdon, who had married Henry's sister Elizabeth. 138. ***consorted:*** associated. 140. ***order several powers:*** marshal separate bodies of troops. 145. ***prove you true.*** Aumerle, as Duke of York, died bravely at Agincourt. 146. ***old:*** unreformed.

Exton. "Have I no friend?" quoth he. He spake it twice,
And urged it twice together, did he not?
Serv. He did.
Exton. And speaking it, he wistly look'd on me,
As who should say, "I would thou wert the man
That would divorce this terror from my heart,"
Meaning the king at Pomfret. Come, let's go.
I am the king's friend, and will rid his foe. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE v. *Pomfret Castle.*

Enter KING RICHARD.

K. Rich. I have been studying how I may compare
This prison where I live unto the world;
And for because the world is populous
And here is not a creature but myself,
I cannot do it; yet I'll hammer it out.
My brain I'll prove the female to my soul,
My soul the father; and these two beget
A generation of still-breeding thoughts,
And these same thoughts people this little world,
In humours like the people of this world,
For no thought is contented. The better sort,
As thoughts of things divine, are intermix'd
With scruples and do set the word itself
Against the word,
As thus, "Come, little ones," and then again,
"It is as hard to come as for a camel

[iv] 5. *urged:* emphasized. 7. *wistly:* fixedly.
[v] 8. *still-breeding:* ever-growing. 9. *little world:* the microcosmos, or mind of man. 10. *humours.* In early physiology, a humour was "any of the four chief fluids of the body (blood, phlegm, choler, melancholy), by the relative proportions of which a person's physical and mental qualities were held to be determined" (Onions). The word *humour*, therefore, came to mean peculiarity of disposition or temperament: sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, or melancholy. 13. *scruples:* doubts. 13–14. *do . . . word:* set one passage of Scripture against another.

To thread the postern of a small needle's eye."
Thoughts tending to ambition, they do plot
Unlikely wonders; how these vain weak nails
May tear a passage through the flinty ribs
Of this hard world, my ragged prison walls,
And, for they cannot, die in their own pride.
Thoughts tending to content flatter themselves
That they are not the first of Fortune's slaves,
Nor shall not be the last; like silly beggars
Who sitting in the stocks refuge their shame,
That many have and others must sit there;
And in this thought they find a kind of ease,
Bearing their own misfortunes on the back
Of such as have before endured the like.
Thus play I in one person many people,
And none contented. Sometimes am I king;
Then treasons make me wish myself a beggar,
And so I am. Then crushing penury
Persuades me I was better when a king;
Then am I king'd again; and by and by
Think that I am unking'd by Bolingbroke,
And straight am nothing. But whate'er I be,
Nor I nor any man that but man is
With nothing shall be pleased, till he be eased
With being nothing. Music do I hear? [*Music.*
Ha, ha! keep time. How sour sweet music is,
When time is broke and no proportion kept!
So is it in the music of men's lives.
And here have I the daintiness of ear
To check time broke in a disorder'd string;
But for the concord of my state and time
Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.
I wasted time, and now doth Time waste me;
For now hath Time made me his numbering clock.

17. *postern:* little gate. 21. *ragged:* rugged. 25. *silly:* harmless. 26. *refuge:* comfort, find consolation for. 43. *proportion:* rhythm. 46. *check:* reprove.

My thoughts are minutes; and with sighs they jar
Their watches on unto mine eyes, the outward watch,
Whereto my finger, like a dial's point,
Is pointing still, in cleansing them from tears.
Now, sir, the sound that tells what hour it is
Are clamorous groans, which strike upon my heart,
Which is the bell. So sighs and tears and groans
Show minutes, times, and hours; but my time
Runs posting on in Bolingbroke's proud joy,
While I stand fooling here, his Jack o' the clock.
This music mads me; let it sound no more;
For though it have holp madmen to their wits,
In me it seems it will make wise men mad.
Yet blessing on his heart that gives it me!
For 'tis a sign of love; and love to Richard
Is a strange brooch in this all-hating world.

Enter a Groom of the Stable.

Groom. Hail, royal prince!

K. Rich. Thanks, noble peer!
The cheapest of us is ten groats too dear.
What art thou? And how comest thou hither,
Where no man never comes but that sad dog
That brings me food to make misfortune live?

Groom. I was a poor groom of thy stable, king,
When thou wert king; who, travelling towards York,
With much ado at length have gotten leave
To look upon my sometimes royal master's face.
O, how it yearn'd my heart when I beheld
In London streets, that coronation-day,
When Bolingbroke rode on roan Barbary,
That horse that thou so often hast bestrid,
That horse that I so carefully have dress'd!

51. *jar:* tick. 60. *Jack o' the clock:* a figure that struck the hours. 66. *brooch:* ornament worn on the hat. 68. *ten groats too dear.* A *royal* or *rial* was worth ten groats more than a *noble.* Even half a noble (ten groats) is too high for Richard and the groom, both common men. 75. *sometimes:* former. 76. *yearn'd:* grieved.

K. Rich. Rode he on Barbary? Tell me, gentle friend,
How went he under him?
Groom. So proudly as if he disdain'd the ground.
K. Rich. So proud that Bolingbroke was on his back!
That jade hath eat bread from my royal hand;
This hand hath made him proud with clapping him.
Would he not stumble? Would he not fall down,
Since pride must have a fall, and break the neck
Of that proud man that did usurp his back?
Forgiveness, horse! Why do I rail on thee,
Since thou, created to be awed by man,
Wast born to bear? I was not made a horse;
And yet I bear a burden like an ass,
Spur-gall'd and tired by jauncing Bolingbroke.

Enter Keeper, *with a dish.*

Keep. Fellow, give place; here is no longer stay.
K. Rich. If thou love me, 'tis time thou wert away.
Groom. What my tongue dares not, that my heart shall say.
[*Exit.*
Keep. My lord, will't please you to fall to?
K. Rich. Taste of it first, as thou art wont to do.
Keep. My lord, I dare not. Sir Pierce of Exton, who lately came from the king, commands the contrary.
K. Rich. The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee!
Patience is stale, and I am weary of it. [*Beats the keeper.*
Keep. Help, help, help!

Enter Exton *and* Servants, *armed.*

K. Rich. How now! What means Death in this rude assault?
Villain, thy own hand yields thy death's instrument.
[*Snatching an axe from a Servant and killing him.*
Go thou and fill another room in hell.
[*He kills another. Then Exton strikes him down.*

94. *jauncing:* hard-riding. 99. *Taste of it first.* It was the duty of the *essayer* or *assayer* to taste all food before it was served to the king.

That hand shall burn in never-quenching fire
That staggers thus my person. Exton, thy fierce hand
Hath with the king's blood stain'd the king's own land.
Mount, mount, my soul! Thy seat is up on high;
Whilst my gross flesh sinks downward, here to die. [*Dies.*

Exton. As full of valour as of royal blood!
Both have I spill'd; O would the deed were good!
For now the Devil, that told me I did well,
Says that this deed is chronicled in hell.
This dead king to the living king I'll bear.
Take hence the rest, and give them burial here. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Windsor Castle.*

Flourish. Enter BOLINGBROKE, YORK, *with other* Lords, *and* Attendants.

Boling. Kind uncle York, the latest news we hear
Is that the rebels have consumed with fire
Our town of Cicester in Gloucestershire;
But whether they be ta'en or slain we hear not.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND.

Welcome, my lord; what is the news?

North. First, to thy sacred state wish I all happiness.
The next news is, I have to London sent
The heads of Oxford, Salisbury, Blunt, and Kent.
The manner of their taking may appear
At large discoursed in this paper here.

Boling. We thank thee, gentle Percy, for thy pains;
And to thy worth will add right worthy gains.

Enter FITZWATER.

Fitz. My lord, I have from Oxford sent to London
The heads of Brocas and Sir Bennet Seely,

114. *As full of valour.* When John Taylor, "the Water Poet," visited the place two centuries later, he saw in the room where it is supposed Richard was killed at least a hundred axe marks on one wall and other indications of a terrific struggle.

Two of the dangerous consorted traitors
That sought at Oxford thy dire overthrow.
Boling. Thy pains, Fitzwater, shall not be forgot;
Right noble is thy merit, well I wot.

Enter PERCY *and the* BISHOP OF CARLISLE, *prisoner.*

Percy. The grand conspirator, Abbot of Westminster,
With clog of conscience and sour melancholy
Hath yielded up his body to the grave;
But here is Carlisle living, to abide
Thy kingly doom and sentence of his pride.
Boling. Carlisle, this is your doom:
Choose out some secret place, some reverend room,
More than thou hast, and with it joy thy life.
So as thou livest in peace, die free from strife;
For though mine enemy thou hast ever been,
High sparks of honour in thee have I seen.

Enter EXTON, *with persons bearing a coffin.*

Exton. Great king, within this coffin I present
Thy buried fear. Herein all breathless lies
The mightiest of thy greatest enemies,
Richard of Bordeaux, by me hither brought.
Boling. Exton, I thank thee not; for thou hast wrought
A deed of slander with thy fatal hand
Upon my head and all this famous land.
Exton. From your own mouth, my lord, did I this deed.
Boling. They love not poison that do poison need,
Nor do I thee. Though I did wish him dead,
I hate the murderer, love him murdered.
The guilt of conscience take thou for thy labour,
But neither my good word nor princely favour.
With Cain go wander thorough shades of night,
And never show thy head by day nor light.
Lords, I protest, my soul is full of woe,

[vi] 20. *clog:* weight. 22. *abide:* endure or, perhaps, await. 26. *joy:* enjoy. 35. *A deed of slander:* a deed that will cause slanderous talk.

That blood should sprinkle me to make me grow.
Come, mourn with me for that I do lament,
And put on sullen black incontinent.
I'll make a voyage to the Holy Land,
To wash this blood off from my guilty hand.
March sadly after; grace my mournings here,
In weeping after this untimely bier. [*Exeunt.*

48. *sullen:* gloomy. *incontinent:* immediately. 49. *I'll . . . Land.* Although Henry often remembered his vow, he never performed it. 51. *sadly:* soberly. *grace:* honor.

King Henry IV, Part One

Introduction

Historical Background

In the closing scene of *Richard II*, Henry IV expresses his grief at the death of Richard and announces his determination to lead a crusade to the Holy Land in expiation of his guilt in the deposition and murder of Richard. The opening scene of *Henry IV, Part One*, reveals the king unable to perform his vow because of disturbances that require his presence in England. In the interval of more than two years some of the nobles who had supported him against Richard had grown dissatisfied. In 1400, during his first year as king, he had carried on an unsuccessful campaign in Wales against Owen Glendower, and in June, 1402, Glendower defeated the English and took as prisoner Sir Edmund Mortimer, brother of Hotspur's wife, and later the husband of Glendower's daughter. This Mortimer was the uncle of Edmund Mortimer, fifth Earl of March, who before Richard's deposition had been proclaimed heir to the crown. Shakespeare follows Holinshed in identifying the two Edmund Mortimers, and thereby supplies a plausible motive for the king's refusal to ransom Mortimer, a claimant to the throne.

In September, 1402, the Earl of Northumberland and his son, Hotspur, defeated the Scots at Holmedon. With the arrival of the news of that victory and of Mortimer's defeat and capture, which had actually occurred three months before, Shakespeare's play opens. The action follows the events of the next ten months to their culmination in Henry's victory at Shrewsbury, July 21, 1403.

Sources

In the scenes based on English history Shakespeare follows Holinshed's *Chronicles*, but in adapting the story to the require-

ments of drama he makes several changes. He introduces Prince John of Lancaster, Lady Percy, and Lady Mortimer, who do not appear in Holinshed's account of the events covered by the play. He represents the thirty-seven-year-old King Henry as elderly, apparently to make more striking the contrast between him and the lively young Prince Hal. Hotspur, who in reality was older than the king, is in the play as young as Hal, to whom he serves as an effective foil. Hal's reconciliation with his father (III, ii) took place, not before the battle of Shrewsbury, but nearly ten years after. There is no authority in Holinshed for Hal's challenge to Hotspur, or for their single combat, or for Hal's rescue of his father at Shrewsbury. Some of these changes may be referable to Shakespeare's possible acquaintance with Daniel's *Civil Wars of England*, in which Hal encounters Hotspur at Shrewsbury, and rescues his father from death at the hands of Douglas. But whatever the source of these departures from Holinshed's account, they add dramatic effectiveness to the story as Shakespeare tells it.

For the humorous scenes, which constitute an independent realistic comedy of everyday life, Shakespeare utilized a crude chronicle-history, *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*, which had been on the stage at least as early as 1588. Shakespeare's debt, however, is little more than certain hints and suggestions which he developed with unusual success: in essentials, the humorous scenes in Shakespeare's play are all but completely original. Shakespeare's principal debt to *The Famous Victories* is his borrowing from it the idea of Prince Hal's comradeship with the enchanting Sir John Falstaff, who in the older play bore the name of Sir John Oldcastle, a fifteenth-century Protestant martyr. Oldcastle, indeed, is the name that Shakespeare first gave Falstaff, but for some reason not certainly known—probably an objection raised by a descendant of Oldcastle or by Protestants—Shakespeare renamed his famous knight.

Characters

The serious and the humorous plots in the play are linked by the figure of Prince Hal. Mentioned first in *Richard II* (V, iii), he is here no longer the graceless scamp of *The Famous Victories*, but an attractive madcap, seeking escape from the irksome routine of his father's somber court, and delighting temporarily in the company of "unrestrained loose companions," but always self-controlled and clear-sighted, and, when the test comes, brave in battle and generous in victory. Contrasted with this honest and engaging personality, King Henry is singularly unattractive. The crafty and scheming Bolingbroke of *Richard II* has grown older. Having won the crown by guile, he has become increasingly fearful, jealous, lonely, suspicious even of his eldest son. Hotspur scorns him as a "vile politician" and a "king of smiles." A third striking contrast is presented by Hotspur—tactless, headstrong, domineering—a foolish, lovable, unteachable, fearless boy.

Of the humorous characters Falstaff is the most conspicuous. Painted against a background of low life in Elizabethan London that neither Shakespeare nor any one of his contemporaries has surpassed, he is Shakespeare's most famous and most successful comic creation. Shakespeare not only included him in *Henry IV, Part Two,* but in the epilogue to that play promised to "continue the story with Sir John in it." In *Henry V*, however, we have only the humorous-pathetic account of Sir John's death. Again he appears—but greatly changed—in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, a play which, if we are to accept a fairly credible tradition first recorded by John Dennis in 1702, was written at the command of Queen Elizabeth, who wished to see him in love. Additional proof of his immediate popularity is to be found in the many contemporary allusions to him and in the fact that his name is included on the title page of every early edition of every play in which he appears.

Although Falstaff is a development of a stock character of Latin comedy—the *miles gloriosus*, the soldier who is both coward and braggart—he is far more than a mere type. By making him an unforgettable human being, Shakespeare has created one of the greatest characters in all literature. Gross and disreputable, but devoid of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, this triumphant jester charms us with his fascinating tongue and dauntless spirits, with his monstrous lies that are not intended to deceive, with his irresponsible, heart-easing mirth. From Shakespeare's day to our own he has delighted playgoers and readers alike, and he has been the subject of perhaps a greater amount of good criticisim than any other character in Shakespeare except Hamlet. If some regard him as "little better than one of the wicked," others have been eloquent in his defense. He is, in Dr. Johnson's words, a "compound of sense and vice; of sense which may be admired, but not esteemed; of vice which may be despised, but hardly detested!" To the late Professor Walter Raleigh he is "a comic Hamlet, stronger in practical resource, and hardly less rich in thought," and behind the jester is discernible the real man, "calm, aristocratic, fanciful, scorning opinion, following his own ends, and intellectual to the finger-tips."

Relation to Other Shakespearean Plays

The two parts of *Henry IV* stand in the closest possible relation to *Richard II*. As the Introduction to *Richard II* and the notes to *Henry IV, Part One*, point out, there are many links between the plays. Indeed, the very action of *Henry IV* is predicted by the deposed Richard:

> Northumberland, thou ladder wherewithal
> The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne,
> The time shall not be many hours of age
> More than it is, ere foul sin gathering head
> Shall break into corruption. Thou shalt think,

Though he divide the realm and give thee half,
It is too little, helping him to all;
And he shall think that thou, which know'st the way
To plant unrightful kings, will know again,
Being ne'er so little urged, another way
To pluck him headlong from the usurped throne.
(V, i, 55 ff.)

In *Henry IV*, then, Shakespeare shows the immediate consequences of Henry's usurpation. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown"—especially a crown gained by "indirect crook'd ways." Even Henry V, to whom the crown descended with a stain, prayed years later to the god of battles to

think not upon the fault
My father made in compassing the crown,

and made good his own claim to it only because he placed the welfare of England before his personal ambition.

The more remote consequences of Henry Bolingbroke's usurpation, as prophesied by the Bishop of Carlisle (*Richard II*, IV, i, 137 ff.), were confusion and civil war through several generations. The House of Lancaster succumbed to a movement precisely parallel to that which had placed it on the throne. Plantagenet Richard had his fifteenth-century counterpart in monk-like Henry VI, York supplanted Lancaster, and peace came only with the accession of Henry of Richmond, the first of the Tudors, who in Shakespeare's eyes represented the union of the claims of Lancaster and York. These prolonged civil wars are the theme of an earlier tetralogy of plays—the three parts of *Henry VI* and finally *Richard III*.

For a reader of the Henry IV plays, as of all Shakespeare's plays dealing with English kings, it is important to bear in mind Shakespeare's conception of kingship—the conception of his day—as a divine stewardship for which the king is responsible only to heaven, and the consequent distinction between the king as erring man and kingship as a divine office and the symbol

of national unity. Richard, dangerous and incompetent though he was, was still God's anointed deputy and above the judgment of any subject, and Henry "in compassing the crown" had sinned against God and man. But now that Richard is dead and there is no more rightful claimant, Henry, despite the stigma of usurpation that remains with him, is England's king and God's vicegerent.

Political Significance

When Shakespeare wrote *Henry IV*, Englishmen feared more than any other calamity—more even than Spanish invasion—the horrors of civil war. As the aging Queen Elizabeth neared her end, uncertainty as to the succession and the consequent danger of war between rival claimants to the throne oppressed men's minds. It was to men fearing civil war that Shakespeare wrote in the closing lines of *King John:*

> This England never did, nor never shall,
> Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
> But when it first did help to wound itself.
> . . . Nought shall make us rue,
> If England to itself do rest but true.

It is important to remember that to Shakespeare's audience, Henry IV, despite his usurpation, was England's king and, like Queen Elizabeth, the symbol of monarchy and national unity, and that those who fomented rebellion were enemies to God and to the state. Hotspur, however he may appeal to the modern reader, was to the Englishman of Shakespeare's day a rebellious feudal baron who placed personal ambition and family pride above loyalty to the monarch. He was, in Shakespeare's phrase, "a very valiant rebel," but a rebel, a disloyal and dangerous subject.

Shakespeare's *Henry IV* plays clearly reflect contemporary opinion, the fears and hopes of Englishmen at the close of the century—the haunting fear of civil war and its resultant ills,

the hope of stability and peace. One may be sure that the men for whom the play was written did not hesitate in their judgment of Hotspur and Henry, did not hesitate in their choice between the rebels who started civil war and sought to partition the country among themselves, and the king, whose continued rule meant peace and stable government.

Date and Text

Henry IV, Part One, was registered for publication, February 25, 1598, and printed in the same year. It was almost certainly written in 1596 or 1597. Its great popularity is proved by the fact that other editions followed in 1599, 1604, 1608, 1613, and 1624, each based on its predecessor. The Folio of 1623 follows a copy of the 1613 edition that had been carelessly corrected for use in the theatre. The first quarto (1598), evidently printed with great care from a reliable manuscript, provides the most satisfactory text.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

HENRY IV, King of England.
HENRY, Prince of Wales, "Prince Hal," son of Henry IV.
JOHN OF LANCASTER, younger brother of Prince Hal.
HENRY PERCY, Earl of Northumberland.
HENRY PERCY, "Hotspur," son of Northumberland.
THOMAS PERCY, Earl of Worcester, brother of Northumberland.
LADY PERCY, wife of Hotspur.
EDMUND MORTIMER, Earl of March, brother of Lady Percy.
OWEN GLENDOWER, Welsh warrior, ally of the Percies.
LADY MORTIMER, daughter of Glendower, and wife of Mortimer.
ARCHIBALD, EARL OF DOUGLAS, Scottish leader, ally of his former enemies, the Percies.
RICHARD SCROOP, Archbishop of York, ally of the Percies.
SIR MICHAEL, a follower of the Archbishop of York.
SIR RICHARD VERNON, of the rebel faction.
THE EARL OF WESTMORELAND, SIR WALTER BLUNT } leaders of the King's forces.
SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.
POINS, a companion of Prince Hal.
GADSHILL, PETO, BARDOLPH } companions of Falstaff.
MISTRESS QUICKLY, hostess of the Boar's Head Tavern.
Lords, Officers, a Vintner, a Chamberlain, Drawers, two Carriers, Travellers, Attendants.

Scene of the action: England and Wales.
Time: September, 1402, to July, 1403.

The First Part of King Henry IV

ACT I

SCENE I. *London. The palace.*

Enter KING HENRY, the EARL OF WESTMORELAND, SIR WALTER BLUNT, *and others.*

King. So shaken as we are, so wan with care,
Find we a time for frighted Peace to pant,
And breathe short-winded accents of new broils
To be commenced in strands afar remote.
No more the thirsty entrance of this soil
Shall daub her lips with her own children's blood;
No more shall trenching War channel her fields,
Nor bruise her flowerets with the armed hoofs
Of hostile paces. Those opposed eyes,
Which, like the meteors of a troubled heaven,
All of one nature, of one substance bred,
Did lately meet in the intestine shock
And furious close of civil butchery,
Shall now, in mutual well-beseeming ranks,
March all one way and be no more opposed
Against acquaintance, kindred, and allies.
The edge of war, like an ill-sheathed knife,
No more shall cut his master. Therefore, friends,
As far as to the sepulchre of Christ,
Whose soldier now, under whose blessed cross
We are impressed and engaged to fight,
Forthwith a power of English shall we levy,

[I. i] 4. *strands:* shores. 5. *entrance:* i.e., mouth. 7. *trenching:* trench-digging. 12. *intestine:* internal, civil. 13. *close:* encounter. 14. *mutual well-beseeming:* friendly and orderly. 17. *edge:* sword. 18. *his:* its. 21. *impressed:* enlisted. 22. *levy:* raise and conduct.

Whose arms were moulded in their mothers' womb
To chase these pagans in those holy fields
Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nail'd
For our advantage on the bitter cross.
But this our purpose now is twelve month old,
And bootless 'tis to tell you we will go;
Therefor we meet not now. Then let me hear
Of you, my gentle cousin Westmoreland,
What yesternight our council did decree
In forwarding this dear expedience.

West. My liege, this haste was hot in question,
And many limits of the charge set down
But yesternight, when all athwart there came
A post from Wales loaden with heavy news;
Whose worst was that the noble Mortimer,
Leading the men of Herefordshire to fight
Against the irregular and wild Glendower,
Was by the rude hands of that Welshman taken,
A thousand of his people butchered;
Upon whose dead corpse there was such misuse,
Such beastly shameless transformation,
By those Welshwomen done as may not be
Without much shame retold or spoken of.

King. It seems then that the tidings of this broil
Brake off our business for the Holy Land.

West. This match'd with other like, my gracious lord.
Far more uneven and unwelcome news
Came from the north, and thus it did import:

28. *twelve month.* More than two years had passed since Henry IV pledged himself to undertake a crusade. See *Richard II*, V, vi, 45–50. 29. *bootless:* useless. 30. *Therefor:* for this. 33. *dear expedience:* important enterprise. 34. *hot in question:* in hot debate. 35. *charge:* expense. 36. *athwart:* from an unexpected quarter, perversely. 37. *post:* messenger. 38. *Mortimer.* See Introduction. 40. *irregular:* lawless. 43–6. *Upon . . . spoken of.* Here Shakespeare closely follows Holinshed. 49. *match'd:* joined. 50. *uneven:* embarrassing.

On Holy-rood day, the gallant Hotspur there,
Young Harry Percy and brave Archibald,
That ever-valiant and approved Scot,
At Holmedon met,
Where they did spend a sad and bloody hour,
As by discharge of their artillery,
And shape of likelihood, the news was told;
For he that brought them, in the very heat
And pride of their contention, did take horse,
Uncertain of the issue any way.

King. Here is a dear, a true industrious friend,
Sir Walter Blunt, new lighted from his horse,
Stain'd with the variation of each soil
Betwixt that Holmedon and this seat of ours;
And he hath brought us smooth and welcome news.
The Earl of Douglas is discomfited.
Ten thousand bold Scots, two and twenty knights,
Balk'd in their own blood did Sir Walter see
On Holmedon's plains. Of prisoners, Hotspur took
Mordake, the Earl of Fife, and eldest son
To beaten Douglas; and the Earl of Atholl,
Of Moray, Angus, and Menteith.
And is not this an honourable spoil?
A gallant prize, ha, cousin, is it not?

West. In faith,
It is a conquest for a prince to boast of.

King. Yea, there thou makest me sad and makest me sin
In envy that my Lord Northumberland
Should be the father to so blest a son,

52. *Holy-rood day:* Holy Cross Day, September 14. 54. *approved:* well-tried. 55. *Holmedon:* the modern Humbleton, in Northumberland. 57. *by:* i.e., judging from. 58. *shape of likelihood:* probability. 64. *the variation of each:* each kind of. 66. *smooth:* pleasant. 69. *Balk'd:* heaped up. 71. *Mordake.* Murdach, Earl of Fife, was the son of Robert, Duke of Albany, regent of Scotland. Shakespeare follows Holinshed, who omits a comma after the world *governour:* "Mordacke earle of Fife, son to the governour Archembald earle of Dowglas."

A son who is the theme of honour's tongue,
Amongst a grove the very straightest plant,
Who is sweet Fortune's minion and her pride;
Whilst I, by looking on the praise of him,
See riot and dishonour stain the brow
Of my young Harry. O that it could be proved
That some night-tripping fairy had exchanged
In cradle-clothes our children where they lay,
And call'd mine Percy, his Plantagenet!
Then would I have his Harry, and he mine.
But let him from my thoughts. What think you, coz,
Of this young Percy's pride? The prisoners
Which he in this adventure hath surprised
To his own use he keeps, and sends me word
I shall have none but Mordake, Earl of Fife.

West. This is his uncle's teaching; this is Worcester,
Malevolent to you in all aspects;
Which makes him prune himself, and bristle up
The crest of youth against your dignity.

King. But I have sent for him to answer this;
And for this cause awhile we must neglect
Our holy purpose to Jerusalem.
Cousin, on Wednesday next our council we
Will hold at Windsor. So inform the lords.
But come yourself with speed to us again,
For more is to be said and to be done
Than out of anger can be uttered.

West. I will, my liege. [*Exeunt.*

83. *minion:* favorite. 91. *coz:* cousin, a title of courtesy used by the sovereign in addressing a nobleman. 95. *none but Mordake.* Since Murdach, a grandson of the Scottish King Robert II, was of royal blood, King Henry was entitled, by the law of arms, to claim him as prisoner. Shakespeare, who here merely records the facts as stated by Holinshed, does not make clear that Hotspur had a legal right to all the other prisoners. 97. *Malevolent, aspects.* These are astrological terms which refer to the supposed influence of the planets. 98. *prune:* preen (as a bird its feathers). 107. *uttered:* put into circulation, given to the public.

SCENE II. *London. A tavern.*

Enter the PRINCE OF WALES *and* FALSTAFF.

Fal. Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?

Prince. Thou art so fat-witted, with drinking of old sack and unbuttoning thee after supper and sleeping upon benches after noon, that thou hast forgotten to demand that truly which thou wouldst truly know. What a devil hast thou to do with the time of the day? Unless hours were cups of sack, and minutes capons, and clocks the tongues of bawds, and dials the signs of leaping-houses, and the blessed sun himself a fair hot wench in flame-coloured taffeta, I see no reason why thou shouldst be so superfluous to demand the time of the day.

Fal. Indeed, you come near me now, Hal; for we that take purses go by the moon and the seven stars, and not by Phœbus, he, "that wandering knight so fair." And, I prithee, sweet wag, when thou art king, as, God save thy Grace—Majesty I should say, for grace thou wilt have none—

Prince. What, none?

Fal. No, by my troth, not so much as will serve to be prologue to an egg and butter.

Prince. Well, how then? Come, roundly, roundly.

Fal. Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art king, let not us

[ii] 3. *sack:* white wine formerly imported from Spain. 9. *bawds:* panders. 10. *leaping-houses:* brothels. 14. *you come near me:* your views are like mine. Falstaff pretends to misunderstand Prince Hal's abuse. 16. *seven stars:* the Pleiades; also a common tavern sign. 16–17. *"that wandering knight so fair":* El Donzel del Febo, Knight of the Sun (Phoebus), hero of a popular Spanish romance. Falstaff is probably quoting a familiar line from a contemporary ballad. 19. *Grace.* Falstaff plays on three senses of the word: (a) as a title, (b) as a spiritual state, (c) as "grace before meat." He plays also on *night* and *knight* in line 27, on *body*, *beauty*, and *booty* (all containing a vowel sound resembling the *o* in *note*), and on the double meaning of the phrase *under whose countenance*, i.e., (a) under whose face, (b) with whose permission. 24. *roundly:* plainly. 26. *Marry:* well. Originally an oath, "by the Virgin Mary."

that are squires of the night's body be called thieves of the day's beauty. Let us be Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon; and let men say we be men of good government, being governed, as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we steal.

Prince. Thou sayest well, and it holds well too; for the fortune of us that are the moon's men doth ebb and flow like the sea, being governed, as the sea is, by the moon. As, for proof, now: a purse of gold most resolutely snatched on Monday night and most dissolutely spent on Tuesday morning; got with swearing "Lay by" and spent with crying "Bring in"; now in as low an ebb as the foot of the ladder and by and by in as high a flow as the ridge of the gallows— 43

Fal. By the Lord, thou sayest true, lad. And is not my hostess of the tavern a most sweet wench?

Prince. As the honey of Hybla, my old lad of the castle. And is not a buff jerkin a most sweet robe of durance? 49

Fal. How now, how now, mad wag! What, in thy quips and thy quiddities? What a plague have I to do with a buff jerkin?

Prince. Why, what a pox have I to do with my hostess of the tavern?

Fal. Well, thou hast called her to a reckoning many a time and oft.

Prince. Did I ever call for thee to pay thy part?

Fal. No. I'll give thee thy due, thou hast paid all there. 60

Prince. Yea, and elsewhere, so far as my coin would stretch; and where it would not, I have used my credit.

27–8. *squires . . . beauty.* Falstaff mimics the affected speech of courtiers. 29. *Diana's:* the moon's. 30. *minions:* favorites. 31. *government:* behavior. 40. *"Lay by":* the highwayman's command to his victim. 41. *"Bring in":* i.e., food and drink at a tavern. 46. *wench:* a term of affectionate or familiar address. 47. *Hybla:* a mountain region in Sicily, famous for honey. *old lad of the castle:* roisterer (?). A pun on the name Sir John Oldcastle, borne by Falstaff in the earlier versions of the play. 48. *buff jerkin:* leather coat worn by sheriff's officers. 49. *durance:* (a) imprisonment, (b) a stout, durable cloth. 51. *quips:* jests. *quiddities:* subtleties, puns.

Fal. Yea, and so used it that, were it not here apparent that thou art heir apparent—but, I prithee, sweet wag, shall there be gallows standing in England when thou art king, and Resolution thus fobbed as it is with the rusty curb of Old Father Antic the law? Do not thou, when thou art king, hang a thief.

Prince. No; thou shalt.

Fal. Shall I? O rare! By the Lord, I'll be a brave judge.

Prince. Thou judgest false already. I mean thou shalt have the hanging of the thieves and so become a rare hangman.

Fal. Well, Hal, well; and in some sort it jumps with my humour as well as waiting in the court, I can tell you.

Prince. For obtaining of suits?

Fal. Yea, for obtaining of suits, whereof the hangman hath no lean wardrobe. 'Sblood, I am as melancholy as a gib cat or a lugged bear.

Prince. Or an old lion, or a lover's lute.

Fal. Yea, or the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe.

Prince. What sayest thou to a hare, or the melancholy of Moorditch?

Fal. Thou hast the most unsavoury similes and art indeed the most comparative, rascalliest, sweet young prince. But, Hal, I prithee, trouble me no more with vanity. I would to God thou and I knew where a commodity of good names were to be bought. An old lord of the council rated me the other day in the street about you, sir, but I marked him not; and yet he talked very wisely, but I regarded him not; and yet he talked wisely, and in the street too.

Prince. Thou didst well; for wisdom cries out in the streets, and no man regards it.

67. *resolution:* boldness. 68. *fobbed:* cheated. 69. *Antic:* buffoon. 73. *brave:* fine. 78. *jumps:* agrees. *humour:* temperament. *waiting in the court:* i.e., as a courtier or as a judge. 80. *suits:* (a) petitions, (b) suits of clothes. The latter were the hangman's perquisite. 83. *gib cat:* tomcat. *lugged bear:* bear led by a rope. 87. *hare.* Eating the flesh of a hare was supposed to cause melancholy. 88. *Moorditch:* an ill-smelling ditch outside the north wall of London. 90. *comparative:* full of witty comparisons. 93. *commodity:* supply. 99–100. *wisdom . . . it.* See Proverbs 1 : 20–4.

Fal. O, thou hast damnable iteration and art indeed able to corrupt a saint. Thou hast done much harm upon me, Hal; God forgive thee for it! Before I knew thee, Hal, I knew nothing; and now am I, if a man should speak truly, little better than one of the wicked. I must give over this life, and I will give it over. By the Lord, an I do not, I am a villain. I'll be damned for never a king's son in Christendom.

Prince. Where shall we take a purse tomorrow, Jack? 111

Fal. 'Zounds, where thou wilt, lad. I'll make one. An I do not, call me villain and baffle me.

Prince. I see a good amendment of life in thee—from praying to purse-taking.

Fal. Why, Hal, 'tis my vocation, Hal. 'Tis no sin for a man to labour in his vocation.

Enter POINS.

Poins! Now shall we know if Gadshill have set a match. O, if men were to be saved by merit, what hole in hell were hot enough for him? This is the most omnipotent villain that ever cried "Stand" to a true man. 122

Prince. Good morrow, Ned.

Poins. Good morrow, sweet Hal. What says Monsieur Remorse? What says Sir John Sack and Sugar? Jack, how agrees the Devil and thee about thy soul, that thou soldest him on Good Friday last for a cup of Madeira and a cold capon's leg? 129

Prince. Sir John stands to his word, the Devil shall have his bargain, for he was never yet a breaker of proverbs. He will give the Devil his due.

Poins. Then art thou damned for keeping thy word with the Devil.

Prince. Else he had been damned for cozening the Devil. 137

101. *iteration:* habit of quoting. 107. *give over:* give up. 113. *baffle:* disgrace publicly as a recreant knight. 116. *vocation:* a cant term for religious conversion. 118, 139. *Gadshill.* The use of this name for both a person and a place derives from Shakespeare's source, *The Famous Victories of Henry V.* Gadshill, two miles from Rochester, was a favorite resort of highwaymen. 119. *set a match:* planned a robbery. 136. *cozening:* cheating.

Poins. But, my lads, my lads, tomorrow morning, by four o'clock, early at Gadshill! There are pilgrims going to Canterbury with rich offerings, and traders riding to London with fat purses. I have vizards for you all; you have horses for yourselves. Gadshill lies tonight in Rochester. I have bespoke supper tomorrow night in Eastcheap. We may do it as secure as sleep. If you will go, I will stuff your purses full of crowns; if you will not, tarry at home and be hanged.

Fal. Hear ye, Yedward; if I tarry at home and go not, I'll hang you for going.

Poins. You will, chops?

Fal. Hal, wilt thou make one?

Prince. Who, I rob? I a thief? Not I, by my faith.

Fal. There's neither honesty, manhood, nor good fellowship in thee, nor thou camest not of the blood royal, if thou darest not stand for ten shillings.

Prince. Well, then, once in my days I'll be a madcap.

Fal. Why, that's well said.

Prince. Well, come what will, I'll tarry at home.

Fal. By the Lord, I'll be a traitor then, when thou art king.

Prince. I care not.

Poins. Sir John, I prithee, leave the prince and me alone. I will lay him down such reasons for this adventure that he shall go.

Fal. Well, God give thee the spirit of persuasion and him the ears of profiting, that what thou speakest may move and what he hears may be believed, that the true prince may, for recreation sake, prove a false thief; for the poor abuses of the time want countenance. Farewell! You shall find me in Eastcheap.

Prince. Farewell, thou latter spring! Farewell, All-hallown summer! [*Exit Falstaff.*

142. *vizards:* masks. 145. *Eastcheap:* the street in London where the Boar's Head Tavern was situated. 151. *chops:* (fat) cheeks. 157. *royal:* a coin worth 10s. 170, 171. *spirit of persuasion, ears of profiting.* Falstaff uses the cant phrases of popular preachers. 178. *All-hallown summer:* warm weather about All Saints' Day, November 1. Despite his age, Falstaff's spirit remains youthful.

Poins. Now, my good sweet honey lord, ride with us to-morrow. I have a jest to execute that I cannot manage alone. Falstaff, Bardolph, Peto, and Gadshill shall rob those men that we have already waylaid; yourself and I will not be there; and when they have the booty, if you and I do not rob them, cut this head off from my shoulders.

Prince. How shall we part with them in setting forth? 188

Poins. Why, we will set forth before or after them, and appoint them a place of meeting, wherein it is at our pleasure to fail; and then will they adventure upon the exploit themselves, which they shall have no sooner achieved, but we'll set upon them. 194

Prince. Yea, but 'tis like that they will know us—by our horses, by our habits, and by every other appointment—to be ourselves.

Poins. Tut! Our horses they shall not see; I'll tie them in the wood; our vizards we will change after we leave them; and, sirrah, I have cases of buckram for the nonce, to immask our noted outward garments. 202

Prince. Yea, but I doubt they will be too hard for us.

Poins. Well, for two of them, I know them to be as true-bred cowards as ever turned back; and for the third, if he fight longer than he sees reason, I'll forswear arms. The virtue of this jest will be the incomprehensible lies that this same fat rogue will tell us when we meet at supper: how thirty, at least, he fought with; what wards, what blows, what extremities he endured; and in the reproof of this lies the jest. 213

Prince. Well, I'll go with thee. Provide us all things necessary and meet me tomorrow night in Eastcheap; there I'll sup. Farewell.

Poins. Farewell, my lord. [*Exit.*

Prince. I know you all, and will awhile uphold
The unyoked humour of your idleness.

196. ***habits:*** clothes. 197. ***appointment:*** equipment. 201. ***cases of buckram:*** suits of coarse cloth. ***nonce:*** occasion. 202. ***noted:*** known. 211. ***wards:*** guards in fencing. 213. ***reproof:*** refutation. 218–40. This soliloquy is Shakespeare's means of making credible the

Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That, when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at,
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.
If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work;
But when they seldom come, they wish'd for come,
And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.
So, when this loose behaviour I throw off
And pay the debt I never promised,
By how much better than my word I am,
By so much shall I falsify men's hopes;
And like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
I'll so offend, to make offense a skill,
Redeeming time when men think least I will. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *London. The palace.*

Enter the KING, NORTHUMBERLAND, WORCESTER, HOTSPUR, SIR WALTER BLUNT, *and others.*

King. My blood hath been too cold and temperate,
Unapt to stir at these indignities,
And you have found me; for accordingly
You tread upon my patience. But be sure
I will from henceforth rather be myself,
Mighty and to be fear'd, than my condition,

---

sudden development of the madcap Prince Hal of tradition into the gallant soldier and successful sovereign. 219. *unyoked humour:* unrestrained caprices. 221. *contagious:* pestilential. 230. *accidents:* events. 235. *sullen ground:* dark or dull background.

[iii] 3. *found me:* i.e., discovered my weakness. 6. *condition:* natural temper.

Which hath been smooth as oil, soft as young down,
And therefore lost that title of respect
Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud.
Wor. Our house, my sovereign liege, little deserves
The scourge of greatness to be used on it,
And that same greatness too which our own hands
Have holp to make so portly.
North. My lord—
King. Worcester, get thee gone, for I do see
Danger and disobedience in thine eye.
O, sir, your presence is too bold and peremptory,
And majesty might never yet endure
The moody frontier of a servant brow.
You have good leave to leave us. When we need
Your use and counsel, we shall send for you. [*Exit Worcester.*
You were about to speak. [*To Northumberland.*
North. Yea, my good lord.
Those prisoners in your Highness' name demanded,
Which Harry Percy here at Holmedon took,
Were, as he says, not with such strength denied
As is deliver'd to your Majesty.
Either envy, therefore, or misprision
Is guilty of this fault, and not my son.
Hot. My liege, I did deny no prisoners.
But I remember, when the fight was done,
When I was dry with rage and extreme toil,
Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,
Came there a certain lord, neat and trimly dress'd,
Fresh as a bridegroom; and his chin new reap'd
Show'd like a stubble-land at harvest-home.
He was perfumed like a milliner,
And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held
A pouncet-box, which ever and anon

13. *holp:* helped. *portly:* majestic. 19. *moody:* angry. *frontier:* outwork in fortification. 26. *deliver'd:* reported. 27. *misprision:* misunderstanding. 36. *milliner:* dealer in gloves and other articles of dress from Milan. 38. *pouncet-box:* perfume box with perforated lid.

He gave his nose and took't away again;
Who therewith angry, when it next came there,
Took it in snuff; and still he smiled and talk'd,
And as the soldiers bore dead bodies by,
He call'd them untaught knaves, unmannerly,
To bring a slovenly unhandsome corse
Betwixt the wind and his nobility.
With many holiday and lady terms
He question'd me; amongst the rest, demanded
My prisoners in your Majesty's behalf.
I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold,
Out of my grief and my impatience,
To be so pester'd with a popinjay,
Answer'd neglectingly—I know not what,
He should, or he should not; for he made me mad
To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet
And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman
Of guns and drums and wounds—God save the mark!—
And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth
Was parmaceti for an inward bruise;
And that it was great pity, so it was,
This villainous salt-petre should be digg'd
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd
So cowardly; and but for these vile guns
He would himself have been a soldier.
This bald unjointed chat of his, my lord,
I answer'd indirectly, as I said;
And I beseech you, let not his report
Come current for an accusation
Betwixt my love and your high Majesty.

41. *in snuff:* as an offense (with play on the word *snuff*). *still:* all the while. 46. *holiday . . . terms:* choice and ladylike expressions. 50. *grief:* pain. 51. *popinjay:* coxcomb. 56. *God save the mark:* a mild expression of displeasure or impatience. 58. *parmaceti:* spermaceti, a substance found in whale-oil. 62. *tall:* valiant. 66. *indirectly:* vaguely. 68. *Come current:* be accepted (as good coin).

Blunt. The circumstance consider'd, good my lord,
Whate'er Lord Harry Percy then had said
To such a person and in such a place,
At such a time, with all the rest retold,
May reasonably die and never rise
To do him wrong or any way impeach
What then he said, so he unsay it now.
King. Why, yet he doth deny his prisoners,
But with proviso and exception,
That we at our own charge shall ransom straight
His brother-in-law, the foolish Mortimer,
Who, on my soul, hath wilfully betray'd
The lives of those that he did lead to fight
Against that great magician, damn'd Glendower,
Whose daughter, as we hear, the Earl of March
Hath lately married. Shall our coffers, then,
Be emptied to redeem a traitor home?
Shall we buy treason, and indent with fears,
When they have lost and forfeited themselves?
No, on the barren mountains let him starve,
For I shall never hold that man my friend
Whose tongue shall ask me for one penny cost
To ransom home revolted Mortimer.
Hot. Revolted Mortimer?
He never did fall off, my sovereign liege,
But by the chance of war. To prove that true
Needs no more but one tongue for all those wounds,

75. *impeach:* call in question. 78. *But:* except. 80, 84. *Mortimer, Earl of March.* Shakespeare follows the chroniclers in confusing two Edmund Mortimers. Sir Edmund Mortimer (1378–1409?), grandson of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, was captured by Glendower, whose daughter he later married. This Edmund's sister Elizabeth was Hotspur's wife. Edmund's elder brother, Roger, Earl of March, was in 1385 proclaimed heir to Richard II, and upon his death in 1398, one year before King Richard's, his son Edmund, Earl of March, then seven years old, succeeded to his claim. The heir, then, was the nephew of Lady Percy, not her brother. 87. *indent:* enter into a compact. 89. *starve:* die. 94. *fall off:* desert.

Those mouthed wounds, which valiantly he took,
When on the gentle Severn's sedgy bank,
In single opposition, hand to hand,
He did confound the best part of an hour
In changing hardiment with great Glendower.
Three times they breathed and three times did they drink,
Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood;
Who then, affrighted with their bloody looks,
Ran fearfully among the trembling reeds,
And hid his crisp head in the hollow bank
Bloodstained with these valiant combatants.
Never did base and rotten policy
Colour her working with such deadly wounds;
Nor never could the noble Mortimer
Receive so many, and all willingly.
Then let not him be slander'd with revolt.

King. Thou dost belie him, Percy, thou dost belie him;
He never did encounter with Glendower.
I tell thee,
He durst as well have met the Devil alone
As Owen Glendower for an enemy.
Art thou not ashamed? But, sirrah, henceforth
Let me not hear you speak of Mortimer.
Send me your prisoners with the speediest means,
Or you shall hear in such a kind from me
As will displease you. My Lord Northumberland,
We license your departure with your son.
Send us your prisoners, or you will hear of it.

[*Exeunt King Henry, Blunt, and train.*

Hot. An if the Devil come and roar for them,
I will not send them. I will after straight

97. *mouthed:* gaping. 100. *confound:* consume. 101. *changing hardiment:* matching brave deeds. 102. *breathed:* stopped to rest 106. *crisp:* curled, rippled. 108. *policy:* craft, deceit. 109. *Colour:* disguise. 113. *belie:* tell lies about. 118. *sirrah:* an insulting form of address. 121. *kind:* way. 123. *license:* permit. 125. *An if:* even if.

And tell him so; for I will ease my heart,
Albeit I make a hazard of my head.

North. What, drunk with choler? Stay and pause awhile.
Here comes your uncle.

Re-enter Worcester.

Hot. Speak of Mortimer!
'Zounds, I will speak of him; and let my soul
Want mercy, if I do not join with him.
Yea, on his part I'll empty all these veins,
And shed my dear blood drop by drop in the dust,
But I will lift the down-trod Mortimer
As high in the air as this unthankful king,
As this ingrate and canker'd Bolingbroke.

North. Brother, the king hath made your nephew mad.

Wor. Who struck this heat up after I was gone?

Hot. He will, forsooth, have all my prisoners;
And when I urged the ransom once again
Of my wife's brother, then his cheek look'd pale,
And on my face he turn'd an eye of death,
Trembling even at the name of Mortimer.

Wor. I cannot blame him. Was not he proclaim'd
By Richard that dead is the next of blood?

North. He was; I heard the proclamation;
And then it was when the unhappy king—
Whose wrongs in us God pardon!—did set forth
Upon his Irish expedition;
From whence he intercepted did return
To be deposed and shortly murdered.

Wor. And for whose death we in the world's wide mouth
Live scandalized and foully spoken of.

Hot. But, soft, I pray you. Did King Richard then
Proclaim my brother Edmund Mortimer
Heir to the crown?

128. *Albeit . . . of:* though I risk. 137. *canker'd:* malignant. 138. *mad:* insane. 145–52. *I cannot . . . murdered.* These lines and the dialogue that follows connect the play with *Richard II*. 154. *scandalized:* defamed.

North. He did; myself did hear it.
Hot. Nay, then I cannot blame his cousin king,
That wish'd him on the barren mountains starve.
But shall it be that you, that set the crown
Upon the head of this forgetful man
And for his sake wear the detested blot
Of murderous subornation—shall it be
That you a world of curses undergo,
Being the agents, or base second means,
The cords, the ladder, or the hangman rather?
O, pardon me that I descend so low,
To show the line and the predicament
Wherein you range under this subtle king!
Shall it for shame be spoken in these days,
Or fill up chronicles in time to come,
That men of your nobility and power
Did gage them both in an unjust behalf,
As both of you—God pardon it!—have done,
To put down Richard, that sweet lovely rose,
And plant this thorn, this canker, Bolingbroke?
And shall it in more shame be further spoken
That you are fool'd, discarded, and shook off
By him for whom these shames ye underwent?
No! Yet time serves wherein you may redeem
Your banish'd honours and restore yourselves
Into the good thoughts of the world again,
Revenge the jeering and disdain'd contempt
Of this proud king, who studies day and night
To answer all the debt he owes to you
Even with the bloody payment of your deaths.
Therefore, I say—
Wor. Peace, cousin! Say no more!
And now I will unclasp a secret book,

163. *murderous subornation:* "secret prompting to murder" (Onions). 168. *line:* rank. *predicament:* classification. 169. *range:* stand in ranks. 173. *gage them:* pledge themselves. 176. *canker:* wild rose. 183. *disdain'd:* disdainful.

And to your quick-conceiving discontents
I'll read you matter deep and dangerous,
As full of peril and adventurous spirit
As to o'er-walk a current roaring loud
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear.
Hot. If he fall in, good night! Or sink or swim!
Send Danger from the east unto the west,
So Honour cross it from the north to south,
And let them grapple. O, the blood more stirs
To rouse a lion than to start a hare!
North. Imagination of some great exploit
Drives him beyond the bounds of patience.
Hot. By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap
To pluck bright Honour from the pale-faced moon,
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,
And pluck up drowned Honour by the locks;
So he that doth redeem her thence might wear
Without corrival all her dignities.
But out upon this half-faced fellowship!
Wor. He apprehends a world of figures here,
But not the form of what he should attend.
Good cousin, give me audience for a while.
Hot. I cry you mercy.
Wor. Those same noble Scots
That are your prisoners—
Hot. I'll keep them all!
By God, he shall not have a Scot of them;
No, if a Scot would save his soul, he shall not!
I'll keep them, by this hand!
Wor. You start away
And lend no ear unto my purposes.
Those prisoners you shall keep.

189. *quick-conceiving:* quickly-comprehending. 194. *Or:* either. 199. *Imagination . . . exploit.* Northumberland thinks of Hotspur as insane. 206. *So:* provided that. 207. *corrival:* rival. 208. *half-faced:* imperfect. 209. *apprehends:* imagines. *figures:* wild fancies. 212. *cry you mercy:* beg your pardon.

Hot. Nay, I will; that's flat.
He said he would not ransom Mortimer;
Forbad my tongue to speak of Mortimer;
But I will find him when he lies asleep,
And in his ear I'll holla "Mortimer!"
Nay,
I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak
Nothing but "Mortimer," and give it him,
To keep his anger still in motion.
Wor. Hear you, cousin; a word.
Hot. All studies here I solemnly defy,
Save how to gall and pinch this Bolingbroke;
And that same sword-and-buckler Prince of Wales,
But that I think his father loves him not
And would be glad he met with some mischance,
I would have him poison'd with a pot of ale.
Wor. Farewell, kinsman! I'll talk to you
When you are better temper'd to attend.
North. Why, what a wasp-stung and impatient fool
Art thou to break into this woman's mood,
Tying thine ear to no tongue but thine own!
Hot. Why, look you, I am whipp'd and scourged with rods,
Nettled and stung with pismires, when I hear
Of this vile politician, Bolingbroke.
In Richard's time—what do you call the place?—
A plague upon it, it is in Gloucestershire;
'Twas where the madcap duke his uncle kept,
His uncle York; where I first bow'd my knee
Unto this king of smiles, this Bolingbroke—
'Sblood!—
When you and he came back from Ravenspurgh.
North. At Berkeley Castle.
Hot. You say true.

228. *defy:* renounce. 230. *sword-and-buckler:* arms used by the lower classes; hence, ruffianly. 240. *pismires:* ants. 241. *politician:* crafty schemer. 244. *kept:* lived. 245. *York.* See *Richard II*, II, iii.

Why, what a candy deal of courtesy
This fawning greyhound then did proffer me!
Look, "when his infant fortune came to age,"
And "gentle Harry Percy," and "kind cousin"—
O, the Devil take such cozeners! God forgive me!
Good uncle, tell your tale, for I have done.
Wor. Nay, if you have not, to it again;
We'll stay your leisure.
Hot. I have done, i' faith.
Wor. Then once more to your Scottish prisoners.
Deliver them up without their ransom straight,
And make the Douglas' son your only mean
For powers in Scotland; which, for divers reasons
Which I shall send you written, be assured,
Will easily be granted. You, my lord, [*To Northumberland.*
Your son in Scotland being thus employ'd,
Shall secretly into the bosom creep
Of that same noble prelate, well beloved,
The archbishop.
Hot. Of York, is it not?
Wor. True—who bears hard
His brother's death at Bristol, the Lord Scroop.
I speak not this in estimation,
As what I think might be, but what I know
Is ruminated, plotted, and set down,
And only stays but to behold the face
Of that occasion that shall bring it on.
Hot. I smell it. Upon my life, it will do well.
North. Before the game is afoot, thou still let'st slip.
Hot. Why, it cannot choose but be a noble plot;
And then the power of Scotland and of York,
To join with Mortimer, ha?
Wor. And so they shall.

251. *candy:* sugared. 255. *cozeners:* cheaters (with pun on *cousin*). 258. *stay:* await. 261–2. *mean . . . powers:* means of obtaining troops. 272. *estimation:* conjecture. 278. *still let'st slip:* always let the hounds slip the leash.

Hot. In faith, it is exceedingly well aim'd.
Wor. And 'tis no little reason bids us speed
To save our heads by raising of a head;
For, bear ourselves as even as we can,
The king will always think him in our debt,
And think we think ourselves unsatisfied,
Till he hath found a time to pay us home.
And see already how he doth begin
To make us strangers to his looks of love.
Hot. He does, he does; we'll be revenged on him.
Wor. Cousin, farewell. No further go in this
Than I by letters shall direct your course.
When time is ripe, which will be suddenly,
I'll steal to Glendower and Lord Mortimer;
Where you and Douglas and our powers at once,
As I will fashion it, shall happily meet,
To bear our fortunes in our own strong arms,
Which now we hold at much uncertainty.
North. Farewell, good brother. We shall thrive, I trust.
Hot. Uncle, adieu! O, let the hours be short
Till fields and blows and groans applaud our sport! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I. *Rochester. An innyard.*

Enter a Carrier *with a lantern in his hand.*

First Car. Heigh-ho! An it be not four by the day, I'll be hanged. Charles' Wain is over the new chimney, and yet our horse not packed. What, ostler!

Ost. [*Within*] Anon, anon.

284. *head:* armed force. 285. *even:* temperately, prudently. 288. *home:* to the utmost. 294. *suddenly:* very soon. 297. *happily:* perhaps, if fortune favors.

[II. i] S. D. *Carrier:* one who carried goods, usually by pack horses. 1. *by the day:* by the sun. 2. *Charles' Wain:* the constellation of the Great Bear. The term is probably a corruption of *churl's wain,* i.e., countryman's wagon.

First Car. I prithee, Tom, beat Cut's saddle, put a few flocks in the point. The poor jade is wrung in the withers out of all cess.

Enter another Carrier.

Sec. Car. Peas and beans are as dank here as a dog, and that is the next way to give poor jades the bots. This house is turned upside down since Robin the ostler died.

First Car. Poor fellow, never joyed since the price of oats rose; it was the death of him.

Sec. Car. I think this be the most villainous house in all London road for fleas; I am stung like a tench.

First Car. Like a tench! By the mass, there is ne'er a king christen could be better bit than I have been since the first cock.

Sec. Car. Why, they will allow us ne'er a jordan, and then we leak in your chimney; and your chamber-lie breeds fleas like a loach.

First Car. What, ostler! Come away and be hanged! Come away.

Sec. Car. I have a gammon of bacon and two races of ginger, to be delivered as far as Charing-cross.

First Car. God's body! The turkeys in my pannier are quite starved. What, ostler! A plague on thee! Hast thou never an eye in thy head? Canst not hear? An 'twere not as good deed as drink, to break the pate on thee, I am a very villain. Come, and be hanged! Hast no faith in thee?

Enter GADSHILL.

Gads. Good morrow, carriers. What's o'clock?

First Car. I think it be two o'clock.

7. *flocks:* tufts of wool. *point:* i.e., of the saddle. 8. *wrung:* galled. *withers:* the part where the shoulder-bones join the neck. *cess:* calculation (aphetic form of *assess* = *assessment*). 9. *dank:* moldy. 10. *next:* nearest, quickest. 11. *bots:* worms. 17. *tench:* a kind of fish; probably an allusion to the old belief that fishes were infested with fleas. 19. *king christen:* Christian king. 22. *jordan:* chamber pot. 23. *chamber-lie:* urine. 27. *races:* roots. 28. *Charing-cross:* in Shakespeare's time, a village between London and Westminster.

Gads. I prithee, lend me thy lantern to see my gelding in the stable.

First Car. Nay, by God, soft; I know a trick worth two of that, i' faith.

Gads. I pray thee, lend me thine.

Sec. Car. Ay, when? Canst tell? Lend me thy lantern, quoth he? Marry, I'll see thee hanged first.

Gads. Sirrah carrier, what time do you mean to come to London?

Sec. Car. Time enough to go to bed with a candle, I warrant thee. Come, neighbour Mugs, we'll call up the gentlemen. They will along with company, for they have great charge.

[*Exeunt Carriers.*

Gads. What, ho! Chamberlain!

Cham. [*Within*] At hand, quoth pick-purse.

Gads. That's even as fair as—at hand, quoth the chamberlain; for thou variest no more from picking of purses than giving direction doth from labouring; thou layest the plot how.

Enter Chamberlain.

Cham. Good morrow, Master Gadshill. It holds current that I told you yesternight; there's a franklin in the wild of Kent hath brought three hundred marks with him in gold. I heard him tell it to one of his company last night at supper; a kind of auditor; one that hath abundance of charge too, God knows what. They are up already, and call for eggs and butter. They will away presently.

Gads. Sirrah, if they meet not with Saint Nicholas' clerks, I'll give thee this neck.

Cham. No, I'll none of it. I pray thee, keep that for the hang-

43. *Ay, when? Canst tell?* Equivalent to "Don't you wish I would?" 51. *charge:* baggage. 52. *Chamberlain:* servant in charge of rooms. 53. *At hand, quoth pick-purse:* slang equivalent of "coming at once." 59. *holds current:* holds true. 60. *franklin:* farmer who owns his land. *wild of Kent:* the Weald or south-western part of Kent. 68. *Saint Nicholas' clerks:* highwaymen. Saint Nicholas was the patron saint of scholars, children, travelers, sailors, and pawnbrokers.

man, for I know thou worshippest Saint Nicholas as truly as a man of falsehood may. 72

Gads. What talkest thou to me of the hangman? If I hang, I'll make a fat pair of gallows; for if I hang, old Sir John hangs with me, and thou knowest he is no starveling. Tut! There are other Trojans that thou dreamest not of, the which for sport sake are content to do the profession some grace; that would, if matters should be looked into, for their own credit sake, make all whole. I am joined with no foot land-rakers, no long-staff sixpenny strikers, none of these mad mustachio purple-hued malt-worms; but with nobility and tranquillity, burgomasters and great oneyers, such as can hold in, such as will strike sooner than speak, and speak sooner than drink, and drink sooner than pray; and yet, 'zounds, I lie; for they pray continually to their saint, the commonwealth; or rather, not pray to her, but prey on her, for they ride up and down on her and make her their boots. 91

Cham. What, the commonwealth their boots? Will she hold out water in foul way?

Gads. She will, she will; justice hath liquored her. We steal as in a castle, cock-sure; we have the receipt of fern-seed; we walk invisible.

Cham. Nay, by my faith, I think you are more beholding to the night than to fern-seed for your walking invisible.

Gads. Give me thy hand. Thou shalt have a share in our purchase, as I am a true man. 101

Cham. Nay, rather let me have it, as you are a false thief.

Gads. Go to; *homo* is a common name to all men. Bid the

77. *Trojans:* rioters and thieves (slang). 81. *foot land-rakers:* footpads. 82. *long-staff sixpenny strikers:* robbers who would knock down a victim for sixpence. 83. *mustachio purple-hued malt-worms:* topers whose mustaches are stained purple by constant drinking. 85. *oneyers.* Probably a coinage from *ones*, with pun on *owners*. *One* was pronounced like *own*. 91. *boots:* booty. 93. *foul:* muddy. 94. *liquored:* (a) made waterproof by oiling, (b) made drunk. 96. *fern-seed.* Those who gathered it properly were supposed to become invisible. 98. *beholding:* indebted. 101. *purchase:* profits. 104. *homo . . . men.* The meaning is probably "Don't call names."

ostler bring my gelding out of the stable. Farewell, you muddy knave. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The highway near Gadshill.*

Enter PRINCE HENRY *and* POINS.

Poins. Come, shelter, shelter! I have removed Falstaff's horse, and he frets like a gummed velvet.

Prince. Stand close. [*They retire.*

Enter FALSTAFF.

Fal. Poins! Poins, and be hanged! Poins!

Prince. Peace, ye fat-kidneyed rascal! What a brawling dost thou keep!

Fal. Where's Poins, Hal?

Prince. He is walked up to the top of the hill; I'll go seek him. [*Retires.* 9

Fal. I am accursed to rob in that thief's company. The rascal hath removed my horse, and tied him I know not where. If I travel but four foot by the squier further afoot, I shall break my wind. Well, I doubt not but to die a fair death for all this, if I 'scape hanging for killing that rogue. I have forsworn his company hourly any time this two and twenty years, and yet I am bewitched with the rogue's company. If the rascal have not given me medicines to make me love him, I'll be hanged; it could not be else; I have drunk medicines. Poins! Hal! A plague upon you both! Bardolph! Peto! I'll starve ere I'll rob a foot further. An 'twere not as good a deed as drink, to turn true man and to leave these rogues, I am the veriest varlet that ever chewed with a tooth. Eight yards of uneven ground is threescore and ten miles afoot with me; and the stony-hearted villains know it well enough. A plague upon it when thieves cannot be true one to another! [*They whistle.*] Whew! A plague upon you all! Give me my horse, you rogues; give me my horse, and be hanged! 32

[ii] 2. ***gummed velvet.*** Velvet stiffened with gum was likely to "fret." 3. ***close:*** out of sight. 13. ***squier:*** foot-rule. 15. ***for all this:*** in spite of all this. 24. ***turn true man:*** become honest.

Prince. [*Coming forward*] Peace, ye fat-guts! Lie down; lay thine ear close to the ground and list if thou canst hear the tread of travellers.

Fal. Have you any levers to lift me up again, being down? 'Sblood, I'll not bear mine own flesh so far afoot again for all the coin in thy father's exchequer. What a plague mean ye to colt me thus?

Prince. Thou liest; thou art not colted, thou art uncolted.

Fal. I prithee, good Prince Hal, help me to my horse, good king's son.

Prince. Out, ye rogue! Shall I be your ostler?

Fal. Go hang thyself in thine own heir-apparent garters! If I be ta'en, I'll peach for this. An I have not ballads made on you all and sung to filthy tunes, let a cup of sack be my poison. When a jest is so forward, and afoot too! I hate it.

Enter GADSHILL.

Gads. Stand.

Fal. So I do, against my will.

Poins. [*Coming forward with Bardolph and Peto*] O, 'tis our setter; I know his voice. Bardoph, what news?

Bard. Case ye, case ye; on with your vizards. There's money of the king's coming down the hill; 'tis going to the king's exchequer.

Fal. You lie, ye rogue; 'tis going to the king's tavern.

Gads. There's enough to make us all.

Fal. To be hanged.

Prince. Sirs, you four shall front them in the narrow lane; Ned Poins and I will walk lower. If they 'scape from your encounter, then they light on us.

Peto. How many be there of them?

Gads. Some eight or ten.

Fal. 'Zounds, will they not rob us?

40. *colt:* cheat. 47. *garters:* an allusion to the Order of the Garter and to the proverbial expression, "Let him hang himself in his own garters." *peach:* turn informer. 50. *forward:* bold. 53. *setter:* i.e., Gadshill, who served as decoy. See I. ii, 118. 55. *Case ye:* put on your masks.

Prince. What, a coward, Sir John Paunch?

Fal. Indeed, I am not John of Gaunt, your grandfather; but yet no coward, Hal.

Prince. Well, we leave that to the proof.

Poins. Sirrah Jack, thy horse stands behind the hedge; when thou needest him, there thou shalt find him. Farewell, and stand fast.

Fal. Now cannot I strike him, if I should be hanged.

Prince. [*Aside to Poins*] Ned, where are our disguises?

Poins. Here, hard by. Stand close. [*Exeunt Prince and Poins.*

Fal. Now, my masters, happy man be his dole, say I. Every man to his business.

Enter the Travellers.

First Trav. Come, neighbour; the boy shall lead our horses down the hill. We'll walk afoot awhile, and ease our legs.

Thieves. Stand!

Travellers. Jesus bless us!

Fal. Strike; down with them! Cut the villains' throats! Ah! Whoreson caterpillars! Bacon-fed knaves! They hate us youth. Down with them! Fleece them.

Travellers. O, we are undone, both we and ours for ever!

Fal. Hang ye, gorbellied knaves, are ye undone? No, ye fat chuffs; I would your store were here! On, bacons, on! What, ye knaves! Young men must live. You are grandjurors, are ye? We'll jure ye, 'faith. [*Here they rob them and bind them. Exeunt.*

Re-enter PRINCE HENRY *and* POINS, *disguised.*

Prince. The thieves have bound the true men. Now could thou and I rob the thieves and go merrily to London, it would be argument for a week, laughter for a month, and a good jest for ever.

Poins. Stand close; I hear them coming. [*They retire.*

72. *proof:* test. 80. *happy . . . dole:* may his destiny be to be called "happy man." 88. *Whoreson caterpillars:* miserable parasites. 93. *gorbellied:* fat. 94. *chuffs:* misers. 95. *bacons.* The meaning is uncertain: pigs, rustics, fat men. 96. *grandjurors.* Only men of substance served on grand jury. 97. *jure:* a word of Falstaff's coinage. 100. *argument:* subject for conversation.

Enter the Thieves *again.*

Fal. Come, my masters, let us share, and then to horse before day. An the Prince and Poins be not two arrant cowards, there's no equity stirring. There's no more valour in that Poins than in a wild-duck.

Prince. Your money!

Poins. Villains!

[*As they are sharing, the Prince and Poins set upon them; they all run away; and Falstaff, after a blow or two, runs away too, leaving the booty behind them.*]

Prince. Got with much ease. Now merrily to horse.
The thieves are all scatter'd and possess'd with fear
So strongly that they dare not meet each other;
Each takes his fellow for an officer.
Away, good Ned. Falstaff sweats to death,
And lards the lean earth as he walks along.
Were't not for laughing, I should pity him.

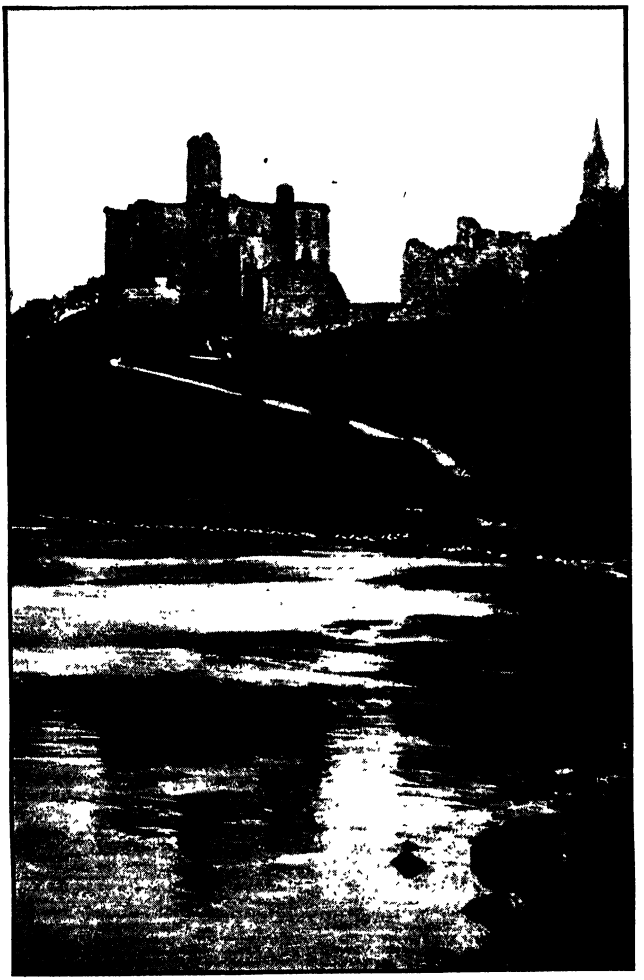
Poins. How the rogue roar'd! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Warkworth Castle.*

Enter HOTSPUR, *alone, reading a letter.*

Hot. "But, for mine own part, my lord, I could be well contented to be there, in respect of the love I bear your house." He could be contented: why is he not, then? In respect of the love he bears our house: he shows in this, he loves his own barn better than he loves our house. Let me see some more. "The purpose you undertake is dangerous." Why, that's certain: 'tis dangerous to take a cold, to sleep, to drink; but I tell you, my lord fool, out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety. "The purpose you undertake is dangerous; the friends you have named uncertain; the time itself unsorted; and your whole plot too light for the counterpoise of so great an opposition." Say you so, say you so? I say unto you again, you are a shallow cowardly

106. *arrant:* thorough, complete. *equity:* justice (?).
[iii] 13. *unsorted:* ill-chosen. 14. *counterpoise:* opposing weight.



Photograph by The Topical Press Agency, London

WARKWORTH CASTLE, NORTHUMBERLAND

hind, and you lie. What a lack-brain is this! By the Lord, our plot is a good plot as ever was laid; our friends true and constant; a good plot, good friends, and full of expectation; an excellent plot, very good friends. What a frosty-spirited rogue is this! Why, my Lord of York commends the plot and the general course of the action. 'Zounds, an I were now by this rascal, I could brain him with his lady's fan. Is there not my father, my uncle, and myself? Lord Edmund Mortimer, my Lord of York, and Owen Glendower? Is there not besides the Douglas? Have I not all their letters to meet me in arms by the ninth of the next month? And are they not some of them set forward already? What a pagan rascal is this! An infidel! Ha! You shall see now in very sincerity of fear and cold heart, will he to the king and lay open all our proceedings. O, I could divide myself and go to buffets, for moving such a dish of skim milk with so honourable an action! Hang him! Let him tell the king; we are prepared. I will set forward tonight.

Enter LADY PERCY.

How now, Kate! I must leave you within these two hours.

Lady. O, my good lord, why are you thus alone?
For what offense have I this fortnight been
A banish'd woman from my Harry's bed?
Tell me, sweet lord, what is't that takes from thee
Thy stomach, pleasure, and thy golden sleep?
Why dost thou bend thine eyes upon the earth,
And start so often when thou sit'st alone?
Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy cheeks,
And given my treasures and my rights of thee
To thick-eyed musing and curst melancholy?
In thy faint slumbers I by thee have watch'd,
And heard thee murmur tales of iron wars;
Speak terms of manage to thy bounding steed;

16. *hind:* servant, slave. 34. *lay open:* reveal. 34–5. *I . . . buffets.* I could divide myself into two parts and then fight myself. 39. *Kate.* Her name was really Elizabeth. 44. *stomach:* appetite. 49. *curst:* perverse. 50. *watch'd:* lain awake. 52. *terms of manage:* words of command.

Cry "Courage! To the field!" And thou hast talk'd
Of sallies and retires, of trenches, tents,
Of palisadoes, frontiers, parapets,
Of basilisks, of cannon, culverin,
Of prisoners' ransom and of soldiers slain,
And all the currents of a heady fight.
The spirit within thee hath been so at war
And thus hath so bestirr'd thee in thy sleep,
That beads of sweat have stood upon thy brow,
Like bubbles in a late-disturbed stream;
And in thy face strange motions have appear'd,
Such as we see when men restrain their breath
On some great sudden hest. O, what portents are these?
Some heavy business hath my lord in hand,
And I must know it, else he loves me not.

Hot. What, ho!

Enter Servant.

Is Gilliams with the packet gone?

Serv. He is, my lord, an hour ago.

Hot. Hath Butler brought those horses from the sheriff?

Serv. One horse, my lord, he brought even now.

Hot. What horse? A roan, a crop-ear, is it not?

Serv. It is, my lord.

Hot. That roan shall be my throne.
Well, I will back him straight. *O Esperance!*
Bid Butler lead him forth into the park. [*Exit Servant.*

Lady. But hear you, my lord.

Hot. What say'st thou, my lady?

Lady. What is it carries you away?

Hot. Why, my horse, my love, my horse.

Lady. Out, you mad-headed ape!

54. *retires:* retreats. 55. *palisadoes:* obstructions made of stakes as defense against cavalry. *frontiers:* outworks. 56. *basilisks, culverin:* cannon named after serpents. 58. *currents:* occurrences. *heady:* headlong. 63. *motions:* expressions. 65. *hest:* command. 74. *Esperance:* Hope, the motto of the Percy family.

A weasel hath not such a deal of spleen
As you are toss'd with. In faith,
I'll know your business, Harry, that I will.
I fear my brother Mortimer doth stir
About his title, and hath sent for you
To line his enterprise; but if you go—
Hot. So far afoot, I shall be weary, love.
Lady. Come, come, you paraquito, answer me
Directly unto this question that I ask.
In faith, I'll break thy little finger, Harry,
An if thou wilt not tell me all things true.
Hot. Away,
Away, you trifler! Love! I love thee not,
I care not for thee, Kate. This is no world
To play with mammets and to tilt with lips.
We must have bloody noses and crack'd crowns,
And pass them current too. God's me, my horse!
What say'st thou, Kate? What would'st thou have with me?
Lady. Do you not love me? Do you not, indeed?
Well, do not then; for since you love me not,
I will not love myself. Do you not love me?
Nay, tell me if you speak in jest or no.
Hot. Come, wilt thou see me ride?
And when I am o' horseback, I will swear
I love thee infinitely. But hark you, Kate;
I must not have you henceforth question me
Whither I go, nor reason whereabout.
Whither I must, I must; and, to conclude,
This evening must I leave you, gentle Kate.
I know you wise, but yet no farther wise
Than Harry Percy's wife. Constant you are,
But yet a woman; and for secrecy,
No lady closer; for I well believe

81. *spleen:* waywardness, contrariness. 86. *line:* strengthen. 88. *paraquito:* small parrot. 89. *Directly:* straightforwardly. 95. *mammets:* dolls. *tilt:* joust. 96. *crack'd crowns:* broken heads, with a pun on the coin called a crown.

Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know;
And so far will I trust thee, gentle Kate.

Lady. How! So far?

Hot. Not an inch further. But hark you, Kate:
Whither I go, thither shall you go too;
Today will I set forth, tomorrow you.
Will this content you, Kate?

Lady. It must of force. [*Exeunt.* 120

SCENE IV. *Eastcheap. The Boar's Head Tavern.*

Enter the PRINCE.

Prince. Ned, prithee, come out of that fat room, and lend me thy hand to laugh a little.

Enter POINS.

Poins. Where hast been, Hal?

Prince. With three or four loggerheads amongst three or four score hogsheads. I have sounded the very base-string of humility. Sirrah, I am sworn brother to a leash of drawers; and can call them all by their christen names, as Tom, Dick, and Francis. They take it already upon their salvation, that though I be but Prince of Wales, yet I am the king of courtesy; and tell me flatly I am no proud Jack, like Falstaff, but a Corinthian, a lad of mettle, a good boy, by the Lord, so they call me, and when I am king of England, I shall command all the good lads in Eastcheap. They call drinking deep, dyeing scarlet; and when you breathe in your watering, they cry "hem!" and bid you play it off. To conclude, I am so good a proficient in one quarter of an hour, that I can drink with any tinker in his own language during my life. I tell thee, Ned, thou hast lost much

120. *of force:* perforce.

[iv] 1. *fat:* stuffy. 4. *loggerheads:* blockheads. 7. *leash:* three hounds leashed together. *drawers:* tapsters. 9. *take it . . . upon:* swear by. 13. *Corinthian:* gay fellow. 17. *watering:* drinking. 18. *play it off:* drink it down. 20. *I can . . . language.* Tinkers were notorious for drinking and for slang and profanity.

honour, that thou wert not with me in this action. But, sweet Ned, to sweeten which name of Ned, I give thee this penny-worth of sugar, clapped even now into my hand by an under-skinker, one that never spake other English in his life than "Eight shillings and sixpence," and "You are welcome," with this shrill addition, "Anon, anon, sir! Score a pint of bastard in the Half-moon," or so. But, Ned, to drive away the time till Falstaff come, I prithee, do thou stand in some by-room, while I question my puny drawer to what end he gave me the sugar; and do thou never leave calling "Francis," that his tale to me may be nothing but "Anon." Step aside, and I'll show thee a precedent.

Poins. Francis! 38

Prince. Thou art perfect.

Poins. Francis! [*Exit Poins.*

Enter FRANCIS.

Fran. Anon, anon, sir. Look down into the Pomgarnet, Ralph.

Prince. Come hither, Francis.

Fran. My lord?

Prince. How long hast thou to serve, Francis?

Fran. Forsooth, five years, and as much as to—

Poins. [*Within*] Francis!

Fran. Anon, anon, sir. 49

Prince. Five year! By'r lady, a long lease for the clinking of pewter. But, Francis, darest thou be so valiant as to play the coward with thy indenture and show it a fair pair of heels and run for it?

Fran. O Lord, sir, I'll be sworn upon all the books in England, I could find in my heart.

Poins. [*Within*] Francis!

Fran. Anon, sir.

Prince. How old art thou, Francis?

26. *under-skinker:* tapster. 30. *bastard:* a sweet Spanish wine. *the Half-moon:* a room in the tavern. 37. *precedent:* example. 42. *Pomgarnet:* Pomegranate, a room in the tavern. 53. *indenture:* apprentice agreement.

Fran. Let me see—about Michaelmas next I shall be—

Poins. [*Within*] Francis!

Fran. Anon, sir. Pray stay a little, my lord.

Prince. Nay, but hark you, Francis; for the sugar thou gavest me, 'twas a pennyworth, was't not?

Fran. O Lord, I would it had been two!

Prince. I will give thee for it a thousand pound. Ask me when thou wilt, and thou shalt have it.

Poins. [*Within*] Francis!

Fran. Anon, anon.

Prince. Anon, Francis? No, Francis; but tomorrow, Francis; or, Francis, o' Thursday; or indeed, Francis, when thou wilt. But, Francis!

Fran. My lord?

Prince. Wilt thou rob this leathern-jerkin, crystal-button, knot-pated, agate-ring, puke-stocking, caddis-garter, smooth-tongue, Spanish-pouch—

Fran. O Lord, sir, who do you mean?

Prince. Why, then, your brown bastard is your only drink; for look you, Francis, your white canvas doublet will sully. In Barbary, sir, it cannot come to so much.

Fran. What, sir?

Poins. [*Within*] Francis!

Prince. Away, you rogue! Dost thou not hear them call?

[*Here they both call him; the drawer stands amazed, not knowing which way to go.*

Enter Vintner.

Vint. What, standest thou still, and hearest such a calling? Look to the guests within. [*Exit Francis.*] My lord, old Sir John, with half-a-dozen more, are at the door. Shall I let them in?

78. *knot-pated:* crop-haired, round-headed. Short hair was a mark of the Puritans, who were disliked by the dramatists, the court, and the theatre-going public. *puke-stocking:* dark-stocking. 79. *caddis-garter:* worsted-garter. 82–5. Mere nonsense to bewilder the waiter.

Prince. Let them alone awhile, and then open the door. [*Exit Vintner.*] Poins!

Re-enter POINS.

Poins. Anon, anon, sir.

Prince. Sirrah, Falstaff and the rest of the thieves are at the door. Shall we be merry?

Poins. As merry as crickets, my lad. But hark ye; what cunning match have you made with this jest of the drawer? Come, what's the issue?

Prince. I am now of all humours that have showed themselves humours since the old days of goodman Adam to the pupil age of this present twelve o'clock at midnight. What's o'clock, Francis?

Fran. [*Within*] Anon, anon, sir.

Prince. That ever this fellow should have fewer words than a parrot, and yet the son of a woman! His industry is up-stairs and down-stairs; his eloquence the parcel of a reckoning. I am not yet of Percy's mind, the Hotspur of the north; he that kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands, and says to his wife, "Fie upon this quiet life! I want work." "O my sweet Harry," says she, "how many hast thou killed today?" "Give my roan horse a drench," says he; and answers, "Some fourteen," an hour after; "a trifle, a trifle." I prithee, call in Falstaff. I'll play Percy, and that damned brawn shall play Dame Mortimer his wife. "Rivo!" says the drunkard. Call in ribs; call in tallow.

Enter FALSTAFF, GADSHILL, BARDOLPH, *and* PETO; FRANCIS *following with wine.*

Poins. Welcome, Jack! Where hast thou been?

Fal. A plague of all cowards, I say, and a vengeance too! Marry, and amen! Give me a cup of sack, boy. Ere I lead this

101. *match:* bargain. 104. *humours:* moods. 106. *goodman:* a title given to farmers and others under the rank of gentleman. *pupil age:* youth. 113. *parcel:* item. 115. *me.* The ethical dative, common in Shakespeare, suggests the interest of the speaker. 120. *drench:* draught. 123. *brawn:* flesh. 124. *Rivo:* a drinker's exclamation.

life long, I'll sew nether stocks and mend them and foot them too. A plague of all cowards! Give me a cup of sack, rogue. Is there no virtue extant? [*He drinks.*

Prince. Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter, pitiful-hearted Titan, that melted at the sweet tale of the sun's! If thou didst, then behold that compound.

Fal. You rogue, here's lime in this sack too. There is nothing but roguery to be found in villainous man; yet a coward is worse than a cup of sack with lime in it. A villainous coward! Go thy ways, old Jack; die when thou wilt; if manhood, good manhood, be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring. There live not three good men unhanged in England; and one of them is fat and grows old. God help the while! A bad world, I say. I would I were a weaver; I could sing psalms or anything. A plague of all cowards, I say still.

Prince. How now, wool-sack! What mutter you?

Fal. A king's son! If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath, and drive all thy subjects afore thee like a flock of wild-geese, I'll never wear hair on my face more. You Prince of Wales!

Prince. Why, you whoreson round man, what's the matter?

Fal. Are not you a coward? Answer me to that; and Poins there?

Poins. 'Zounds, ye fat paunch, an ye call me coward, by the Lord, I'll stab thee.

Fal. I call thee coward! I'll see thee damned ere I call thee coward; but I would give a thousand pound I could run as fast as thou canst. You are straight enough in the shoulders; you care not who sees your back. Call you that backing of your

130. *nether stocks:* stockings. 132. *virtue:* courage. 133. *Titan:* the sun. 134–5. Perhaps, as Warburton first suggested, the antecedent of *that* is *butter;* perhaps, as Theobald suggested, *pitiful-hearted Titan* should read *pitiful-hearted butter.* 137. *lime:* used as a preservative. 143. *a shotten herring:* a herring that has shed its roe. 146. *while:* present time. 147. *weaver . . . psalms.* Many of the weavers in England were psalm-singing immigrants from Flanders. 151. *a dagger of lath.* The Vice in morality plays carried a dagger of lath.

friends? A plague upon such backing! Give me them that will face me. Give me a cup of sack; I am a rogue if I drunk today.

Prince. O villain! Thy lips are scarce wiped since thou drunkest last.

Fal. All's one for that. [*He drinks.*] A plague of all cowards, still say I.

Prince. What's the matter?

Fal. What's the matter! There be four of us here have ta'en a thousand pound this day morning.

Prince. Where is it, Jack? Where is it?

Fal. Where is it! Taken from us it is; a hundred upon poor four of us.

Prince. What, a hundred, man?

Fal. I am a rogue if I were not at half-sword with a dozen of them two hours together. I have 'scaped by miracle. I am eight times thrust through the doublet, four through the hose; my buckler cut through and through; my sword hacked like a hand-saw—*ecce signum!* I never dealt better since I was a man; all would not do. A plague of all cowards! Let them speak; if they speak more or less than truth, they are villains and the sons of darkness.

Prince. Speak, sirs; how was it?

Gads. We four set upon some dozen—

Fal. Sixteen at least, my lord.

Gads. And bound them.

Peto. No, no, they were not bound.

Fal. You rogue, they were bound, every man of them; or I am a Jew else, an Ebrew Jew.

Gads. As we were sharing, some six or seven fresh men set upon us—

Fal. And unbound the rest, and then come in the other.

Prince. What, fought you with them all?

Fal. All! I know not what you call all; but if I fought not with fifty of them, I am a bunch of radish. If there were not two or three and fifty upon poor old Jack, then am I no two-legged creature.

182. ***half-sword:*** close quarters. 187. ***ecce signum:*** behold the proof.

Prince. Pray God you have not murdered some of them.

Fal. Nay, that's past praying for; I have peppered two of them. Two I am sure I have paid, two rogues in buckram suits. I tell thee what, Hal, if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face, call me horse. Thou knowest my old ward; here I lay, and thus I bore my point. Four rogues in buckram let drive at me—

Prince. What, four? Thou saidst but two even now.

Fal. Four, Hal; I told thee four.

Poins. Ay, ay, he said four.

Fal. These four came all a-front, and mainly thrust at me. I made me no more ado but took all their seven points in my target, thus.

Prince. Seven? Why, there were but four even now.

Fal. In buckram?

Poins. Ay, four, in buckram suits.

Fal. Seven, by these hilts, or I am a villain else.

Prince. Prithee, let him alone; we shall have more anon.

Fal. Dost thou hear me, Hal?

Prince. Ay, and mark thee too, Jack.

Fal. Do so, for it is worth the listening to. These nine in buckram that I told thee of—

Prince. So, two more already.

Fal. Their points being broken—

Poins. Down fell their hose.

Fal. Began to give me ground; but I followed me close, came in foot and hand; and with a thought seven of the eleven I paid.

Prince. O monstrous! Eleven buckram men grown out of two!

Fal. But, as the Devil would have it, three misbegotten knaves in Kendal green came at my back and let drive at me; for it was so dark, Hal, that thou couldst not see thy hand.

213. *paid:* killed. *buckram:* coarse, stiff linen. 215. *ward:* posture of defense. 222. *mainly:* strongly. 224. *target:* shield. 238. *points:* (a) sword points, (b) laces that fastened the hose to the doublet. 246. *Kendal green:* dark green cloth made at Kendal, Westmoreland.

Prince. These lies are like their father that begets them—gross as a mountain, open, palpable. Why, thou clay-brained guts, thou knotty-pated fool, thou whoreson, obscene, greasy tallow-catch—

Fal. What, art thou mad? Art thou mad? Is not the truth the truth?

Prince. Why, how couldst thou know these men in Kendal green, when it was so dark thou couldst not see thy hand? Come, tell us your reason; what sayest thou to this?

Poins. Come, your reason, Jack, your reason. 260

Fal. What, upon compulsion? 'Zounds, an I were at the strappado, or all the racks in the world, I would not tell you on compulsion. Give you a reason on compulsion? If reasons were as plenty as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I.

Prince. I'll be no longer guilty of this sin. This sanguine coward, this bed-presser, this horseback-breaker, this huge hill of flesh— 269

Fal. 'Sblood, you starveling, you elf-skin, you dried neat's tongue, you bull's pizzle, you stock-fish! O for breath to utter what is like thee! You tailor's-yard, you sheath, you bow-case, you vile standing-tuck—

Prince. Well, breathe awhile, and then to it again; and when thou hast tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but this.

Poins. Mark, Jack. 278

Prince. We two saw you four set on four and bound them, and were masters of their wealth. Mark now, how a plain tale shall put you down. Then did we two set on you four; and, with a word, out-faced you from your prize, and have it; yea, and can show it you here in the house; and, Falstaff, you carried your guts away as nimbly, with as quick dexterity, and roared

251. *knotty-pated:* thick-headed. 253. *tallow-catch:* tub of tallow. 262. *strappado:* a machine for torture. 264. *reasons.* The words *reasons* and *raisins* were pronounced almost alike. 268. *sanguine:* red-faced. 271. *neat's:* ox's. *stock-fish:* dried fish. 274. *standing-tuck:* rapier standing upright. 283. *out-faced:* frightened away.

for mercy and still run and roared, as ever I heard bull-calf. What a slave art thou, to hack thy sword as thou hast done, and then say it was in fight! What trick, what device, what starting-hole, canst thou now find out to hide thee from this open and apparent shame?

Poins. Come, let's hear, Jack; what trick hast thou now?

Fal. By the Lord, I knew ye as well as he that made ye. Why, hear you, my masters. Was it for me to kill the heir-apparent? Should I turn upon the true prince? Why, thou knowest I am as valiant as Hercules; but beware instinct; the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter; I was now a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself and thee during my life, I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince. But, by the Lord, lads, I am glad you have the money. Hostess, clap to the doors! [*To Hostess within.*] Watch tonight, pray tomorrow. Gallants, lads, boys, hearts of gold, all the titles of good fellowship come to you! What, shall we be merry? Shall we have a play extempore?

Prince. Content; and the argument shall be thy running away.

Fal. Ah, no more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me!

Enter Hostess.

Host. O Jesu, my lord the prince!

Prince. How now, my lady the hostess! What sayest thou to me?

Host. Marry, my lord, there is a nobleman of the court at door would speak with you. He says he comes from your father.

Prince. Give him as much as will make him a royal man, and send him back again to my mother.

Fal. What manner of man is he?

Host. An old man.

Fal. What doth Gravity out of his bed at midnight? Shall I give him his answer?

287. *still:* all the while. 290. *starting-hole:* place of refuge for a hunted animal. 310. *argument:* subject. 317–21. *nobleman, royal man:* a pun on the names of coins: noble, 6s. 8d., royal, 10s.

Prince. Prithee, do, Jack.

Fal. 'Faith, and I'll send him packing. [*Exit.*

Prince. Now, sirs, by'r lady, you fought fair; so did you, Peto; so did you, Bardolph. You are lions too, you ran away upon instinct, you will not touch the true prince; no, fie!

Bard. 'Faith, I ran when I saw others run.

Prince. 'Faith, tell me now in earnest, how came Falstaff's sword so hacked?

Peto. Why, he hacked it with his dagger, and said he would swear truth out of England but he would make you believe it was done in fight, and persuaded us to do the like.

Bard. Yea, and to tickle our noses with spear-grass to make them bleed, and then to be-slubber our garments with it and swear it was the blood of true men. I did that I did not this seven year before—I blushed to hear his monstrous devices.

Prince. O villain, thou stolest a cup of sack eighteen years ago, and wert taken with the manner, and ever since thou hast blushed extempore. Thou hadst fire and sword on thy side, and yet thou rannest away. What instinct hadst thou for it?

Bard. My lord, do you see these meteors? Do you behold these exhalations? [*He points to his face.*

Prince. I do.

Bard. What think you they portend?

Prince. Hot livers and cold purses.

Bard. Choler, my lord, if rightly taken.

Prince. No, if rightly taken, halter.

Re-enter FALSTAFF.

Here comes lean Jack; here comes bare-bone. How now, my sweet creature of bombast! How long is't ago, Jack, since thou sawest thine own knee?

Fal. My own knee? When I was about thy years, Hal, I was not an eagle's talon in the waist; I could have crept into any alderman's thumb-ring. A plague of sighing and grief! It blows

347. *with the manner:* in the act. 348. *fire:* Bardolph's red face. 357. *halter:* punning reference to *choler* and *collar*. 359. *bombast:* cotton padding used to stuff out garments.

a man up like a bladder. There's villainous news abroad. Here was Sir John Bracy from your father; you must to the court in the morning. That same mad fellow of the north, Percy, and he of Wales, that gave Amamon the bastinado and made Lucifer cuckold and swore the Devil his true liegeman upon the cross of a Welsh hook—what a plague call you him?

Poins. O, Glendower.

Fal. Owen, Owen, the same; and his son-in-law Mortimer, and old Northumberland, and that sprightly Scot of Scots, Douglas, that runs o' horseback up a hill perpendicular—

Prince. He that rides at high speed and with his pistol kills a sparrow flying.

Fal. You have hit it.

Prince. So did he never the sparrow.

Fal. Well, that rascal hath good mettle in him; he will not run.

Prince. Why, what a rascal art thou then, to praise him so for running!

Fal, O' horseback, ye cuckoo; but afoot he will not budge a foot.

Prince. Yes, Jack, upon instinct.

Fal. I grant ye, upon instinct. Well, he is there too, and one Mordake, and a thousand blue-caps more. Worcester is stolen away tonight. Thy father's beard is turned white with the news. You may buy land now as cheap as stinking mackerel.

Prince. Why, then, it is like, if there come a hot June and this civil buffeting hold, we shall buy maidenheads as they buy hob-nails, by the hundreds.

Fal. By the mass, lad, thou sayest true; it is like we shall have good trading that way. But tell me, Hal, art not thou horrible afeard? Thou being heir-apparent, could the world pick thee out three such enemies again as that fiend Douglas, that spirit Percy, and that devil Glendower? Art thou not horribly afraid? Doth not thy blood thrill at it?

370. *Amamon:* a devil. *bastinado:* beating with a stick. 373. *Welsh hook:* weapon resembling a halberd. 392. *blue-caps:* blue-bonneted Scots.

Prince. Not a whit, i' faith; I lack some of thy instinct.

Fal. Well, thou wilt be horribly chid tomorrow when thou comest to thy father. If thou love me, practice an answer.

Prince. Do thou stand for my father, and examine me upon the particulars of my life.

Fal. Shall I? Content. This chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre, and this cushion my crown.

Prince. Thy state is taken for a joined-stool, thy golden sceptre for a leaden dagger, and thy precious rich crown for a pitiful bald crown!

Fal. Well, an the fire of grace be not quite out of thee, now shalt thou be moved. Give me a cup of sack to make my eyes look red, that it may be thought I have wept; for I must speak in passion, and I will do it in King Cambyses' vein. [*He drinks.*

Prince. Well, here is my leg. [*Kneels.*

Fal. And here is my speech. Stand aside, nobility.

Host. O Jesu, this is excellent sport, i' faith!

Fal. Weep not, sweet queen; for trickling tears are vain.

Host. O, the Father, how he holds his countenance!

Fal. For God's sake, lords, convey my tristful queen;
For tears do stop the flood-gates of her eyes.

Host. O Jesu, he doth it as like one of these harlotry players as ever I see!

Fal. Peace, good pint-pot; peace, good tickle-brain. Harry, I do not only marvel where thou spendest thy time, but also how thou art accompanied; for though the camomile, the more it is trodden on the faster it grows, yet youth, the more it is wasted the sooner it wears. That thou art my son, I have partly thy mother's word, partly my own opinion, but chiefly a villainous trick of thine eye and a foolish hanging of thy nether lip, that doth warrant me. If then thou be son to me, here lies

416. *state:* throne. 425. *passion:* sorrow. *King Cambyses' vein.* Falstaff parodies the style of Thomas Preston's popular melodrama *King Cambises*, published about 1570. 427. *leg:* bow. 433. *tristful:* sad. 437. *harlotry:* rascally. 438. *tickle-brain:* strong drink. 439–75. Falstaff here parodies a passage in Lyly's *Euphues*, especially his fantastic natural history and his exaggerated use of antithesis and alliteration. 441. *camomile:* a creeping herb.

the point: why, being son to me, art thou so pointed at? Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a micher and eat blackberries? A question not to be asked. Shall the son of England prove a thief and take purses? A question to be asked. There is a thing, Harry, which thou hast often heard of, and it is known to many in our land by the name of pitch. This pitch, as ancient writers do report, doth defile; so doth the company thou keepest; for, Harry, now I do not speak to thee in drink but in tears, not in pleasure but in passion, not in words only, but in woes also; and yet there is a virtuous man whom I have often noted in thy company, but I know not his name.

Prince. What manner of man, an it like your Majesty?

Fal. A goodly portly man, i' faith, and a corpulent; of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye, and a most noble carriage; and, as I think, his age some fifty, or, by'r lady, inclining to threescore; and now I remember me, his name is Falstaff. If that man should be lewdly given, he deceiveth me; for, Harry, I see virtue in his looks. If then the tree may be known by the fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then, peremptorily I speak it, there is virtue in that Falstaff; him keep with, the rest banish. And tell me now, thou naughty varlet, tell me, where hast thou been this month?

Prince. Dost thou speak like a king? Do thou stand for me, and I'll play my father.

Fal. Depose me? If thou dost it half so gravely, so majestically, both in word and matter, hang me up by the heels for a rabbit-sucker or a poulter's hare.

Prince. Well, here I am set.

Fal. And here I stand. Judge, my masters.

Prince. Now, Harry, whence come you?

Fal. My noble lord, from Eastcheap.

Prince. The complaints I hear of thee are grievous.

Fal. 'Sblood, my lord, they are false. [*To the others.*] Nay, I'll tickle ye for a young prince, i' faith.

450. *micher:* truant. 474. *naughty varlet:* good-for-nothing rascal. 480. *rabbit-sucker:* sucking rabbit. 481. *poulter's:* poultry-dealer's.

Prince. Swearest thou, ungracious boy? Henceforth ne'er look on me. Thou art violently carried away from grace. There is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of an old fat man; a tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that swollen parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak-bag of guts, that roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in his belly, that reverend Vice, that grey Iniquity, that Father Ruffian, that Vanity in years? Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it? Wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and eat it? Wherein cunning, but in craft? Wherein crafty, but in villainy? Wherein villainous, but in all things? Wherein worthy, but in nothing? 505

Fal. I would your Grace would take me with you. Whom means your Grace?

Prince. That villainous abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan.

Fal. My lord, the man I know. 510

Prince. I know thou dost.

Fal. But to say I know more harm in him than in myself, were to say more than I know. That he is old, the more the pity, his white hairs do witness it; but that he is, saving your reverence, a whoremaster, that I utterly deny. If sack and sugar be a fault, God help the wicked! If to be old and merry be a sin, then many an old host that I know is damned. If to be fat be to be hated, then Pharaoh's lean kine are to be loved. No, my good lord; banish Peto, banish Bardolph, banish Poins; but for sweet Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff, valiant Jack Falstaff, and therefore more valiant, being, as he is, old Jack Falstaff, banish not him thy Harry's company, banish not him

493. *tun:* (a) cask for liquor, (b) ton. 495. *trunk of humours:* chest of (a) fluids, (b) caprices. *bolting-hutch:* miller's bin. 497. *bombard:* leather container. 498. *Manningtree:* a town in Essex famous for its cattle. 499. *Vice:* a reference to the Vice of the morality plays, who was often named "Iniquity" or "Vanity." 506. *take me with you:* tell me your meaning. 520. *Pharaoh's lean kine.* See Genesis 41.

thy Harry's company. Banish plump Jack, and banish all the world.

Prince. I do, I will. [*A knocking heard.*

[*Exeunt Hostess, Francis, and Bardolph.*

Re-enter BARDOLPH, *running.*

Bard. O, my lord, my lord, the sheriff with a most monstrous watch is at the door!

Fal. Out, ye rogue! Play out the play; I have much to say in the behalf of that Falstaff.

Re-enter the Hostess.

Host. O Jesu, my lord, my lord!

Prince. Heigh, heigh! The Devil rides upon a fiddlestick. What's the matter?

Host. The sheriff and all the watch are at the door; they are come to search the house. Shall I let them in?

Fal. Dost thou hear, Hal? Never call a true piece of gold a counterfeit. Thou art essentially mad, without seeming so.

Prince. And thou a natural coward, without instinct.

Fal. I deny your major. If you will deny the sheriff, so; if not, let him enter. If I become not a cart as well as another man, a plague on my bringing up! I hope I shall as soon be strangled with a halter as another.

Prince. Go, hide thee behind the arras; the rest walk up above. Now, my masters, for a true face and good conscience.

Fal. Both which I have had; but their date is out, and therefore I'll hide me. [*Goes behind the arras.*

Prince. Call in the sheriff. [*Exeunt all but Prince and Peto.*

Enter Sheriff *and a* Carrier.

Now, master sheriff, what is your will with me?

Sher. First, pardon me, my lord. A hue and cry
Hath follow'd certain men unto this house.

534. *the Devil . . . fiddlestick:* proverbial equivalent of "here's a fine commotion." 539–41. Falstaff warns Hal not to trifle now that a real danger faces them. 544. *major:* major premise. It was pronounced "mayor"; hence the association with *sheriff*. 546. *cart:* hangman's cart. 549. *arras:* tapestry hangings.

Prince. What men?

Sher. One of them is well known, my gracious lord,
A gross fat man.

Car. As fat as butter.

Prince. The man, I do assure you, is not here,
For I myself at this time have employ'd him.
And, sheriff, I will engage my word to thee
That I will, by tomorrow dinner-time,
Send him to answer thee, or any man,
For anything he shall be charged withal.
And so let me entreat you leave the house.

Sher. I will, my lord. There are two gentlemen
Have in this robbery lost three hundred marks.

Prince. It may be so. If he have robb'd these men,
He shall be answerable; and so farewell.

Sher. Good night, my noble lord.

Prince. I think it is good morrow, is it not?

Sher. Indeed, my lord, I think it be two o'clock.

[*Exeunt Sheriff and Carrier.*

Prince. This oily rascal is known as well as Paul's. Go, call him forth.

Peto. Falstaff!—Fast asleep behind the arras, and snorting like a horse. [*Lifts the arras and reveals Falstaff.*

Prince. Hark, how hard he fetches breath. Search his pockets. [*Peto searches his pockets, and finds certain papers.*] What hast thou found?

Peto. Nothing but papers, my lord.

Prince. Let's see what they be. Read them.

Peto. [*Reads*]

Item, A capon,	2s. 2d.
Item, Sauce,	4d.
Item, Sack, two gallons,	5s. 8d.
Item, Anchovies and sack after supper,	2s. 6d.
Item, Bread,	ob.

Prince. O monstrous! But one half-pennyworth of bread

576. *Paul's:* St. Paul's Cathedral. 578. *snorting:* snoring. 590. *ob.:* obolus, a halfpenny.

to this intolerable deal of sack! What there is else, keep close; we'll read it at more advantage. There let him sleep till day. I'll to the court in the morning. We must all to the wars, and thy place shall be honourable. I'll procure this fat rogue a charge of foot; and I know his death will be a march of twelve-score. The money shall be paid back again with advantage. Be with me betimes in the morning; and so, good morrow, Peto.

Peto. Good morrow, good my lord. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I. *Bangor. The Archdeacon's house.*

HOTSPUR, WORCESTER, MORTIMER, *and* GLENDOWER *seated around a table, with maps and papers.*

Mort. These promises are fair, the parties sure,
And our induction full of prosperous hope.

Hot. Lord Mortimer and cousin Glendower,
Will you sit down?
And uncle Worcester—a plague upon it!
I have forgot the map.

Glend. No, here it is.
Sit, cousin Percy; sit, good cousin Hotspur,
For by that name as oft as Lancaster
Doth speak of you, his cheek looks pale and with
A rising sigh he wisheth you in heaven.

Hot. And you in hell, as oft as he hears Owen Glendower spoke of.

Glend. I cannot blame him. At my nativity
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
Of burning cressets; and at my birth

597. *charge of foot:* command of infantry. 598. *his death . . . twelve-score:* a march of twelve-score yards will kill him. 599. *advantage:* interest.

[III. i] 1. *sure:* reliable. 2. *induction:* beginning. 15. *cressets:* vessels containing fire.

The frame and huge foundation of the earth
Shaked like a coward.

Hot. Why, so it would have done at the same season, if your mother's cat had but kittened, though yourself had never been born.

Glend. I say the earth did shake when I was born.

Hot. And I say the earth was not of my mind,
If you suppose as fearing you it shook.

Glend. The heavens were all on fire; the earth did tremble.

Hot. O, then the earth shook to see the heavens on fire,
And not in fear of your nativity.
Diseased nature oftentimes breaks forth
In strange eruptions; oft the teeming earth
Is with a kind of colic pinch'd and vex'd
By the imprisoning of unruly wind
Within her womb; which, for enlargement striving,
Shakes the old beldam earth and topples down
Steeples and moss-grown towers. At your birth
Our grandam earth, having this distemperature,
In passion shook.

Glend. Cousin, of many men
I do not bear these crossings. Give me leave
To tell you once again that at my birth
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
The goats ran from the mountains, and the herds
Were strangely clamorous to the frighted fields.
These signs have mark'd me extraordinary;
And all the courses of my life do show
I am not in the roll of common men.
Where is he living, clipp'd in with the sea
That chides the banks of England, Scotland, Wales,
Which calls me pupil, or hath read to me?
And bring him out that is but woman's son

31. *enlargement:* release. 32. *beldam:* grandmother. 34. *distemperature:* disorder. 44. *clipp'd in with:* surrounded by. 46. *read to:* instructed.

Can trace me in the tedious ways of art
And hold me pace in deep experiments.
Hot. I think there's no man speaks better Welsh. I'll to dinner.
Mort. Peace, cousin Percy; you will make him mad.
Glend. I can call spirits from the vasty deep.
Hot. Why, so can I, or so can any man;
But will they come when you do call for them?
Glend. Why, I can teach you, cousin, to command
The Devil.
Hot. And I can teach thee, coz, to shame the Devil
By telling truth; tell truth and shame the Devil.
If thou have power to raise him, bring him hither,
And I'll be sworn I have power to shame him hence.
O, while you live, tell truth and shame the Devil!
Mort. Come, come, no more of this unprofitable chat.
Glend. Three times hath Henry Bolingbroke made head
Against my power; thrice from the banks of Wye
And sandy-bottom'd Severn have I sent him
Bootless home and weather-beaten back.
Hot. Home without boots, and in foul weather too!
How 'scapes he agues, in the Devil's name?
Glend. Come, here's the map. Shall we divide our right
According to our threefold order ta'en?
Mort. The archdeacon hath divided it
Into three limits very equally.
England, from Trent and Severn hitherto,
By south and east is to my part assign'd;
All westward, Wales beyond the Severn shore,
And all the fertile land within that bound,
To Owen Glendower; and, dear coz, to you
The remnant northward, lying off from Trent.
And our indentures tripartite are drawn;

48. *trace:* follow. *art:* magic. 49. *hold me pace:* keep up with me. 56. Perhaps *cousin* should be omitted. 65. *power:* army. 67. *Bootless:* without advantage. 74. *hitherto:* to this point. 80. *indentures tripartite:* agreements drawn up for all three.

Which being sealed interchangeably,
A business that this night may execute,
Tomorrow, cousin Percy, you and I
And my good Lord of Worcester will set forth
To meet your father and the Scottish power,
As is appointed us, at Shrewsbury.
My father Glendower is not ready yet,
Nor shall we need his help these fourteen days.
Within that space you may have drawn together
[*To Glendower.*
Your tenants, friends, and neighbouring gentlemen.
Glend. A shorter time shall send me to you, lords;
And in my conduct shall your ladies come,
From whom you now must steal and take no leave,
For there will be a world of water shed
Upon the parting of your wives and you.
Hot. Methinks my moiety, north from Burton here,
In quantity equals not one of yours.
See how this river comes me cranking in,
And cuts me from the best of all my land
A huge half-moon, a monstrous cantle out.
I'll have the current in this place damm'd up;
And here the smug and silver Trent shall run
In a new channel, fair and evenly.
It shall not wind with such a deep indent,
To rob me of so rich a bottom here.
Glend. Not wind? It shall, it must; you see it doth.
Mort. Yea, but
Mark how he bears his course, and runs me up
With like advantage on the other side;
Gelding the opposed continent as much
As on the other side it takes from you.
Wor. Yea, but a little charge will trench him here

96. *moiety:* portion; properly, half. 98. *comes . . . in:* comes winding into my portion. 100. *cantle:* corner. 102. *smug:* neat, trim. 104. *indent:* indentation. 105. *bottom:* valley. 110. *Gelding . . . continent:* cutting away the area opposite. 112. *charge:* expense.

And on this north side win this cape of land;
And then he runs straight and even.
Hot. I'll have it so; a little charge will do it.
Glend. I'll not have it alter'd.
Hot. Will not you?
Glend. No, nor you shall not.
Hot. Who shall say me nay?
Glend. Why, that will I.
Hot. Let me not understand you, then. Speak it in Welsh.
Glend. I can speak English, lord, as well as you;
For I was train'd up in the English court,
Where, being but young, I framed to the harp
Many an English ditty lovely well
And gave the tongue a helpful ornament,
A virtue that was never seen in you.
Hot. Marry,
And I am glad of it with all my heart.
I had rather be a kitten and cry mew
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers.
I had rather hear a brazen canstick turn'd,
Or a dry wheel grate on the axle-tree;
And that would set my teeth nothing on edge,
Nothing so much as mincing poetry.
'Tis like the forced gait of a shuffling nag.
Glend. Come, you shall have Trent turn'd.
Hot. I do not care. I'll give thrice so much land
To any well-deserving friend;
But in the way of bargain, mark ye me,
I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair.
Are the indentures drawn? Shall we be gone?
Glend. The moon shines fair; you may away by night.
I'll haste the writer and withal
Break with your wives of your departure hence.

123. *framed:* composed. 131. *canstick:* candlestick. *turn'd:* i.e., on the lathe. 134. *mincing:* affected. 144. *Break with:* inform.

I am afraid my daughter will run mad,
So much she doteth on her Mortimer. [*Exit.*
Mort. Fie, cousin Percy! How you cross my father!
Hot. I cannot choose. Sometime he angers me
With telling me of the moldwarp and the ant,
Of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies,
And of a dragon and a finless fish,
A clip-wing'd griffin and a moulten raven,
A couching lion and a ramping cat,
And such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff
As puts me from my faith. I tell you what!
He held me last night at least nine hours
In reckoning up the several devils' names
That were his lackeys. I cried "hum" and "well, go to,"
But mark'd him not a word. O, he is as tedious
As a tired horse, a railing wife;
Worse than a smoky house. I had rather live
With cheese and garlic in a windmill, far,
Than feed on cates and have him talk to me
In any summer-house in Christendom.
Mort. In faith, he is a worthy gentleman,
Exceedingly well read, and profited
In strange concealments, valiant as a lion
And wondrous affable, and as bountiful
As mines of India. Shall I tell you, cousin?
He holds your temper in a high respect
And curbs himself even of his natural scope
When you come 'cross his humour. Faith, he does.
I warrant you that man is not alive
Might so have tempted him as you have done,
Without the taste of danger and reproof.
But do not use it oft, let me entreat you.

149. *moldwarp:* mole. 153. *couching, ramping:* terms that describe conventional attitudes of beasts in heraldry. 154. *skimble-skamble:* confused. 163. *cates:* dainties. 164. *summer-house:* summer residence in the country. 166. *profited:* skilled. 167. *concealments:* mysteries. 171. *scope:* tendency. 174. *tempted:* provoked.

Wor. In faith, my lord, you are too wilful-blame;
And since your coming hither have done enough
To put him quite beside his patience.
You must needs learn, lord, to amend this fault.
Though sometimes it show greatness, courage, blood—
And that's the dearest grace it renders you—
Yet oftentimes it doth present harsh rage,
Defect of manners, want of government,
Pride, haughtiness, opinion, and disdain;
The least of which haunting a nobleman
Loseth men's hearts and leaves behind a stain
Upon the beauty of all parts besides,
Beguiling them of commendation.

Hot. Well, I am school'd. Good manners be your speed!
Here come our wives, and let us take our leave.

Re-enter GLENDOWER *with the ladies.*

Mort. This is the deadly spite that angers me;
My wife can speak no English, I no Welsh.

Glend. My daughter weeps; she will not part with you;
She'll be a soldier too; she'll to the wars.

Mort. Good father, tell her that she and my aunt Percy
Shall follow in your conduct speedily.

[*Glendower speaks to her in Welsh, and she answers him in the same.*

Glend. She is desperate here—a peevish self-will'd harlotry, one that no persuasion can do good upon.

[*The lady speaks in Welsh.*

Mort. I understand thy looks. That pretty Welsh
Which thou pour'st down from these swelling heavens
I am too perfect in; and, but for shame,
In such a parley should I answer thee.

[*The lady speaks again in Welsh.*

177. *wilful-blame:* wilfully blameworthy. 181. *blood:* spirit. 182. *dearest:* best. 183. *present:* represent. 184. *government:* self-control. 185. *opinion:* arrogance. 189. *Beguiling:* cheating. 190. *be your speed:* bring you good fortune. 192. *spite:* vexation. 199. *harlotry:* here, a term of affectionate censure, such as "silly dear."

I understand thy kisses and thou mine,
And that's a feeling disputation.
But I will never be a truant, love,
Till I have learn'd thy language, for thy tongue
Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly penn'd,
Sung by a fair queen in a summer's bower,
With ravishing division, to her lute.

Glend. Nay, if you melt, then will she run mad.

[*The lady speaks again in Welsh.*

Mort. O, I am ignorance itself in this!

Glend. She bids you on the wanton rushes lay you down
And rest your gentle head upon her lap,
And she will sing the song that pleaseth you
And on your eyelids crown the god of sleep,
Charming your blood with pleasing heaviness,
Making such difference 'twixt wake and sleep
As is the difference betwixt day and night
The hour before the heavenly-harness'd team
Begins his golden progress in the east.

Mort. With all my heart I'll sit and hear her sing.
By that time will our book, I think, be drawn.

Glend. Do so;
And those musicians that shall play to you
Hang in the air a thousand leagues from hence,
And straight they shall be here. Sit and attend.

Hot. Come, Kate, thou art perfect in lying down. Come, quick, quick, that I may lay my head in thy lap.

Lady P. Go, ye giddy goose.

[*The music plays.*

Hot. Now I perceive the Devil understands Welsh;
And 'tis no marvel he is so humorous.
By'r lady, he is a good musician.

Lady P. Then should you be nothing but musical, for you

206. ***disputation:*** conversation. 209. ***highly:*** in elevated style. 211. ***division:*** modulation. 214. ***wanton:*** soft. ***rushes:*** the usual floor-covering of Shakespeare's time. 218. ***heaviness:*** sleepiness. 224. ***book:*** indentures. 234. ***humorous:*** capricious.

are altogether governed by humours. Lie still, ye thief, and hear the lady sing in Welsh.

Hot. I had rather hear Lady, my brach, howl in Irish.

Lady P. Wouldst thou have thy head broken?

Hot. No.

Lady P. Then be still.

Hot. Neither; 'tis a woman's fault.

Lady P. Now God help thee!

Hot. To the Welsh lady's bed.

Lady P. What's that?

Hot. Peace! She sings. [*Here the lady sings a Welsh song.*

Hot. Come, Kate, I'll have your song too.

Lady P. Not mine, in good sooth.

Hot. Not yours, in good sooth! Heart, you swear like a comfit-maker's wife. "Not you, in good sooth," and "as true as I live," and "as God shall mend me," and "as sure as day,"
And givest such sarcenet surety for thy oaths,
As if thou never walk'st further than Finsbury.
Swear me, Kate, like a lady as thou art,
A good mouth-filling oath, and leave "in sooth"
And such protest of pepper-gingerbread,
To velvet-guards and Sunday-citizens.
Come, sing.

Lady P. I will not sing.

Hot. 'Tis the next way to turn tailor, or be red-breast teacher. An the indentures be drawn, I'll away within these two hours; and so come in when ye will. [*Exit.*

Glend. Come, come, Lord Mortimer; you are as slow
As hot Lord Percy is on fire to go.
By this our book is drawn. We'll but seal,
And then to horse immediately.

Mort. With all my heart. [*Exeunt.*

240. *brach:* female hound. 253. *comfit-maker's:* confectioner's. 256. *sarcenet:* silken, flimsy. 257. *Finsbury:* a tract of open ground north of London. 261. *velvet-guards:* velvet trimmings worn on Sunday by citizens' wives. 264. *turn tailor.* Tailors, like weavers, sang psalms at their work. See II, iv, 147. 265. *red-breast teacher:* trainer of singing birds. 270. *book is drawn:* agreement is drawn up.

Scene II. *London. The palace.*

Enter the King, Prince of Wales, *and others.*

King. Lords, give us leave. The Prince of Wales and I
Must have some private conference. But be near at hand,
For we shall presently have need of you. [*Exeunt Lords.*
I know not whether God will have it so,
For some displeasing service I have done,
That, in his secret doom, out of my blood
He'll breed revengement and a scourge for me;
But thou dost in thy passages of life
Make me believe that thou art only mark'd
For the hot vengeance and the rod of heaven
To punish my mistreadings. Tell me else,
Could such inordinate and low desires,
Such poor, such bare, such lewd, such mean attempts,
Such barren pleasures, rude society,
As thou art match'd withal and grafted to,
Accompany the greatness of thy blood
And hold their level with thy princely heart?

Prince. So please your Majesty, I would I could
Quit all offenses with as clear excuse
As well as I am doubtless I can purge
Myself of many I am charged withal.
Yet such extenuation let me beg,
As, in reproof of many tales devised,
Which oft the ear of greatness needs must hear,
By smiling pick-thanks and base newsmongers,
I may, for some things true, wherein my youth
Hath faulty wander'd and irregular,
Find pardon on my true submission.

King. God pardon thee! Yet let me wonder, Harry,
At thy affections, which do hold a wing
Quite from the flight of all thy ancestors.

[ii] 6. ***doom:*** judgment. 8. ***passages:*** acts. 13. ***lewd:*** ignorant. 19. ***Quit:*** cancel. 20. ***doubtless:*** positive. 23. ***reproof:*** refutation. 25. ***pick-thanks:*** flatterers. 30. ***affections:*** tastes.

Thy place in council thou hast rudely lost,
Which by thy younger brother is supplied,
And art almost an alien to the hearts
Of all the court and princes of my blood.
The hope and expectation of thy time
Is ruin'd, and the soul of every man
Prophetically doth forethink thy fall.
Had I so lavish of my presence been,
So common-hackney'd in the eyes of men,
So stale and cheap to vulgar company,
Opinion, that did help me to the crown,
Had still kept loyal to possession
And left me in reputeless banishment,
A fellow of no mark nor likelihood.
By being seldom seen, I could not stir
But like a comet I was wonder'd at;
That men would tell their children "This is he";
Others would say "Where, which is Bolingbroke?"
And then I stole all courtesy from heaven,
And dress'd myself in such humility
That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts,
Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths,
Even in the presence of the crowned king.
Thus did I keep my person fresh and new,
My presence, like a robe pontifical,
Ne'er seen but wonder'd at; and so my state,
Seldom but sumptuous, showed like a feast
And won by rareness such solemnity.
The skipping king, he ambled up and down
With shallow jesters and rash bavin wits,
Soon kindled and soon burnt; carded his state;

32. *Thy . . . lost.* According to tradition, Prince Hal boxed the ears of the Chief Justice. 36. *time:* reign. 42. *Opinion:* public opinion. 43. *possession:* the possessor, Richard II. 45. *likelihood:* promise. 57. *state:* i.e., the dignity befitting his rank. 59. *such solemnity:* i.e., the dignity and pomp of a ceremonious festival. 60. *skipping:* flighty, thoughtless. 61. *bavin:* brushwood. 62. *carded:* debased by mixing.

Mingled his royalty with capering fools;
Had his great name profaned with their scorns;
And gave his countenance, against his name,
To laugh at gibing boys and stand the push
Of every beardless vain comparative;
Grew a companion to the common streets;
Enfeoff'd himself to popularity;
That, being daily swallow'd by men's eyes,
They surfeited with honey and began
To loathe the taste of sweetness, whereof a little
More than a little is by much too much.
So when he had occasion to be seen,
He was but as the cuckoo is in June,
Heard, not regarded; seen, but with such eyes
As, sick and blunted with community,
Afford no extraordinary gaze,
Such as is bent on sun-like majesty
When it shines seldom in admiring eyes;
But rather drowsed and hung their eyelids down,
Slept in his face and render'd such aspect
As cloudy men use to their adversaries,
Being with his presence glutted, gorged, and full.
And in that very line, Harry, standest thou;
For thou hast lost thy princely privilege
With vile participation. Not an eye
But is a-weary of thy common sight,
Save mine, which hath desired to see thee more;
Which now doth that I would not have it do,
Make blind itself with foolish tenderness.

Prince. I shall hereafter, my thrice gracious lord,
Be more myself.

King. For all the world

65. ***against his name:*** contrary to his dignity. 66. ***stand the push.*** face the attack. 67. ***comparative:*** (a) dealer in humorous comparisons, (b) rival. 69. ***Enfeoff'd:*** surrendered. ***popularity:*** association with the populace. 77. ***community:*** familiarity. 82. ***in his face:*** in his presence. 83. ***cloudy:*** sullen. 87. ***vile participation:*** low companionship.

As thou art to this hour was Richard then
When I from France set foot at Ravenspurgh,
And even as I was then is Percy now.
Now, by my sceptre and my soul to boot,
He hath more worthy interest to the state
Than thou, the shadow of succession;
For of no right, nor colour like to right,
He doth fill fields with harness in the realm,
Turns head against the lion's armed jaws,
And, being no more in debt to years than thou,
Leads ancient lords and reverend bishops on
To bloody battles and to bruising arms.
What never-dying honour hath he got
Against renowned Douglas, whose high deeds,
Whose hot incursions, and great name in arms
Holds from all soldiers chief majority
And military title capital
Through all the kingdoms that acknowledge Christ.
Thrice hath this Hotspur, Mars in swathling clothes,
This infant warrior, in his enterprises
Discomfited great Douglas, ta'en him once,
Enlarged him, and made a friend of him,
To fill the mouth of deep defiance up
And shake the peace and safety of our throne.
And what say you to this? Percy, Northumberland,
The Archbishop's Grace of York, Douglas, Mortimer,
Capitulate against us and are up.
But wherefore do I tell these news to thee?
Why, Harry, do I tell thee of my foes,
Which art my near'st and dearest enemy?
Thou that art like enough, through vassal fear,
Base inclination, and the start of spleen,
To fight against me under Percy's pay,

98. *interest:* claim. 100. *colour:* pretext. 101. *harness:* armor. 109. *majority:* pre-eminence. 110. *capital:* chief. 115. *Enlarged:* freed. 120. *Capitulate:* agree together. 124. *vassal:* slavish. 125. *start of spleen:* angry impulse.

To dog his heels, and curtsy at his frowns,
To show how much thou art degenerate.
Prince. Do not think so; you shall not find it so.
And God forgive them that so much have sway'd
Your Majesty's good thoughts away from me!
I will redeem all this on Percy's head
And in the closing of some glorious day
Be bold to tell you that I am your son,
When I will wear a garment all of blood
And stain my favours in a bloody mask,
Which, wash'd away, shall scour my shame with it.
And that shall be the day, whene'er it lights,
That this same child of honour and renown,
This gallant Hotspur, this all-praised knight,
And your unthought-of Harry chance to meet.
For every honour sitting on his helm,
Would they were multitudes, and on my head
My shames redoubled! For the time will come,
That I shall make this northern youth exchange
His glorious deeds for my indignities.
Percy is but my factor, good my lord,
To engross up glorious deeds on my behalf;
And I will call him to so strict account
That he shall render every glory up,
Yea, even the slightest worship of his time,
Or I will tear the reckoning from his heart.
This, in the name of God, I promise here;
The which if He be pleased I shall perform,
I do beseech your Majesty may salve
The long-grown wounds of my intemperance.
If not, the end of life cancels all bands;
And I will die a hundred thousand deaths
Ere break the smallest parcel of this vow.
King. A hundred thousand rebels die in this.
Thou shalt have charge and sovereign trust herein.

136. *favours:* features. 147. *factor:* agent. 148. *engross up:* acquire wholesale. 151. *worship:* honor. 157. *bands:* bonds.

Enter BLUNT.

How now, good Blunt? Thy looks are full of speed.

Blunt. So hath the business that I come to speak of.
Lord Mortimer of Scotland hath sent word
That Douglas and the English rebels met
The eleventh of this month at Shrewsbury.
A mighty and a fearful head they are,
If promises be kept on every hand,
As ever offer'd foul play in a state.

King. The Earl of Westmoreland set forth today;
With him my son, Lord John of Lancaster;
For this advertisement is five days old.
On Wednesday next, Harry, you shall set forward;
On Thursday we ourselves will march. Our meeting
Is Bridgnorth; and, Harry, you shall march
Through Gloucestershire; by which account,
Our business valued, some twelve days hence
Our general forces at Bridgnorth shall meet.
Our hands are full of business; let's away;
Advantage feeds him fat, while men delay.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Eastcheap. The Boar's Head Tavern.*

Enter FALSTAFF *and* BARDOLPH.

Fal. Bardolph, am I not fallen away vilely since this last action? Do I not bate? Do I not dwindle? Why, my skin hangs about me like an old lady's loose gown; I am withered like an old apple-john. Well, I'll repent, and that suddenly, while I am in some liking. I shall be out of heart shortly, and then I shall have no strength to repent. An I have not forgotten what the

164. *Lord Mortimer of Scotland:* George Dunbar, the Scottish Earl of March. 167. *head:* armed force. 172. *advertisement:* information. 177. *valued:* estimated.

[iii] 2. *bate:* decrease. 5. *apple-john:* a kind of apple that becomes very shrivelled. *suddenly:* at once. 6. *liking:* good condition.

inside of a church is made of, I am a peppercorn, a brewer's horse. The inside of a church! Company, villainous company, hath been the spoil of me.

Bard. Sir John, you are so fretful, you cannot live long.

Fal. Why, there is it. Come sing me a bawdy song; make me merry. I was as virtuously given as a gentleman need to be; virtuous enough, swore little, diced not above seven times a week, went to a bawdy-house not above once in a quarter—of an hour, paid money that I borrowed three or four times, lived well and in good compass; and now I live out of all order, out of all compass.

Bard. Why, you are so fat, Sir John, that you must needs be out of all compass, out of all reasonable compass, Sir John.

Fal. Do thou amend thy face, and I'll amend my life. Thou art our admiral; thou bearest the lantern in the poop, but 'tis in the nose of thee. Thou art the Knight of the Burning Lamp.

Bard. Why, Sir John, my face does you no harm.

Fal. No, I'll be sworn; I make as good use of it as many a man doth of a Death's-head or a *memento mori;* I never see thy face but I think upon hell-fire and Dives that lived in purple, for there he is in his robes, burning, burning. If thou wert any way given to virtue, I would swear by thy face; my oath should be "By this fire, that's God's angel"; but thou art altogether given over, and wert indeed, but for the light in thy face, the son of utter darkness. When thou rannest up Gadshill in the night to catch my horse, if I did not think thou hadst been an *ignis fatuus* or a ball of wildfire, there's no purchase in money. O, thou art a perpetual triumph, an everlasting bonfire-light! Thou hast saved me a thousand marks in links and torches, walking with thee in the night betwixt tavern and tavern; but the sack

9. *peppercorn:* the dried berry of the pepper plant. 12. *spoil:* ruin. 22. *in good compass:* within reasonable limits. 25. *compass:* circumference. 28. *admiral:* flagship. 35. *memento mori:* reminder of death; often a skull-and-crossbones engraved on a ring. 36. *Dives.* See Luke 16:19–31. 40. *God's angel.* See Psalm 104:4—"Who maketh his angels spirits; and his ministers a flaming fire." 45. *ignis fatuus:* will o' the wisp. *ball of wildfire:* fireworks. 47. *triumph:* public celebration. 48. *links:* torches.

that thou hast drunk me would have bought me lights as good cheap at the dearest chandler's in Europe. I have maintained that salamander of yours with fire any time this two and thirty years; God reward me for it!

Bard. 'Sblood, I would my face were in your belly!

Fal. God-a-mercy! So should I be sure to be heart-burned.

Enter Hostess.

How now, Dame Partlet the hen! Have you inquired yet who picked my pocket?

Host. Why, Sir John, what do you think, Sir John? Do you think I keep thieves in my house? I have searched, I have inquired, so has my husband, man by man, boy by boy, servant by servant. The tithe of a hair was never lost in my house before.

Fal. Ye lie, hostess. Bardolph was shaved and lost many a hair; and I'll be sworn my pocket was picked. Go to, you are a woman, go.

Host. Who, I? No; I defy thee. God's light, I was never called so in mine own house before.

Fal. Go to, I know you well enough.

Host. No, Sir John; you do not know me, Sir John. I know you, Sir John; you owe me money, Sir John; and now you pick a quarrel to beguile me of it. I bought you a dozen of shirts to your back.

Fal. Dowlas, filthy dowlas. I have given them away to bakers' wives, and they have made bolters of them.

Host. Now, as I am a true woman, holland of eight shillings an ell. You owe money here besides, Sir John, for your diet and by-drinkings, and money lent you, four and twenty pound.

Fal. He had his part of it; let him pay.

Host. He? Alas, he is poor; he hath nothing.

Fal. How! Poor? Look upon his face; what call you rich? Let them coin his nose, let them coin his cheeks. I'll not pay a

51. *as good cheap:* at as good a bargain. 53. *salamander:* lizard supposed to live in fire. 60. *Partlet:* name traditionally given a hen. 79. *Dowlas:* coarse linen, named from Daoulas, Brittany. 81. *bolters:* sieves. 82. *holland:* fine linen. 83. *ell:* forty-five inches.

denier. What, will you make a younker of me? Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn but I shall have my pocket picked? I have lost a seal-ring of my grandfather's worth forty mark.

Host. O Jesu, I have heard the prince tell him, I know not how oft, that that ring was copper!

Fal. How! The prince is a Jack, a sneak-cup. 'Sblood, an he were here, I would cudgel him like a dog, if he would say so.

Enter the Prince *and* Peto, *marching, and* Falstaff *meets them, playing on his truncheon like a fife.*

How now, lad! Is the wind in that door, i' faith? Must we all march?

Bard. Yea, two and two, Newgate fashion.

Host. My lord, I pray you, hear me.

Prince. What sayest thou, Mistress Quickly? How doth thy husband? I love him well; he is an honest man.

Host. Good my lord, hear me.

Fal. Prithee, let her alone, and list to me.

Prince. What sayest thou, Jack?

Fal. The other night I fell asleep here behind the arras and had my pocket picked. This house is turned bawdy-house; they pick pockets.

Prince. What didst thou lose, Jack?

Fal. Wilt thou believe me, Hal? Three or four bonds of forty pound a-piece, and a seal-ring of my grandfather's.

Prince. A trifle, some eight-penny matter.

Host. So I told him, my lord; and I said I heard your Grace say so; and, my lord, he speaks most vilely of you, like a foul-mouthed man as he is; and said he would cudgel you.

Prince. What? He did not?

Host. There's neither faith, truth, nor womanhood in me else.

Fal. There's no more faith in thee than in a stewed prune;

91. *denier:* a French coin of little value. 92. *younker:* boy, greenhorn. 93. *take ... inn.* Proverbial. See Heywood's *Epigrams upon Proverbs* (1562). 99. *sneak-cup:* low frequenter of taverns (?). 104. *Newgate:* a London prison.

nor no more truth in thee than in a drawn fox; and for woman-hood, Maid Marian may be the deputy's wife of the ward to thee. Go, you thing, go.

Host. Say, what thing? What thing?

Fal. What thing? Why, a thing to thank God on.

Host. I am no thing to thank God on, I would thou shouldst know it. I am an honest man's wife; and, setting thy knighthood aside, thou art a knave to call me so.

Fal. Setting thy womanhood aside, thou art a beast to say otherwise.

Host. Say, what beast, thou knave, thou?

Fal. What beast? Why, an otter.

Prince. An otter, Sir John? Why an otter?

Fal. Why, she's neither fish nor flesh; a man knows not where to have her.

Host. Thou art an unjust man in saying so. Thou or any man knows where to have me, thou knave, thou!

Prince. Thou sayest true, hostess; and he slanders thee most grossly.

Host. So he doth you, my lord; and said this other day you ought him a thousand pound.

Prince. Sirrah, do I owe you a thousand pound?

Fal. A thousand pound, Hal? A million! Thy love is worth a million; thou owest me thy love.

Host. Nay, my lord, he called you Jack, and said he would cudgel you.

Fal. Did I, Bardolph?

Bard. Indeed, Sir John, you said so.

Fal. Yea, if he said my ring was copper.

Prince. I say 'tis copper. Darest thou be as good as thy word now?

Fal. Why, Hal, thou knowest, as thou art but man, I dare;

129. *drawn fox:* "a fox driven from cover and therefore wily in his attempts to get back again" (Onions). 129–30. *Maid Marian . . . thee.* Maid Marian, the companion of Robin Hood, was traditionally disreputable. Falstaff says that she, in comparison with the hostess, is as respectable as the wife of a deputy-alderman. 145. *have:* classify. 152. *ought:* owed.

but as thou art prince, I fear thee as I fear the roaring of the lion's whelp.

Prince. And why not as the lion?

Fal. The king himself is to be feared as the lion. Dost thou think I'll fear thee as I fear thy father? Nay, an I do, I pray God my girdle break.

Prince. O, if it should, how would thy guts fall about thy knees! But, sirrah, there's no room for faith, truth, nor honesty in this bosom of thine; it is all filled up with guts and midriff. Charge an honest woman with picking thy pocket! Why, thou whoreson, impudent, embossed rascal, if there were anything in thy pocket but tavern-reckonings, memorandums of bawdy-houses, and one poor penny-worth of sugar-candy to make thee long-winded, if thy pocket were enriched with any other injuries but these, I am a villain. And yet you will stand to it; you will not pocket up wrong. Art thou not ashamed?

Fal. Dost thou hear, Hal? Thou knowest in the state of innocency Adam fell; and what should poor Jack Falstaff do in the days of villainy? Thou seest I have more flesh than another man, and therefore more frailty. You confess then, you picked my pocket?

Prince. It appears so by the story.

Fal. Hostess, I forgive thee. Go, make ready breakfast, love thy husband, look to thy servants, cherish thy guests. Thou shalt find me tractable to any honest reason; thou seest I am pacified still. Nay, prithee, be gone. [*Exit Hostess.*] Now, Hal, to the news at court. For the robbery, lad, how is that answered?

Prince. O, my sweet beef, I must still be good angel to thee; the money is paid back again.

Fal. O, I do not like that paying back; 'tis a double labour.

Prince. I am good friends with my father and may do anything.

Fal. Rob me the exchequer the first thing thou doest, and do it with unwashed hands too.

177. *embossed:* swollen. 182. *injuries:* insults. 206. *with unwashed hands:* quickly; perhaps also alluding to Pilate.

Bard. Do, my lord.

Prince. I have procured thee, Jack, a charge of foot.

Fal. I would it had been of horse. Where shall I find one that can steal well? O for a fine thief, of the age of two and twenty or thereabouts! I am heinously unprovided. Well, God be thanked for these rebels; they offend none but the virtuous. I laud them, I praise them.

Prince. Bardolph!

Bard. My lord?

Prince. Go bear this letter to Lord John of Lancaster, to my brother John; this to my Lord of Westmoreland. [*Exit Bardolph.*] Go, Peto, to horse, to horse; for thou and I have thirty miles to ride yet ere dinner time. [*Exit Peto.*] Jack, meet me tomorrow in the Temple Hall at two o'clock in the afternoon.

There shalt thou know thy charge, and there receive
Money and order for their furniture.
The land is burning; Percy stands on high;
And either we or they must lower lie. [*Exit.*

Fal. Rare words! Brave world! Hostess, my breakfast, come!
O, I could wish this tavern were my drum! [*Exit.*

ACT IV

SCENE I. *The rebel camp near Shrewsbury.*

Enter HOTSPUR, WORCESTER, *and* DOUGLAS.

Hot. Well said, my noble Scot! If speaking truth
In this fine age were not thought flattery,

218–24. *Go bear . . . afternoon.* It is probable that this passage, like the following, was originally in verse, although in both Q and F it is printed as prose. 223. *the Temple Hall:* the hall of the Middle Temple. 226. *furniture:* equipment. 230. *my drum:* i.e., my recruiting station.

[IV. i] This meeting did not take place until three years after the battle of Shrewsbury; Northumberland, not Hotspur, was present.

Such attribution should the Douglas have
As not a soldier of this season's stamp
Should go so general current through the world.
By God, I cannot flatter; I do defy
The tongues of soothers; but a braver place
In my heart's love hath no man than yourself.
Nay, task me to my word; approve me, lord.
Doug. Thou art the king of honour.
No man so potent breathes upon the ground
But I will beard him.
Hot. Do so, and 'tis well.

Enter a Messenger *with letters.*

What letters hast thou there?—I can but thank you.
Mess. These letters come from your father.
Hot. Letters from him? Why comes he not himself?
Mess. He cannot come, my lord; he is grievous sick.
Hot. 'Zounds! How has he the leisure to be sick
In such a justling time? Who leads his power?
Under whose government come they along?
Mess. His letters bear his mind, not I, my lord.
Wor. I prithee, tell me, doth he keep his bed?
Mess. He did, my lord, four days ere I set forth;
And at the time of my departure thence
He was much fear'd by his physicians.
Wor. I would the state of time had first been whole
Ere he by sickness had been visited.
His health was never better worth than now.
Hot. Sick now? Droop now? This sickness doth infect
The very life-blood of our enterprise;
'Tis catching hither, even to our camp.
He writes me here, that inward sickness—
And that his friends by deputation could not
So soon be drawn, nor did he think it meet

3. *attribution:* praise. 7. *soothers:* flatterers. 9. *task, approve:* test. 12. *beard:* defy. 18. *justling:* jostling, busy. 32. *by deputation:* by means of agents.

To lay so dangerous and dear a trust
On any soul removed but on his own.
Yet doth he give us bold advertisement
That with our small conjunction we should on,
To see how Fortune is disposed to us;
For, as he writes, there is no quailing now,
Because the king is certainly possess'd
Of all our purposes. What say you to it?
Wor. Your father's sickness is a maim to us.
Hot. A perilous gash, a very limb lopp'd off.
And yet, in faith, it is not; his present want
Seems more than we shall find it. Were it good
To set the exact wealth of all our states
All at one cast? To set so rich a main
On the nice hazard of one doubtful hour?
It were not good; for therein should we read
The very bottom and the soul of hope,
The very list, the very utmost bound
Of all our fortunes.
Doug. 'Faith, and so we should;
Where now remains a sweet reversion,
We may boldly spend upon the hope of what
Is to come in.
A comfort of retirement lives in this.
Hot. A rendezvous, a home to fly unto,
If that the Devil and Mischance look big
Upon the maidenhead of our affairs.
Wor. But yet I would your father had been here.
The quality and hair of our attempt
Brooks no division. It will be thought

34. *dear:* critical. 36. *advertisement:* advice. 37. *conjunction:* allied forces. 40. *possess'd:* informed. 44. *want:* absence. 47. *main:* stake. 48. *nice:* critical, precarious. 51. *list:* limit (properly, the edge or selvage of cloth). 53. *Where:* whereas. *reversion:* prospect of future benefit. 56. *comfort . . . this:* this offers us the possibility of safe retreat. 59. *maidenhead:* maidenhood, start. 61. *hair:* quality, texture (a word used to describe cloth). 62. *Brooks:* permits.

By some that know not why he is away,
That wisdom, loyalty, and mere dislike
Of our proceedings kept the earl from hence;
And think how such an apprehension
May turn the tide of fearful faction
And breed a kind of question in our cause.
For well you know we of the offering side
Must keep aloof from strict arbitrement,
And stop all sight-holes, every loop from whence
The eye of reason may pry in upon us.
This absence of your father's draws a curtain,
That shows the ignorant a kind of fear
Before not dreamt of.
Hot. You strain too far.
I rather of his absence make this use:
It lends a lustre and more great opinion,
A larger dare to our great enterprise,
Than if the earl were here; for men must think,
If we without his help can make a head
To push against a kingdom, with his help
We shall o'erturn it topsy-turvy down.
Yet all goes well; yet all our joints are whole.
Doug. As heart can think. There is not such a word
Spoke of in Scotland as this term of fear.

Enter SIR RICHARD VERNON.

Hot. My cousin Vernon! Welcome, by my soul.
Ver. Pray God my news be worth a welcome, lord.
The Earl of Westmoreland, seven thousand strong,
Is marching hitherwards; with him Prince John.
Hot. No harm. What more?
Ver. And further, I have learn'd,
The king himself in person is set forth,
Or hitherwards intended speedily,
With strong and mighty preparation.

67. *fearful:* timid. 69. *offering:* attacking. 70. *arbitrement:* investigation. 71. *loop:* loophole. 77. *opinion:* reputation. 78. *dare:* daring. 80. *head:* armed force.

Hot. He shall be welcome too. Where is his son,
The nimble-footed, madcap Prince of Wales,
And his comrades, that daff'd the world aside,
And bid it pass?
Ver. All furnish'd, all in arms,
All plumed like estridges that with the wind
Baited, like eagles having lately bathed;
Glittering in golden coats, like images;
As full of spirit as the month of May,
And gorgeous as the sun at midsummer;
Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls.
I saw young Harry, with his beaver on,
His cuisses on his thighs, gallantly arm'd,
Rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury,
And vaulted with such ease into his seat,
As if an angel dropp'd down from the clouds,
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus
And witch the world with noble horsemanship.
Hot. No more, no more! Worse than the sun in March,
This praise doth nourish agues. Let them come!
They come like sacrifices in their trim,
And to the fire-eyed maid of smoky War
All hot and bleeding will we offer them.
The mailed Mars shall on his altar sit
Up to the ears in blood. I am on fire
To hear this rich reprisal is so nigh
And yet not ours. Come, let me taste my horse,
Who is to bear me like a thunderbolt
Against the bosom of the Prince of Wales.
Harry to Harry shall, hot horse to horse,
Meet and ne'er part till one drop down a corse.
O that Glendower were come!

96. *daff'd:* thrust. 98. *estridges:* goshawks. 99. *Baited:* beat the wings impatiently. 100. *images.* The reference is probably to the images of saints adorned with festival robes on holy days. 103. *Wanton:* playful. 104. *beaver:* helmet. 105. *cuisses:* thigh-armor. 109. *wind:* move in a circle. 113. *trim:* fine apparel. 114. *maid of smoky war:* Bellona. 118. *reprisal:* prize.

Ver. There is more news.
I learn'd in Worcester, as I rode along,
He cannot draw his power this fourteen days.
Doug. That's the worst tidings that I hear of yet.
Wor. Ay, by my faith, that bears a frosty sound.
Hot. What may the king's whole battle reach unto?
Ver. To thirty thousand.
Hot. Forty let it be!
My father and Glendower being both away,
The powers of us may serve so great a day.
Come, let us take a muster speedily.
Doomsday is near; die all, die merrily.
Doug. Talk not of dying; I am out of fear
Of death or death's hand for this one-half year. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A road near Coventry.*

Enter FALSTAFF *and* BARDOLPH.

Fal. Bardolph, get thee before to Coventry; fill me a bottle of sack. Our soldiers shall march through; we'll to Sutton Co'fi'l' tonight.

Bard. Will you give me money, captain?

Fal. Lay out, lay out.

Bard. This bottle makes an angel.

Fal. An if it do, take it for thy labour; and if it make twenty, take them all. I'll answer the coinage. Bid my lieutenant Peto meet me at town's end.

Bard. I will, captain; farewell. [*Exit.*

Fal. If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet. I have misused the king's press damnably. I have got, in

126. ***draw:*** mobilize. 129. ***battle:*** army.

[ii] 3. ***Sutton Co'fi'l':*** Sutton Coldfield (pronounced Colfil), a Warwickshire village northwest of Coventry. 5. ***Lay out:*** spend freely; I'll pay you later. 6. ***makes:*** amounts to. ***angel:*** coin bearing the figure of the archangel Michael. 12 ff. Shakespeare is here satirizing the military abuses of his own day. 13. ***soused gurnet:*** pickled fish. ***press:*** warrant for impressing recruits.

exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds. I press me none but good householders, yeomen's sons; inquire me out contracted bachelors, such as had been asked twice on the banns; such a commodity of warm slaves, as had as lieve hear the Devil as a drum; such as fear the report of a caliver worse than a struck fowl or a hurt wild-duck. I pressed me none but such toasts-and-butter, with hearts in their bellies no bigger than pins' heads, and they have bought out their services; and now my whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies, slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth, where the glutton's dogs licked his sores; and such as indeed were never soldiers, but discarded unjust serving-men, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters, and ostlers trade-fallen, the cankers of a calm world and a long peace, ten times more dishonourable ragged than an old faced ancient; and such have I, to fill up the rooms of them that have bought out their services, that you would think that I had a hundred and fifty tattered prodigals lately come from swine-keeping, from eating draff and husks. A mad fellow met me on the way and told me I had unloaded all the gibbets and pressed the dead bodies. No eye hath seen such scarecrows. I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat. Nay, and the villains march wide betwixt the legs, as if they had gyves on; for indeed I had the most of them out of prison. There's but a shirt and a half in all my company; and the half shirt is two napkins tacked together and thrown over the shoulders like a herald's coat without sleeves; and the shirt, to say the truth, stolen from my host at Saint Albans, or the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry. But that's all one; they'll find linen enough on every hedge. 52

17. *contracted:* engaged to be married. 18. *such . . . banns:* whose banns had been twice published, i.e., those who were to be married at once. 19. *commodity:* quantity. *warm:* comfortable. 21. *caliver:* light musket. 26. *ancients:* ensigns. 27. *Lazarus.* See Luke 16:19–21. 28. *painted cloth:* painted cloth for walls. 30. *unjust:* dishonest. 32. *trade-fallen:* out of work. *cankers:* worms. 34. *faced ancient:* patched ensign. 38. *draff:* refuse for swine; an allusion to the story of the Prodigal Son. 44. *gyves:* fetters.

Enter the PRINCE *and* WESTMORELAND.

Prince. How now, blown Jack? How now, quilt?

Fal. What, Hal? How now, mad wag? What a devil dost thou in Warwickshire? My good Lord of Westmoreland, I cry you mercy; I thought your honour had already been at Shrewsbury.

West. Faith, Sir John, 'tis more than time that I were there, and you too; but my powers are there already. The king, I can tell you, looks for us all. We must away all night.

Fal. Tut, never fear me. I am as vigilant as a cat to steal cream.

Prince. I think, to steal cream indeed, for thy theft hath already made thee butter. But tell me, Jack, whose fellows are these that come after?

Fal. Mine, Hal, mine.

Prince. I did never see such pitiful rascals.

Fal. Tut, tut; good enough to toss; food for powder, food for powder; they'll fill a pit as well as better. Tush, man, mortal men, mortal men.

West. Ay, but, Sir John, methinks they are exceeding poor and bare, too beggarly.

Fal. 'Faith, for their poverty, I know not where they had that; and for their bareness, I am sure they never learned that of me.

Prince. No, I'll be sworn; unless you call three fingers on the ribs bare. But, sirrah, make haste; Percy is already in the field. [*Exit.*

Fal. What, is the king encamped?

West. He is, Sir John. I fear we shall stay too long.

Fal. Well,

To the latter end of a fray and the beginning of a feast
Fits a dull fighter and a keen guest. [*Exeunt.*

53. *blown:* swollen.

SCENE III. *The rebel camp near Shrewsbury.*

Enter HOTSPUR, WORCESTER, DOUGLAS, *and* VERNON.

Hot. We'll fight with him tonight.
Wor. It may not be.
Doug. You give him then advantage.
Ver. Not a whit.
Hot. Why say you so? Looks he not for supply?
Ver. So do we.
Hot. His is certain, ours is doubtful.
Wor. Good cousin, be advised; stir not tonight.
Ver. Do not, my lord.
Doug. You do not counsel well;
You speak it out of fear and cold heart.
Ver. Do me no slander, Douglas. By my life,
And I dare well maintain it with my life,
If well-respected Honour bid me on,
I hold as little counsel with weak fear
As you, my lord, or any Scot that this day lives.
Let it be seen tomorrow in the battle
Which of us fears.
Doug. Yea, or tonight.
Ver. Content.
Hot. Tonight, say I.
Ver. Come, come, it may not be. I wonder much,
Being men of such great leading as you are,
That you foresee not what impediments
Drag back our expedition. Certain horse
Of my cousin Vernon's are not yet come up;
Your uncle Worcester's horse came but today;
And now their pride and mettle is asleep,
Their courage with hard labour tame and dull,
That not a horse is half the half of himself.

[iii] 2. *then:* i.e., if you delay. Douglas is addressing Worcester. 3. *supply:* reinforcements. 10. *well-respected:* well-considered. 12. Perhaps *my lord* or *this day* should, for metrical reasons, be omitted. 17. *leading:* generalship. 19. *expedition:* haste.

Hot. So are the horses of the enemy
In general, journey-bated and brought low.
The better part of ours are full of rest.
Wor. The number of the king exceedeth ours.
For God's sake, cousin, stay till all come in.
[*The trumpet sounds a parley.*

Enter Sir Walter Blunt.

Blunt. I come with gracious offers from the king,
If you vouchsafe me hearing and respect.
Hot. Welcome, Sir Walter Blunt; and would to God
You were of our determination!
Some of us love you well; and even those some
Envy your great deservings and good name,
Because you are not of our quality,
But stand against us like an enemy.
Blunt. And God defend but still I should stand so,
So long as out of limit and true rule
You stand against anointed majesty.
But to my charge. The king hath sent to know
The nature of your griefs, and whereupon
You conjure from the breast of civil peace
Such bold hostility, teaching his duteous land
Audacious cruelty. If that the king
Have any way your good deserts forgot,
Which he confesseth to be manifold,
He bids you name your griefs; and with all speed
You shall have your desires with interest
And pardon absolute for yourself and these
Herein misled by your suggestion.
Hot. The king is kind; and well we know the king
Knows at what time to promise, when to pay.
My father and my uncle and myself
Did give him that same royalty he wears;

26. *journey-bated:* weary from travel. 31. *respect:* attention. 36. *quality:* party. 38. *defend:* forbid. 42. *whereupon:* for what reason. 51. *suggestion:* urging to evil.

And when he was not six and twenty strong,
Sick in the world's regard, wretched and low,
A poor unminded outlaw sneaking home,
My father gave him welcome to the shore;
And when he heard him swear and vow to God
He came but to be Duke of Lancaster,
To sue his livery and beg his peace,
With tears of innocency and terms of zeal,
My father, in kind heart and pity moved,
Swore him assistance and perform'd it too.
Now when the lords and barons of the realm
Perceived Northumberland did lean to him,
The more and less came in with cap and knee;
Met him in boroughs, cities, villages,
Attended him on bridges, stood in lanes,
Laid gifts before him, proffer'd him their oaths,
Gave him their heirs as pages, follow'd him
Even at the heels in golden multitudes.
He presently, as greatness knows itself,
Steps me a little higher than his vow
Made to my father, while his blood was poor,
Upon the naked shore at Ravenspurgh;
And now, forsooth, takes on him to reform
Some certain edicts and some strait decrees
That lie too heavy on the commonwealth,
Cries out upon abuses, seems to weep
Over his country's wrongs; and by this face,
This seeming brow of justice, did he win
The hearts of all that he did angle for;
Proceeded further; cut me off the heads
Of all the favourites that the absent king
In deputation left behind him here,
When he was personal in the Irish war.

Blunt. Tut, I came not to hear this.

62. ***sue his livery:*** seek the legal delivery of inherited estates. 68. ***more and less:*** i.e., all classes. 70. ***Attended:*** awaited. 79. ***strait:*** strict. 88. ***personal:*** in person.

Hot. Then to the point.
In short time after, he deposed the king;
Soon after that, deprived him of his life;
And in the neck of that, task'd the whole state;
To make that worse, suffer'd his kinsman March,
Who is, if every owner were well placed,
Indeed his king, to be engaged in Wales,
There without ransom to lie forfeited;
Disgraced me in my happy victories;
Sought to entrap me by intelligence;
Rated mine uncle from the council-board;
In rage dismiss'd my father from the court;
Broke oath on oath; committed wrong on wrong;
And in conclusion drove us to seek out
This head of safety, and withal to pry
Into his title, the which we find
Too indirect for long continuance.
Blunt. Shall I return this answer to the king?
Hot. Not so, Sir Walter; we'll withdraw awhile.
Go to the king; and let there be impawn'd
Some surety for a safe return again,
And in the morning early shall my uncle
Bring him our purposes; and so farewell.
Blunt. I would you would accept of grace and love.
Hot. And may be so we shall.
Blunt. Pray God you do. [*Exeunt.*

Scene iv. *York. The* Archbishop's *palace.*

Enter the Archbishop of York *and* Sir Michael.

Arch. Hie, good Sir Michael; bear this sealed brief
With winged haste to the Lord Marshal,

92. ***in the neck of:*** in addition to. ***task'd:*** taxed. 93. ***his kinsman March.*** Not the Earl of March, but Sir Edmund Mortimer. 95. ***engaged:*** held captive. 98. ***intelligence:*** secret information. 99. ***Rated:*** berated. 103. ***head of safety:*** armed force to insure safety. 105. ***indirect:*** irregular.

[iv] 1. ***brief:*** letter.

This to my cousin Scroop, and all the rest
To whom they are directed. If you knew
How much they do import, you would make haste.
Sir M. My good lord,
I guess their tenour.
Arch. Like enough you do.
Tomorrow, good Sir Michael, is a day
Wherein the fortune of ten thousand men
Must bide the touch; for, sir, at Shrewsbury,
As I am truly given to understand,
The king with mighty and quick-raised power
Meets with Lord Harry; and, I fear, Sir Michael,
What with the sickness of Northumberland,
Whose power was in the first proportion,
And what with Owen Glendower's absence thence,
Who with them was a rated sinew too
And comes not in, o'er-ruled by prophecies,
I fear the power of Percy is too weak
To wage an instant trial with the king.
Sir M. Why, my good lord, you need not fear;
There is Douglas and Lord Mortimer.
Arch. No, Mortimer is not there.
Sir M. But there is Mordake, Vernon, Lord Harry Percy;
And there is my Lord of Worcester and a head
Of gallant warriors, noble gentlemen.
Arch. And so there is; but yet the king hath drawn
The special head of all the land together:
The Prince of Wales, Lord John of Lancaster,
The noble Westmoreland, and warlike Blunt,
And many moe corrivals and dear men
Of estimation and command in arms.
Sir M. Doubt not, my lord, they shall be well opposed.
Arch. I hope no less; yet needful 'tis to fear.

10. ***bide the touch:*** stand the test. The touchstone determined the quality of gold. 15. ***proportion:*** magnitude. 17. ***rated sinew:*** support counted upon. 25. ***head:*** band. 31. ***moe corrivals:*** more comrades. ***dear:*** worthy. 32. ***estimation:*** reputation.

And, to prevent the worst, Sir Michael, speed;
For if Lord Percy thrive not, ere the king
Dismiss his power, he means to visit us,
For he hath heard of our confederacy,
And 'tis but wisdom to make strong against him.
Therefore make haste. I must go write again
To other friends; and so farewell, Sir Michael. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I. *The* KING'S *camp near Shrewsbury.*

Enter the KING, PRINCE OF WALES, LORD JOHN OF LANCASTER, SIR WALTER BLUNT, *and* FALSTAFF.

King. How bloodily the sun begins to peer
Above yon busky hill! The day looks pale
At his distemperature.
Prince. The southern wind
Doth play the trumpet to his purposes,
And by his hollow whistling in the leaves
Foretells a tempest and a blustering day.
King. Then with the losers let it sympathize,
For nothing can seem foul to those that win.
[*The trumpet sounds.*

Enter WORCESTER *and* VERNON.

How now, my Lord of Worcester! 'Tis not well
That you and I should meet upon such terms
As now we meet. You have deceived our trust,
And made us doff our easy robes of peace,
To crush our old limbs in ungentle steel.
This is not well, my lord, this is not well.
What say you to it? Will you again unknit
This churlish knot of all-abhorred war,

[V. i] 2. ***busky:*** bosky, wooded. 3. ***distemperature:*** illness. 13. ***old limbs.*** The king was actually thirty-seven years old.

And move in that obedient orb again
Where you did give a fair and natural light,
And be no more an exhaled meteor,
A prodigy of fear, and a portent
Of broached mischief to the unborn times?
Wor. Hear me, my liege.
For mine own part, I could be well content
To entertain the lag-end of my life
With quiet hours, for I do protest
I have not sought the day of this dislike.
King. You have not sought it? How comes it, then?
Fal. Rebellion lay in his way, and he found it.
Prince. Peace, chewet, peace!
Wor. It pleased your Majesty to turn your looks
Of favour from myself and all our house;
And yet I must remember you, my lord,
We were the first and dearest of your friends.
For you my staff of office did I break
In Richard's time; and posted day and night
To meet you on the way, and kiss your hand,
When yet you were in place and in account
Nothing so strong and fortunate as I.
It was myself, my brother, and his son,
That brought you home and boldly did outdare
The dangers of the time. You swore to us,
And you did swear that oath at Doncaster,
That you did nothing purpose 'gainst the state,
Nor claim no further than your new-fall'n right,
The seat of Gaunt, dukedom of Lancaster.
To this we swore our aid. But in short space
It rain'd down fortune showering on your head;
And such a flood of greatness fell on you,
What with our help, what with the absent king,
What with the injuries of a wanton time,

17. *obedient orb:* orbit of obedience. 21. *broached:* begun. 29. *chewet:* chatterer (literally, chough or jackdaw). 32. *remember:* remind. 33 ff. See *Richard II*, II, ii, 58–61. 50. *wanton:* frivolous.

The seeming sufferances that you had borne,
And the contrarious winds that held the king
So long in his unlucky Irish wars
That all in England did repute him dead;
And from this swarm of fair advantages
You took occasion to be quickly woo'd
To gripe the general sway into your hand;
Forgot your oath to us at Doncaster;
And being fed by us you used us so
As that ungentle gull, the cuckoo's bird,
Useth the sparrow; did oppress our nest;
Grew by our feeding to so great a bulk
That even our love durst not come near your sight
For fear of swallowing; but with nimble wing
We were enforced, for safety sake, to fly
Out of your sight and raise this present head;
Whereby we stand opposed by such means
As you yourself have forged against yourself
By unkind usage, dangerous countenance,
And violation of all faith and troth
Sworn to us in your younger enterprise.

King. These things indeed you have articulate,
Proclaim'd at market-crosses, read in churches,
To face the garment of rebellion
With some fine colour that may please the eye
Of fickle changelings and poor discontents,
Which gape and rub the elbow at the news
Of hurlyburly innovation.
And never yet did insurrection want
Such water-colours to impaint his cause,
Nor moody beggars, starving for a time
Of pellmell havoc and confusion.

51. *sufferances:* sufferings. 57. *gripe:* grasp. 60. *gull:* unfledged bird. 66. *head:* power. 69. *dangerous:* threatening. 72. *articulate:* specified, set forth in articles. 74. *face:* trim, patch. 75. *colour:* pretext, excuse. 76. *changelings:* turncoats. 78. *innovation:* insurrection.

Prince. In both your armies there is many a soul
Shall pay full dearly for this encounter,
If once they join in trial. Tell your nephew
The Prince of Wales doth join with all the world
In praise of Henry Percy. By my hopes,
This present enterprise set off his head,
I do not think a braver gentleman,
More active-valiant or more valiant-young,
More daring or more bold, is now alive
To grace this latter age with noble deeds.
For my part, I may speak it to my shame,
I have a truant been to chivalry;
And so I hear he doth account me too;
Yet this before my father's majesty—
I am content that he shall take the odds
Of his great name and estimation,
And will, to save the blood on either side,
Try fortune with him in a single fight.

King. And, Prince of Wales, so dare we venture thee,
Albeit considerations infinite
Do make against it. No, good Worcester, no,
We love our people well; even those we love
That are misled upon your cousin's part;
And, will they take the offer of our grace,
Both he and they and you, yea, every man
Shall be my friend again and I'll be his.
So tell your cousin, and bring me word
What he will do. But if he will not yield,
Rebuke and dread Correction wait on us,
And they shall do their office. So, be gone;
We will not now be troubled with reply.
We offer fair; take it advisedly.

[*Exeunt Worcester and Vernon.*

Prince. It will not be accepted, on my life.
The Douglas and the Hotspur both together
Are confident against the world in arms.

88. *set off his head:* not laid to his charge.

King. Hence, therefore, every leader to his charge,
For, on their answer, will we set on them;
And God befriend us, as our cause is just!

[*Exeunt all but the Prince of Wales and Falstaff.*

Fal. Hal, if thou see me down in the battle and bestride me, so! 'Tis a point of friendship.

Prince. Nothing but a colossus can do thee that friendship. Say thy prayers, and farewell.

Fal. I would 'twere bed-time, Hal, and all well.

Prince. Why, thou owest God a death. [*Exit.*

Fal. 'Tis not due yet; I would be loath to pay him before his day. What need I be so forward with him that calls not on me? Well, 'tis no matter; honour pricks me on. Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I come on? How then? Can honour set to a leg? No. Or an arm? No. Or take away the grief of a wound? No. Honour hath no skill in surgery, then? No. What is honour? A word. What is in that word honour? What is that honour? Air. A trim reckoning! Who hath it? He that died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No. 'Tis insensible, then? Yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living? No. Why? Detraction will not suffer it. Therefore I'll none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon, and so ends my catechism. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *The rebel camp near Shrewsbury.*

Enter WORCESTER *and* VERNON.

Wor. O, no, my nephew must not know, Sir Richard,
The liberal and kind offer of the king.

Ver. 'Twere best he did.

Wor. Then are we all undone.
It is not possible, it cannot be,
The king should keep his word in loving us.
He will suspect us still and find a time
To punish this offense in other faults.

122. *so:* good! 131. *pricks me on:* spurs me on. 132. *prick me off:* mark me off as dead. 143. *scutcheon:* shield with armorial bearings.

Supposition all our lives shall be stuck full of eyes;
For treason is but trusted like the fox,
Who, ne'er so tame, so cherish'd and lock'd up,
Will have a wild trick of his ancestors.
Look how we can, or sad or merrily,
Interpretation will misquote our looks,
And we shall feed like oxen at a stall,
The better cherish'd, still the nearer death.
My nephew's trespass may be well forgot;
It hath the excuse of youth and heat of blood,
And an adopted name of privilege,
A hare-brain'd Hotspur, govern'd by a spleen.
All his offenses live upon my head
And on his father's. We did train him on,
And, his corruption being ta'en from us,
We, as the spring of all, shall pay for all.
Therefore, good cousin, let not Harry know,
In any case, the offer of the king.

Ver. Deliver what you will; I'll say 'tis so.
Here comes your cousin.

Enter HOTSPUR *and* DOUGLAS.

Hot. My uncle is return'd.
Deliver up my Lord of Westmoreland.
Uncle, what news?

Wor. The king will bid you battle presently.

Doug. Defy him by the Lord of Westmoreland.

Hot. Lord Douglas, go you and tell him so.

Doug. Marry, and shall, and very willingly. [*Exit*

Wor. There is no seeming mercy in the king.

Hot. Did you beg any? God forbid!

Wor. I told him gently of our grievances,
Of his oath-breaking; which he mended thus,
By now forswearing that he is forsworn.

[ii] 8. *Supposition:* suspicion. The allusion is to Argus and his hundred eyes. 18. *And . . . privilege:* i.e., his nickname will excuse his rashness. 31. *bid:* offer.

He calls us rebels, traitors; and will scourge
With haughty arms this hateful name in us.

Re-enter DOUGLAS.

Doug. Arm, gentlemen; to arms! for I have thrown
A brave defiance in King Henry's teeth,
And Westmoreland, that was engaged, did bear it;
Which cannot choose but bring him quickly on.

Wor. The Prince of Wales stepp'd forth before the king,
And, nephew, challenged you to single fight.

Hot. O, would the quarrel lay upon our heads,
And that no man might draw short breath today
But I and Harry Monmouth! Tell me, tell me,
How show'd his tasking? Seem'd it in contempt?

Ver. No, by my soul; I never in my life
Did hear a challenge urged more modestly,
Unless a brother should a brother dare
To gentle exercise and proof of arms.
He gave you all the duties of a man,
Trimm'd up your praises with a princely tongue,
Spoke your deservings like a chronicle,
Making you ever better than his praise
By still dispraising praise valued with you;
And, which became him like a prince indeed,
He made a blushing cital of himself,
And chid his truant youth with such a grace
As if he master'd there a double spirit
Of teaching and of learning instantly.
There did he pause; but let me tell the world,
If he outlive the envy of this day,
England did never owe so sweet a hope,
So much misconstrued in his wantonness.

Hot. Cousin, I think thou art enamoured

44. *engaged:* held as a hostage. 50. *Harry Monmouth.* Prince Hal was born at Monmouth. 51. *tasking:* challenge. 53. *modestly:* moderately. 56. *duties:* respect. 60. *valued:* compared. 62. *cital:* mention. 68. *owe:* possess. 69. *wantonness:* sportiveness.

On his follies. Never did I hear
Of any prince so wild a libertine.
But be he as he will, yet once ere night
I will embrace him with a soldier's arm,
That he shall shrink under my courtesy.
Arm, arm with speed! And, fellows, soldiers, friends,
Better consider what you have to do
Than I, that have not well the gift of tongue,
Can lift your blood up with persuasion.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, here are letters for you.
Hot. I cannot read them now.
O gentlemen, the time of life is short!
To spend that shortness basely were too long,
If life did ride upon a dial's point,
Still ending at the arrival of an hour.
An if we live, we live to tread on kings;
If die, brave death, when princes die with us!
Now, for our consciences, the arms are fair,
When the intent of bearing them is just.

Enter another Messenger.

Mess. My lord, prepare; the king comes on apace.
Hot. I thank him, that he cuts me from my tale,
For I profess not talking; only this—
Let each man do his best; and here draw I
A sword whose temper I intend to stain
With the best blood that I can meet withal
In the adventure of this perilous day.
Now, *Esperance!* Percy! and set on.
Sound all the lofty instruments of war,
And by that music let us all embrace;
For, heaven to earth, some of us never shall
A second time do such a courtesy.

[*The trumpets sound. They embrace and exeunt.*

84. ***dial's point:*** hand of a clock. 92. ***profess:*** claim to have skill in. 97. ***Esperance.*** See II, iii, 74.

SCENE III. *Plain between the camps.*

The KING *enters with his power. Alarum to the battle. Then enter* DOUGLAS *and* SIR WALTER BLUNT.

Blunt. What is thy name, that in the battle thus
Thou crossest me? What honour dost thou seek
Upon my head?

Doug. Know then, my name is Douglas;
And I do haunt thee in the battle thus
Because some tell me that thou art a king.

Blunt. They tell thee true.

Doug. The Lord of Stafford dear today hath bought
Thy likeness, for instead of thee, King Harry,
This sword hath ended him. So shall it thee,
Unless thou yield thee as my prisoner.

Blunt. I was not born a yielder, thou proud Scot;
And thou shalt find a king that will revenge
Lord Stafford's death. [*They fight. Douglas kills Blunt.*

Enter HOTSPUR.

Hot. O Douglas, hadst thou fought at Holmedon thus,
I never had triumph'd upon a Scot.

Doug. All's done, all's won; here breathless lies the king.

Hot. Where?

Doug. Here.

Hot. This, Douglas? No. I know this face full well.
A gallant knight he was; his name was Blunt;
Semblably furnish'd like the king himself.

Doug. A fool go with thy soul, whither it goes!
A borrow'd title hast thou bought too dear.
Why didst thou tell me that thou wert a king?

Hot. The king hath many marching in his coats.

Doug. Now, by my sword, I will kill all his coats;
I'll murder all his wardrobe, piece by piece,
Until I meet the king.

Hot. Up, and away!
Our soldiers stand full fairly for the day. [*Exeunt.*

[iii] 21. *Semblably furnish'd:* similarly equipped.

Alarum. Enter FALSTAFF, *alone.*

Fal. Though I could 'scape shot-free at London, I fear the shot here; here's no scoring but upon the pate. Soft! Who are you? Sir Walter Blunt. There's honour for you! Here's no vanity! I am as hot as molten lead, and as heavy too. God keep lead out of me! I need no more weight than mine own bowels. I have led my ragamuffins where they are peppered. There's not three of my hundred and fifty left alive; and they are for the town's end, to beg during life. But who comes here? 40

Enter the PRINCE.

Prince. What, stand'st thou idle here? Lend me thy sword.
Many a nobleman lies stark and stiff
Under the hoofs of vaunting enemies,
Whose deaths are yet unrevenged. I prithee, lend me thy sword.

Fal. O Hal, I prithee, give me leave to breathe awhile. Turk Gregory never did such deeds in arms as I have done this day. I have paid Percy; I have made him sure.

Prince. He is, indeed; and living to kill thee. I prithee, lend me thy sword. 50

Fal. Nay, before God, Hal, if Percy be alive, thou get'st not my sword; but take my pistol, if thou wilt.

Prince. Give it me. What, is it in the case?

Fal. Ay, Hal; 'tis hot, 'tis hot. There's that will sack a city.

[*The Prince draws it out, and finds it to be a bottle of sack.*

Prince. What, is it a time to jest and dally now? 57

[*He throws the bottle at him. Exit.*

Fal. Well, if Percy be alive, I'll pierce him. If he do come in my way, so; if he do not, if I come in his willingly, let him make a carbonado of me. I like not such grinning honour as Sir Walter hath. Give me life; which if I can save, so; if not, honour comes unlooked for, and there's an end. [*Exit.* 65

30. *shot-free:* without paying the shot or score. 31. *scoring:* (a) marking up the bill, (b) slashing. 39. *they . . . life.* The crippled old soldier, begging at the town end, was a common sight in Shakespeare's England. 46. *Turk Gregory.* Pope Gregory VII was famous for military exploits. *Turk* has perhaps only the significance of *fierce* or *raging.* 61. *carbonado:* meat scored for broiling.

SCENE IV. *Another part of the field.*

Alarum. Excursions. Enter the KING, *the* PRINCE, LORD JOHN OF LANCASTER, *and* EARL OF WESTMORELAND.

King. I prithee,
Harry, withdraw thyself; thou bleed'st too much.
Lord John of Lancaster, go you with him.
Lan. Not I, my lord, unless I did bleed too.
Prince. I beseech your Majesty, make up,
Lest your retirement do amaze your friends.
King. I will do so.
My Lord of Westmoreland, lead him to his tent.
West. Come, my lord, I'll lead you to your tent.
Prince. Lead me, my lord? I do not need your help;
And God forbid a shallow scratch should drive
The Prince of Wales from such a field as this,
Where stain'd nobility lies trodden on,
And rebels' arms triumph in massacres!
Lan. We breathe too long. Come, cousin Westmoreland,
Our duty this way lies; for God's sake, come.
[*Exeunt Prince John and Westmoreland.*
Prince. By God, thou hast deceived me, Lancaster;
I did not think thee lord of such a spirit.
Before, I loved thee as a brother, John;
But now, I do respect thee as my soul.
King. I saw him hold Lord Percy at the point
With lustier maintenance than I did look for
Of such an ungrown warrior.
Prince. O, this boy
Lends mettle to us all! [*Exit.*

Enter DOUGLAS.

Doug. Another king! They grow like Hydra's heads.
I am the Douglas, fatal to all those

[iv] 5. ***make up:*** advance. 6. ***amaze:*** bewilder, alarm. 15. ***breathe:*** rest. 22. ***lustier maintenance:*** braver bearing. 25. ***Hydra's heads.*** The Hydra's heads grew as fast as they were cut off.

That wear those colours on them. What art thou,
That counterfeit'st the person of a king?
King. The king himself; who, Douglas, grieves at heart
So many of his shadows thou hast met
And not the very king. I have two boys
Seek Percy and thyself about the field;
But, seeing thou fall'st on me so luckily,
I will assay thee; so, defend thyself.
Doug. I fear thou art another counterfeit;
And yet, in faith, thou bear'st thee like a king.
But mine I am sure thou art, whoe'er thou be,
And thus I win thee.
[*They fight; the King being in danger, re-enter Prince of Wales.*
Prince. Hold up thy head, vile Scot, or thou art like
Never to hold it up again! The spirits
Of valiant Shirley, Stafford, Blunt, are in my arms.
It is the Prince of Wales that threatens thee,
Who never promiseth but he means to pay.
[*They fight; Douglas flies.*
Cheerly, my lord, how fares your Grace?
Sir Nicholas Gawsey hath for succour sent,
And so hath Clifton. I'll to Clifton straight.
King. Stay, and breathe awhile.
Thou hast redeem'd thy lost opinion,
And show'd thou makest some tender of my life,
In this fair rescue thou hast brought to me.
Prince. O God! They did me too much injury
That ever said I hearken'd for your death.
If it were so, I might have let alone
The insulting hand of Douglas over you,
Which would have been as speedy in your end
As all the poisonous potions in the world
And saved the treacherous labour of your son.
King. Make up to Clifton. I'll to Sir Nicholas Gawsey. [*Exit.*

31. ***the very king:*** the king himself. 34. *assay:* challenge to fight. 49. ***makest some tender of:*** hast some regard for. 52. ***hearken'd:*** waited eagerly for.

Enter HOTSPUR.

Hot. If I mistake not, thou art Harry Monmouth.
Prince. Thou speak'st as if I would deny my name.
Hot. My name is Harry Percy.
Prince. Why, then I see
A very valiant rebel of the name.
I am the Prince of Wales; and think not, Percy,
To share with me in glory any more.
Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere;
Nor can one England brook a double reign,
Of Harry Percy and the Prince of Wales.
Hot. Nor shall it, Harry; for the hour is come
To end the one of us; and would to God
Thy name in arms were now as great as mine!
Prince. I'll make it greater ere I part from thee;
And all the budding honours on thy crest
I'll crop, to make a garland for my head.
Hot. I can no longer brook thy vanities. [*They fight.*

Enter FALSTAFF.

Fal. Well said, Hal! To it, Hal! Nay, you shall find no boy's play here, I can tell you.

Re-enter DOUGLAS; *he fights with* FALSTAFF, *who falls down as if he were dead, and exit* DOUGLAS. HOTSPUR *is wounded, and falls.*

Hot. O, Harry, thou hast robb'd me of my youth!
I better brook the loss of brittle life
Than those proud titles thou hast won of me.
They wound my thoughts worse than thy sword my flesh.
But thought's the slave of life, and life Time's fool;
And Time, that takes survey of all the world,
Must have a stop. O, I could prophesy,
But that the earthy and cold hand of Death

65. *Two . . . sphere.* According to the Ptolemaic astronomy, each sphere that revolved about the earth held only one planet. 66. *brook:* endure, tolerate.

Lies on my tongue. No, Percy, thou art dust,
And food for— [*Dies.*

Prince. For worms, brave Percy. Fare thee well, great heart!
Ill-weaved ambition, how much art thou shrunk!
When that this body did contain a spirit,
A kingdom for it was too small a bound;
But now two paces of the vilest earth
Is room enough. This earth that bears thee dead
Bears not alive so stout a gentleman.
If thou wert sensible of courtesy,
I should not make so dear a show of zeal;
But let my favours hide thy mangled face;
And, even in thy behalf, I'll thank myself
For doing these fair rites of tenderness.
Adieu, and take thy praise with thee to heaven!
Thy ignominy sleep with thee in the grave,
But not remember'd in thy epitaph!
[*He sees Falstaff on the ground.*
What, old acquaintance! Could not all this flesh
Keep in a little life? Poor Jack, farewell!
I could have better spared a better man.
O, I should have a heavy miss of thee,
If I were much in love with vanity!
Death hath not struck so fat a deer today,
Though many dearer, in this bloody fray.
Embowell'd will I see thee by and by;
Till then in blood by noble Percy lie. [*Exit.*

Fal. [*Rising up*] Embowelled? If thou embowel me today, I'll give you leave to powder me and eat me too tomorrow. 'Sblood, 'twas time to counterfeit, or that hot termagant Scot had paid me scot and lot too. Counterfeit? I lie, I am no counterfeit. To die is to be a counterfeit, for he is but the counterfeit of

90. *bound:* enclosure. 93. *stout:* brave. 94. *sensible of:* able to perceive. 95. *dear:* heartfelt. 96. *favours:* scarves or gloves worn in the helmet. 109. *Embowell'd:* disembowelled for burial. 112. *powder:* salt. 114. *termagant:* imaginary Mohammedan deity, represented in morality plays as violent. 115. *scot and lot:* a tax levied on all subjects; here, completely.

a man who hath not the life of a man; but to counterfeit dying, when a man thereby liveth, is to be no counterfeit, but the true and perfect image of life indeed. The better part of valour is discretion; in the which better part I have saved my life. 'Zounds, I am afraid of this gunpowder Percy, though he be dead. How, if he should counterfeit too and rise? By my faith, I am afraid he would prove the better counterfeit. Therefore I'll make him sure; yea, and I'll swear I killed him. Why may not he rise as well as I? Nothing confutes me but eyes, and nobody sees me. Therefore, sirrah [*Stabbing him.*], with a new wound in your thigh, come you along with me.

[*Takes up Hotspur on his back.*

Re-enter the PRINCE OF WALES *and* LORD JOHN OF LANCASTER.

Prince. Come, brother John; full bravely hast thou flesh'd
Thy maiden sword.

Lan. But, soft! Whom have we here?
Did you not tell me this fat man was dead?

Prince. I did; I saw him dead,
Breathless and bleeding on the ground. Art thou alive?
Or is it fantasy that plays upon our eyesight?
I prithee, speak; we will not trust our eyes
Without our ears. Thou art not what thou seem'st.

Fal. No, that's certain; I am not a double man. But if I be not Jack Falstaff, then am I a Jack. There is Percy. [*Throwing down the body.*] If your father will do me any honour, so; if not, let him kill the next Percy himself. I look to be either earl or duke, I can assure you.

Prince. Why, Percy I killed myself and saw thee dead.

Fal. Didst thou? Lord, Lord, how this world is given to lying! I grant you I was down and out of breath; and so was he; but we rose both at an instant and fought a long hour by Shrewsbury clock. If I may be believed, so; if not, let them that should reward valour bear the sin upon their own heads.

138. *fantasy:* delusion. 141. *I am not a double man.* He is carrying Hotspur on his back.

I'll take it upon my death, I gave him this wound in the thigh. If the man were alive and would deny it, 'zounds, I would make him eat a piece of my sword.

Lan. This is the strangest tale that ever I heard.

Prince. This is the strangest fellow, brother John.
Come, bring your luggage nobly on your back.
For my part, if a lie may do thee grace,
I'll gild it with the happiest terms I have. [*A retreat is sounded.*
The trumpet sounds retreat; the day is ours.
Come, brother, let us to the highest of the field,
To see what friends are living, who are dead.
[*Exeunt Prince of Wales and Lancaster.*

Fal. I'll follow, as they say, for reward. He that rewards me, God reward him! If I do grow great, I'll grow less; for I'll purge, and leave sack, and live cleanly as a nobleman should do.
[*Exit, bearing off the body.*

SCENE V. *Another part of the field.*

The trumpets sound. Enter the KING, PRINCE OF WALES, LORD JOHN OF LANCASTER, EARL OF WESTMORELAND, *with* WORCESTER *and* VERNON *prisoners.*

King. Thus ever did rebellion find rebuke.
Ill-spirited Worcester, did not we send grace,
Pardon, and terms of love to all of you?
And wouldst thou turn our offers contrary?
Misuse the tenour of thy kinsman's trust?
Three knights upon our party slain today,
A noble earl, and many a creature else
Had been alive this hour,
If like a Christian thou hadst truly borne
Betwixt our armies true intelligence.

Wor. What I have done my safety urged me to;
And I embrace this fortune patiently,
Since not to be avoided it falls on me.

[v] 4. *turn . . . contrary:* misrepresent. 5. *tenour:* substance, meaning. 10. *intelligence:* communication.

King. Bear Worcester to the death and Vernon too;
Other offenders we will pause upon.
[*Exeunt Worcester and Vernon, guarded.*
How goes the field?

Prince. The noble Scot, Lord Douglas, when he saw
The fortune of the day quite turn'd from him,
The noble Percy slain, and all his men
Upon the foot of fear, fled with the rest;
And falling from a hill, he was so bruised
That the pursuers took him. At my tent
The Douglas is; and I beseech your Grace
I may dispose of him.

King. With all my heart.

Prince. Then, brother John of Lancaster, to you
This honourable bounty shall belong.
Go to the Douglas, and deliver him
Up to his pleasure, ransomless and free.
His valour shown upon our crests today
Hath taught us how to cherish such high deeds
Even in the bosom of our adversaries.

Lan. I thank your Grace for this high courtesy,
Which I shall give away immediately.

King. Then this remains, that we divide our power.
You, son John, and my cousin Westmoreland
Towards York shall bend you with your dearest speed,
To meet Northumberland and the prelate Scroop,
Who, as we hear, are busily in arms.
Myself and you, son Harry, will towards Wales,
To fight with Glendower and the Earl of March.
Rebellion in this land shall lose his sway,
Meeting the check of such another day;
And since this business so fair is done,
Let us not leave till all our own be won. [*Exeunt.*

20. *Upon . . . fear:* flying in fear. 36. *dearest:* best.

Much Ado about Nothing

Introduction

Dramatic Type

In many respects, *Much Ado about Nothing* is the most thoroughly Elizabethan of all of Shakespeare's comedies. Universal as it is in many ways, the spirit which permeates it is that specifically of the Renaissance. The "May of youth and bloom of lustihood" with which Leonato reproaches Claudio is shot clear through it and belongs to days more spacious than those we know. The melodramatic combination of romantic love and deep-dyed villainy in the plot, which, if conceived in another mood, would have led to tragedy, is not a modern combination. The touch of the bizarre in Claudio's wooing by proxy and in consenting to wed a veiled bride is also of other days. So is the rarefied cultivated society in which the ladies hold their own with the men, but capitulate to them in the end. So likewise is the humor, the "college of wit-crackers," the verbal fencing, the "quick answers," and the broad jesting. All of the ladies and gentlemen of this play speak by the book, and others than Beatrice have read *A Hundred Merry Tales* and a great deal besides. Quaint classical and medieval lore has been their portion, and they are all skilled to "labor in sad invention." They talk familiarly about Hercules and Philemon, Leander and Prester John, the infernal Ate and the Great Cham, and they turn naturally to verse to express the perplexities of their falling in love. Halting sonnets of their own pure brains convict both Benedick and Beatrice in the end to matrimony, and even Claudio is something of a poet. Part of his penance for killing a sweet and innocent lady, it has been remarked, is that he compose an epitaph for her tomb and "sing it to her bones." These are not the conditions or the codes of a world that seems

very real to us, but it seemed more so to Shakespeare's day and provided a suitable background for a brilliant drama of manners and high comedy.

There is ample contemporary testimony that the play was among the most popular of Shakespeare's comedies. It was apparently performed several times at court; and at the public theatres, says Leonard Digges in some commendatory verses prefixed to Shakespeare's *Poems* (1640),

> Let but Beatrice
> And Benedick be seen, lo, in a trice
> The cockpit, galleries, boxes, all are full.

Source

As his principal source for *Much Ado about Nothing* Shakespeare selected the story of Don Timbreo and Fenecia, No. 22 in Matteo Bandello's *Novelle* (1554), which had not been translated into English in his time, but which had appeared in a free paraphrase, in French, in Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques* (1582). Of the French version Shakespeare seems to have made no use, and how he became acquainted with the story is not known. Perhaps he simply read the original. Some scholars, however, surmise an earlier play which Shakespeare merely revised. The theme was an old one, and a version of it in Canto V of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (translated by Sir John Harington in 1591 but used by Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* the year before) seems to have supplied at least one episode, which will be noted below. It has also been suggested that the wit-combats of Shakespeare's Benedick and Beatrice, who do not appear in any of the other versions, may have been inspired by those of two similar characters in Castiglione's *The Courtier*, translated by Sir Thomas Hoby in 1561. But their kind of humor Shakespeare had found attractive before in a court play, *Love's Labor's Lost*, and Benedick and Beatrice, like Biron and Rosaline, are usually thought of as original sketches from Elizabethan court life. The

similarity of *Much Ado* to Bandello's novel, however, leaves no doubt that it was Shakespeare's main source.

Bandello's tale is a tear-soaked version of an old theme meant to appeal chiefly to sentiment and pathos. Don Timbreo di Cardona, enamored of Fenecia, daughter of Leonato, a gentleman of Messina, seeks her hand in marriage, and a betrothal is arranged. Signior Girondo, a friend of Timbreo's, has secretly loved the girl a long time, and, disappointed at the betrothal, resolves to break it off. Accordingly, he "proves" to Timbreo that Fenecia is unfaithful, by bribing a servant to enter her window by a ladder at night, and arranging for Timbreo to witness the visit. Timbreo sends a letter to Leonato repudiating his daughter; Fenecia swoons and appears to be dead; and her funeral is conducted, while her father sends the girl into the country, and hopes that the mystery will be cleared up. Signior Girondo, hearing of Fenecia's death, is smitten with remorse, confesses to Don Timbreo, and goes with him to reveal the truth to Leonato. Both are forgiven, on condition that Don Timbreo marry only the bride whom Leonato shall pick for him. About a year later, he introduces Timbreo to Fenecia, whose stay in the country has so improved her beauty that he does not recognize her, and a wedding is celebrated. After the ceremony, Leonato reveals all, and rewards Girondo with an equally beautiful sister of Fenecia.

Modification of the Material

The framework of this sorry tale Shakespeare freely adapted as the main plot of a play noted for its high comedy, the brilliance of its wit, and its bold contrasts in character. To make it serviceable many important modifications were necessary, which reveal the sure hand of the dramatist and structural art of a high kind.

(1) Shakespeare drops the bloody details of the Sicilian Vespers (1282) which Bandello had made the background of his story. For this massacre which established the House of

Aragon on the throne of Sicily, he substitutes the enmity between Don Pedro and his baseborn brother Don John. As the drama opens, this rift has just been outwardly healed by a bloodless victory over the latter in which Claudio, the hero, has had the major share. Thus, at a stroke, Shakespeare supplies an enveloping action for his play, devises a means of drawing his lovers together, creates a new villain to replace the disappointed suitor, and supplies him with a double motive and an opportunity for mischief. The betrothal is arranged and the conspiracy hatched at a great celebration of Pedro's victory—at which the vanquished brother is an invited guest.

(2) Bandello's Girondo, described as "exceeding doughty in his person in the late wars" and "one of the most magnificent and liberal gentlemen of the court," furnishes the hint for Benedick, who, with Beatrice, appears to be entirely Shakespeare's own invention. With this unsentimental pair he brings about, not only a "merry war" and a brilliant contrast to his conventional storybook lovers, but also a high comedy parallel to the darker nature of the main situation. Just as Don John finds in the betrothal something "to build mischief on" and conspires by means of villainous slander to wreck the happiness of Claudio and Hero and make them fall *out* of love, so his genial brother Don Pedro, to while away the time until the wedding, undertakes one of "Hercules' labors" and devises "honest slanders" with which to stain Benedick and Beatrice, and, in spite of their raillery against love, to bring them "into a mountain of affection th' one with th' other."

(3) This contrast, however, is not his only means of softening the seriousness and the pathos of the Claudio-Hero story. Shakespeare has deliberately made these characters appear shallow. Though a valiant soldier, Claudio is too prone to believe the worst of what he hears and to sulk in consequence, and, compared with Benedick, partakes of both the hero and the cad. Hero, though a worthy, virtuous girl, is, compared with

Beatrice, colorless and dependent. Moreover, instead of wooing manfully for himself, Claudio weakly accepts Don Pedro as his proxy, and Hero, prepared by rumor for a proposal from Don Pedro, accepts Claudio just as readily. There is no suggestion of the wooing by proxy episode in his source, and that Shakespeare deliberately complicated his story by this indirection is evidence that he had no desire that we be unduly concerned about these lovers. Further, perhaps at the suggestion of Ariosto's story of Ariodante and Genevra, which had been retold by Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* (Book II, Canto IV), Shakespeare created Margaret and permitted Claudio actually to see a meeting between a groom and the waiting-woman the lover mistakes for Hero. The episode costs some sympathy with Claudio, but it makes the deception more plausible. But by removing Margaret from all contact with the actual villain (who works by deputy), by reporting what occurs rather than presenting it to our eyes, and, above all, by having the villainy discovered before anything serious has occurred, though without preventing it, he lightens the episode and maintains suspense.

(4) The repudiation of Hero also is not made tamely by letter as in Bandello, but theatrically in a tremendous scene in the church. The disclosure of the villainy, however, has already been made, not by the remorse of Don John, but by an accident, which is also Shakespeare's invention. In the small hours of the morning, Borachio and Conrade in their cups have revealed all and been apprehended by the stupidest night-watchmen who ever slept on their beat. The report has even been brought to Leonato, but by the tedious fools, Dogberry and Verges, and Leonato hurries off to the wedding without sifting the matter. But if the disgrace of Hero is not prevented, and the splendid faith of Beatrice in her cousin comes to naught in discovering her detractors, the church scene accomplishes what nothing short of such a crisis could produce—the mutual

declaration of love between Benedick and Beatrice. In her helplessness over the prostrate form of her cousin, Beatrice for a moment has let the bars down, and Benedick seizes his opportunity. Her test of his devotion—"Kill Claudio"—is a severe one, and, happily, need not be carried out. But it does produce a challenge, which is all the evidence the lady needs. After the church scene and the events which follow, things can never again be as of old between the two. Their jesting humor, however, never leaves them; even their final capitulation is accompanied by some bantering. Thus, to resolve his serious conspiracy, Shakespeare brings it into contact with comedy, and, to resolve his comic conspiracy, brings it into contact with the serious. The whole is the work of an artist who knows how to construct a plot.

(5) In addition to these structural devices, Shakespeare has promoted the unity of his story by variations on a number of motifs. A series of deceptions, innocent as well as malicious, runs through the play, not the least of which is the self-deception of the two most engaging characters. Mr. John Masefield sees in the play Shakespeare's effort to write "of the power of report, of the thing overheard, to alter human destiny." Finally, it has been suggested that the very title of the play is a pun, now lost because of a change in pronunciation, *Much Ado about Noting*, i.e., observing or judging by appearances. Specific variations of these motifs will occur to every reader. Yet every lie that is uttered we know to be a lie; every rumor that is acted upon we know to be a rumor; and every mistaken observation we know to be mistaken. Into all of the secrets we are admitted from the beginning, and we are never in doubt that all will eventually be detected. The play is an excellent illustration of Coleridge's observation that Shakespeare almost always prefers expectation to surprise for his dramatic effects. There are no crises in the drama which we do not approach with fuller wisdom than the characters on the stage.

(6) *Much Ado about Nothing* is also one of the best examples of Shakespeare's contrast of romance and realism in comedy and of his practice of supporting one with the aid of the other. The play is woven of three strands—an Italian melodramatic tale of sentiment, some incidents in a "merry war of the sexes" conceived in what Meredith called the "comic spirit," and a low-comedy element continuing the tradition of native English realism which the Elizabethan drama inherited from its medieval forerunners. As in other comedies—like *Twelfth Night*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Merchant of Venice*, or *Measure for Measure*, to name only a few—the romantic, implausible main plot is the borrowed element, but the rest, which is realistic, is Shakespeare's own. In the plays mentioned, Toby, Andrew, Maria, and Malvolio; Launce and his dog; Launcelot Gobbo; Pompey and Mistress Overdone are not to be found in the sources. So in this play, Benedick and Beatrice, as well as the fools in authority, Dogberry and Verges, are Shakespeare's drawings from life. "Independence of the dramatic interest on the plot" was Coleridge's phrase for this characteristic of Shakespeare's, and it may be observed not only in the characters and scenes he invented, but also in the reality of his personages even when the demands made of them by the plot belong to the world of romance.

Date and Text

The date usually assigned to *Much Ado about Nothing* is sometime between 1598, when it was omitted from a list of Shakespeare's plays in Francis Meres's *Palladis Tamia*, and 1600, when a quarto edition was published. The play exists in two good versions, a quarto of 1600 (Q), which is a slightly fuller text, and the Folio of 1623 (F_1). The latter, to judge by the more exact stage directions and occasional alterations, was reprinted from a copy of Q which had seen service in the theatre as a prompt-book. The present text is based upon Q, with variants from F_1.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DON PEDRO, Prince of Aragon.
DON JOHN, his bastard brother.
LEONATO, Governor of Messina.
CLAUDIO, a young lord of Florence, friend to Don Pedro.
HERO, daughter of Leonato and the beloved of Claudio.
BENEDICK, a young lord of Padua, foil to Claudio.
BEATRICE, niece of Leonato, foil to Hero.
MARGARET, URSULA } gentlewomen attending Hero.
ANTONIO, brother of Leonato.
FRIAR FRANCIS.
BALTHASAR, a singing squire in Don Pedro's train.
BORACHIO, CONRADE } followers of Don John.
DOGBERRY, a pompous Jack-in-office, Constable of Messina.
VERGES, his headborough.
A SEXTON.

Watchmen, Messengers, and Attendants.

Scene of the Action: Messina.

Much Ado about Nothing

ACT I

SCENE I. *Messina. The orchard on the Governor's estate.*

LEONATO, *the Governor;* HERO, *his daughter; and* BEATRICE, *his niece, are receiving a* Messenger *who has brought dispatches.*

Leon. I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Aragon comes this night to Messina.

Mess. He is very near by this; he was not three leagues off when I left him.

Leon. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

Mess. But few of any sort, and none of name.

Leon. A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine called Claudio.

Mess. Much deserved on his part and equally remembered by Don Pedro. He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing, in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion. He hath indeed better bettered expectation than you must expect of me to tell you how.

Leon. He hath an uncle here in Messina will be very much glad of it.

Mess. I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him; even so much that joy could not show itself modest enough without a badge of bitterness.

Leon. Did he break out into tears?

Mess. In great measure.

Leon. A kind overflow of kindness. There are no faces truer than those that are so washed. How much better is it to weep at joy than to joy at weeping!

[I. i] 7. ***none of name:*** none of rank. 18. ***will:*** who will. 22. ***modest:*** moderate. 26. ***kind:*** natural. ***kindness:*** natural emotion.

Beat. I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returned from the wars or no?

Mess. I know none of that name, lady. There was none such in the army of any sort.

Leon. What is he that you ask for, niece?

Hero. My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua.

Mess. O, he's returned; and as pleasant as ever he was.

Beat. He set up his bills here in Messina and challenged Cupid at the flight; and my uncle's fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid, and challenged him at the bird-bolt. I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he killed? For indeed I promised to eat all of his killing.

Leon. Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

Mess. He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

Beat. You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it. He is a very valiant trencher-man; he hath an excellent stomach.

Mess. And a good soldier too, lady.

Beat. And a good soldier to a lady, but what is he to a lord?

Mess. A lord to a lord, a man to a man—stuffed with all honourable virtues.

Beat. It is so, indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man. But for the stuffing—well, we are all mortal.

Leon. You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her; they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

30. *Signior Mountanto:* i.e., Signior Duellist; *mountanto* in fencing meant an up-thrust. 33. *sort:* rank. 39. *bills:* general challenges. 40. *at the flight:* at long-distance shooting with weapons of war. Note the possible pun on *flight:* (a) archery, (b) running away, (c) *flyte,* quarrel. 42. *bird-bolt:* blunt, harmless arrows safely entrusted to children. The bird-bolt was Cupid's weapon—his arrows are not fatal. 46. *tax:* censure. 47. *he'll be meet:* he'll get even. 51. *holp:* an archaic past tense of *help. trencher-man:* great eater. 52. *stomach:* (a) appetite, (b) courage. 53. *too:* probably pronounced as a dissyllable. 56. *stuffed:* filled. The messenger does not

Beat. Alas, he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one; so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

Mess. Is't possible?

Beat. Very easily possible. He wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block.

Mess. I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

Beat. No, an he were, I would burn my study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer now that will make a voyage with him to the Devil?

Mess. He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

Beat. O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease! He is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! If he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere a' be cured.

Mess. I will hold friends with you, lady.

Beat. Do, good friend.

Leon. You will never run mad, niece.

Beat. No, not till a hot January.

Mess. Don Pedro is approached.

Enter DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, *and* BALTHASAR.

D. Pedro. Good Signior Leonato, are you come to meet your trouble? The fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it.

---

mean to ridicule Benedick, but his unfortunate choice of idiom does not escape Beatrice. 59. *stuffed man:* scarecrow.

66. *five wits:* five "faculties," i.e., common wit, imagination, fantasy, judgment, and reason. 69. *difference:* distinguishing mark (in heraldry). 75. *faith:* constancy. 78–9. *not . . . books:* no one you're interested in. 80. *an:* if. 82. *squarer:* swaggerer, quarreller. 88. *presently:* immediately. 90. *a':* he. 93. *You . . . mad:* i.e., you will never catch the Benedick. 95. *is:* in Elizabethan English the verb *to be* is frequently used with verbs of motion.

Leon. Never came Trouble to my house in the likeness of your Grace. For Trouble being gone, Comfort should remain; but when you depart from me, Sorrow abides, and Happiness takes his leave.

D. Pedro. You embrace your charge too willingly. I think this is your daughter.

Leon. Her mother hath many times told me so.

Bene. Were you in doubt, sir, that you asked her?

Leon. Signior Benedick, no; for then were you a child.

D. Pedro. You have it full, Benedick; we may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly, the lady fathers herself. Be happy, lady; for you are like an honourable father.

Bene. If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all Messina, as like him as she is.

Beat. I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick; nobody marks you.

Bene. What, my dear Lady Disdain! Are you yet living?

Beat. Is it possible Disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to Disdain, if you come in her presence.

Bene. Then is Courtesy a turncoat. But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted; and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

Beat. A dear happiness to women. They would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that. I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

Bene. God keep your ladyship still in that mind, so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratched face.

Beat. Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.

103. ***charge:*** expense, trouble. 110. ***You . . . full:*** that strikes you exactly. 115. ***his head:*** i.e., his wrinkles and grey beard. 117. ***still:*** always. 119. ***Disdain.*** This vice is frequently laid at Beatrice's door; cf. II, i, 134, and III, i, 51. Benedick and Beatrice at least are not indifferent to one another. 122. ***meet:*** suitable. 123. ***convert:*** turn. 129. ***dear happiness:*** a precious piece of good luck. 134. ***still:*** always. 137. ***an:*** if.

Bene. Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

Beat. A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

Bene. I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer. But keep your way, i' God's name; I have done.

Beat. You always end with a jade's trick; I know you of old.

D. Pedro. That is the sum of all, Leonato. Signior Claudio and Signior Benedick, my dear friend Leonato hath invited you all. I tell him we shall stay here at the least a month, and he heartily prays some occasion may detain us longer. I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.

Leon. If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn. [*To Don John.*] Let me bid you welcome, my lord; being reconciled to the prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

D. John. I thank you. I am not of many words, but I thank you.

Leon. Please it your Grace lead on?

D. Pedro. Your hand, Leonato; we will go together.

[*Exeunt all except Benedick and Claudio.*

Claud. Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior Leonato?

Bene. I noted her not, but I looked on her.

Claud. Is she not a modest young lady?

Bene. Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment? Or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

Claud. No, I pray thee speak in sober judgment.

Bene. Why, i' faith, methinks she's too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great

139. *parrot-teacher:* speaker of nonsense. 145. *jade's trick:* vicious trick; i.e., "by slipping your head out of the collar" (Wright), or, "by stopping suddenly and so casting me off" (Wilson). 147. *sum:* total. 156. *being reconciled:* since you are reconciled. 158–9. *I am . . . words:* an excellent summary of the character of saturnine Don John. 160. *Please . . . on:* will it please your Grace to lead on? 161. *we will go together:* i.e., as equals, not as prince and subject. 163. *note:* notice. 173 ff. I.e., Hero is a little brunette.

praise. Only this commendation I can afford her, that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome; and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.

Claud. Thou thinkest I am in sport. I pray thee tell me truly how thou likest her.

Bene. Would you buy her, that you inquire after her?

Claud. Can the world buy such a jewel?

Bene. Yea, and a case to put it into. But speak you this with a sad brow? Or do you play the flouting Jack, to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder and Vulcan a rare carpenter? Come, in what key shall a man take you to go in the song?

Claud. In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.

Bene. I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter. There's her cousin, an she were not possessed with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope you have no intent to turn husband, have you?

Claud. I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

Bene. Is't come to this? In faith, hath not the world one man but he will wear his cap with suspicion? Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? Go to, i' faith; an thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it and sigh away Sundays. [*Re-enter* Don Pedro.] Look, Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

D. Pedro. What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's?

Bene. I would your Grace would constrain me to tell.

D. Pedro. I charge thee on thy allegiance.

Bene. You hear, Count Claudio. I can be secret as a dumb

185. *sad:* serious. 186. *flouting Jack:* scoffer. 186–7. *Cupid . . . carpenter:* blind Cupid is good at spying out hares, and Vulcan, the blacksmith, is an expert carpenter. 188. *to . . . song:* to accompany you, understand you. 192. *an:* if. 200. *his cap with suspicion:* i.e., be suspected of wearing a cap only to hide the horns said to grow on the heads of husbands of unfaithful wives. 202. *Go to:* go on.

man—I would have you think so—but, on my allegiance, mark you this, on my allegiance. He is in love. With who? Now that is your Grace's part. Mark how short his answer is—with Hero, Leonato's short daughter.

Claud. If this were so, so were it uttered.

Bene. Like the old tale, my lord: "it is not so, nor 'twas not so, but, indeed, God forbid it should be so." 220

Claud. If my passion change not shortly, God forbid it should be otherwise.

D. Pedro. Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

Claud. You speak this to fetch me in, my lord.

D. Pedro. By my troth, I speak my thought.

Claud. And, in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

Bene. And, by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine.

Claud. That I love her, I feel. 230

D. Pedro. That she is worthy, I know.

Bene. That I neither feel how she should be loved nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me; I will die in it at the stake.

D. Pedro. Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic in the despite of beauty.

Claud. And never could maintain his part but in the force of his will. 239

Bene. That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks; but that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick, all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is—for the which I may go the finer—I will live a bachelor. 248

D. Pedro. I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

Bene. With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord,

214. *who:* whom. 225. *fetch me in:* take me in. 237. *despite:* scorn. 242. *recheat:* the sound for calling hounds together—an allusion to the cuckold's horns. 247. *fine:* end.

not with love. Prove that ever I lose more blood with love than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen and hang me up at the door of a brothel-house for the sign of blind Cupid.

D. Pedro. Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

Bene. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat and shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder, and called Adam.

D. Pedro. Well, as time shall try:

"In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke."

Bene. The savage bull may; but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns and set them in my forehead, and let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write "Here is good horse to hire," let them signify under my sign: "Here you may see Benedick the married man."

Claud. If this should ever happen, thou wouldst be horn-mad.

D. Pedro. Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

Bene. I look for an earthquake too, then.

D. Pedro. Well, you will temporize with the hours. In the meantime, good Signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's, commend me to him, and tell him I will not fail him at supper; for indeed he hath made great preparation.

Bene. I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassage, and so I commit you—

253. *lose more blood:* i.e., with sighing, which was believed to draw blood from the heart. 254. *ballad-maker:* writer of love songs. 258. *argument:* example. 259. *a bottle:* i.e., of wicker; a cage. 261. *Adam:* the proverbial name for an archer, possibly in allusion to Adam Bell, who, with Clym of the Clough and William of Cloudesly, outlaws of the North Country, were as famous as Robin Hood. 263. *In . . . yoke:* quoted from a poem by Thomas Watson, *Hecatompathia* (1582). 266 ff. *let me,* etc.: i.e., exhibit me in a sideshow. 272. *horn-mad:* mad as a bull. Allusions to the cuckold's horns seem never to have tired the Elizabethans. 274. *Venice:* notorious for its courtesans. 276. *temporize:* i.e., put off the evil day. 278. *repair:* return. 281. *I . . . enough:* I am almost clever enough.

Claud. To the tuition of God. From my house, if I had it—

D. Pedro. The sixth of July. Your loving friend, Benedick.

Bene. Nay, mock not, mock not. The body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guards are but slightly basted on neither; ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience, and so I leave you. [*Exit.*

Claud. My liege, your Highness now may do me good.

D. Pedro. My love is thine to teach; teach it but how,
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

Claud. Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

D. Pedro. No child but Hero; she's his only heir.
Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

Claud. O, my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,
That liked, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love.
But now I am return'd, and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying, I liked her ere I went to wars.

D. Pedro. Thou wilt be like a lover presently
And tire the hearer with a book of words.
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it,
And I will break with her, and with her father,
And thou shalt have her. Was't not to this end
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?

Claud. How sweetly you do minister to love,
That know love's grief by his complexion!
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
I would have salved it with a longer treatise.

285. ***sixth of July:*** old Midsummer Day, appropriate for such midsummer madness (Wright). 288. ***guarded:*** decorated, trimmed. 299. ***ended:*** completed. 303. ***now I am return'd:*** now that I have returned. 311. ***break with:*** speak to. 315. ***his complexion:*** its visible aspect.

D. Pedro. What need the bridge much broader than the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity.
Look, what will serve is fit; 'tis once, thou lovest,
And I will fit thee with the remedy.
I know we shall have revelling tonight;
I will assume thy part in some disguise,
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio,
And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart
And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And strong encounter of my amorous tale.
Then after to her father will I break;
And the conclusion is, she shall be thine.
In practice let us put it presently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A hall in* LEONATO'S *house some time after. Servants and members of the household, under the direction of* ANTONIO, *are busy making preparations for a ball.*

Enter LEONATO.

Leon. How now, brother, where is my cousin, your son? Hath he provided this music?

Ant. He is very busy about it. But, brother, I can tell you strange news that you yet dreamt not of.

Leon. Are they good?

Ant. As the event stamps them; but they have a good cover; they show well outward. The prince and Count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached alley in mine orchard, were thus much overheard by a man of mine: the prince discovered to Claudio that he loved my niece your daughter and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance; and if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top and instantly break with you of it.

318–9. *What need . . . necessity:* Why hunt for reasons? Necessity is enough. 320. *'tis once:* it is simply.

[ii] 1. *cousin:* relative. 7. *event:* outcome. 10. *thick-pleached:* made with dense hedges of intertwined shrubs. 11. *discovered:* revealed. 15. *by the top:* by the forelock. *break with:* speak to.

Leon. Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

Ant. A good sharp fellow! I will send for him, and question him yourself.

Leon. No, no; we will hold it as a dream till it appear itself; but I will acquaint my daughter w[illegible]hal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you and tell her of it. [*Exit Antonio; Leonato turns to the others who have come up.*] Cousins, you know what you have to do. [*He spies the musician, who has just been brought in by Antonio's son.*] O, I cry you mercy, friend; go you with me, and I will use your skill. [*To his nephew as he goes out with the musician.*] Good cousin, have a care this busy time. [*Exeunt.* 28

SCENE III. *A room in the house.*

Enter CONRADE, *meeting* DON JOHN.

Con. What the good-year, my lord! Why are you thus out of measure sad?

D. John. There is no measure in the occasion that breeds; therefore, the sadness is without limit.

Con. You should hear reason.

D. John. And when I have heard it, what blessing brings it?

Con. If not a present remedy, at least a patient sufferance. 10

D. John. I wonder that thou—being, as thou sayest thou art, born under Saturn—goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am; I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests, eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure; sleep when I am drowsy, and tend on no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humour. 19

Con. Yea, but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without controlment. You have of late stood out

[iii] 1. ***What . . . year:*** "a meaningless expletive" (Onions). 2. ***out of measure sad:*** unduly sad. 3. ***measure:*** moderation. 4. ***breeds:*** i.e., produces the sadness. 10. ***sufferance:*** endurance. 12. ***born under Saturn:*** hence, of a "saturnine" or gloomy disposition. 13. ***mortifying:*** death-dealing. 19. ***claw:*** flatter. 21. ***controlment:*** restraint.

against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace, where it is impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that you make yourself. It is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

D. John. I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace, and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any. In this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle and enfranchised with a clog; therefore, I have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking. In the meantime let me be that I am and seek not to alter me.

Con. Can you make no use of your discontent?

D. John. I make all use of it, for I use it only.
Who comes here?

Enter Borachio.

What news, Bórachio?

Bora. I came yonder from a great supper; the prince your brother is royally entertained by Leonato; and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

D. John. Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?

Bora. Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

D. John. Who? The most exquisite Claudio?

Bora. Even he.

D. John. A proper squire! And who, and who? Which way looks he?

Bora. Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

D. John. A very forward March-chick! How came you to this?

26. *frame:* bring to pass. 28. *canker:* wild rose. 30. *fashion . . . any:* devise a means of gaining the affection of anyone. 34. *enfranchised:* given freedom. 46. *intelligence:* information, news. 48. *model:* plan. 49. *What . . . fool:* what sort of fool is he? 58. *A . . . March-chick:* a very pert young flapper.

Bora. Being entertained for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty room, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad conference. I whipt me behind the arras, and there heard it agreed upon that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to Count Claudio.

D. John. Come, come, let us thither; this may prove food to my displeasure. That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow; if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way. You are both sure, and will assist me? 71

Con. To the death, my lord.

D. John. Let us to the great supper; their cheer is the greater that I am subdued. Would the cook were o' my mind! Shall we go prove what's to be done?

Bora. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I. *The hall in* LEONATO'S *house.*

Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, HERO, BEATRICE, MARGARET, URSULA, *and others, from the supper-room.*

Leon. Was not Count John here at supper?

Ant. I saw him not.

Beat. How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heart-burned an hour after.

Hero. He is of a very melancholy disposition.

Beat. He were an excellent man that were made just in the midway between him and Benedick; the one is too like an image and says nothing, and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling. 11

Leon. Then half Signior Benedick's tongue in Count John's

60. *entertained for a perfumer:* employed as a perfumer. Sweet herbs were burned to make the rooms in Elizabethan houses less offensively odorous. 61. *smoking:* fumigating. 62. *sad:* serious. 63. *arras:* wall hanging. 68–9. *That . . . overthrow:* Don John's most important motive. 70. *cross:* (a) to thwart, (b) to bless by the sign of the cross. 71. *sure:* to be trusted. 75. *prove:* try.

[II. i] 9. *image:* statue. 10. *my . . . son:* i.e., a spoiled child.

mouth, and half Count John's melancholy in Signior Benedick's face—

Beat. With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world, if a' could get her good-will.

Leon. By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

Ant. In faith, she's too curst.

Beat. Too curst is more than curst. I shall lessen God's sending that way, for it is said, "God sends a curst cow short horns," but to a cow too curst he sends none.

Leon. So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns.

Beat. Just, if he send me no husband; for the which blessing I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face; I had rather lie in the woollen.

Leon. You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

Beat. What should I do with him? Dress him in my apparel and make him my waiting-gentlewoman? He that hath a beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man; and he that is more than a youth is not for me, and he that is less than a man, I am not for him. Therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bear-ward, and lead his apes into hell.

Leon. Well, then, go you into hell?

Beat. No, but to the gate; and there will the devil meet me, like an old cuckold, with horns on his head, and say "Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you to heaven; here's no place for you maids." So deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter for the heavens; he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

Ant. [*To Hero*] Well, niece, I trust you will be ruled by your father.

17. *a':* he. 20. *shrewd:* sharp. 22. *curst:* vicious. 33. *in the woollen:* in the blankets without sheets. 42–3. *earnest of the bear-ward:* as an installment of wages from the bear-trainer, who frequently kept apes as well. 43. *apes into hell.* According to a proverb, leading apes into hell is the fate of old maids, since they cannot lead children into heaven.

Beat. Yes, faith, it is my cousin's duty to make curtsy and say "Father, as it please you." But yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy and say "Father, as it please me."

Leon. Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband. 61

Beat. Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust? To make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none; Adam's sons are my brethren; and, truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

Leon. Daughter, remember what I told you; if the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer. 71

Beat. The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time. If the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in everything and so dance out the answer. For, hear me, Hero; wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque pace: the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest, as a measure, full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance and, with his bad legs, falls into the cinque pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave. 83

Leon. Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

Beat. I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by daylight.

Leon. The revellers are entering, brother. [*To the servants.*] Make good room. [*All put on their masks.*

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, BALTHASAR, DON JOHN, BORACHIO, *and other maskers, with a drum. Music*

55 ff. Observe the contrast between the meek Hero and the more independent Beatrice. 66. *marl:* clay. 73. *time:* a pun suggested by *music.* 74. *important:* importunate. *measure:* moderation, with a pun on *measure,* a dance. 77. *Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque pace.* Beatrice's simile describes the character of these dances, the last-named being a lively caper. *Cinque pace* was probably pronounced "sink apace." 80. *ancientry:* dignity. 84. *apprehend passing shrewdly:* have a sharp intelligence.

plays, the dancing begins, and, as they wheel about the floor, first one couple and then another can be overheard at their banter.

D. Pedro. Lady, will you walk about with your friend?

Hero. So you walk softly and look sweetly and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and especially when I walk away.

D. Pedro. With me in your company?

Hero. I may say so, when I please.

D. Pedro. And when please you to say so?

Hero. When I like your favour; for God defend the lute should be like the case!

D. Pedro. My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove.

Hero. Why, then, your visor should be thatched.

D. Pedro. Speak low, if you speak love. [*Drawing her aside.*

Bene. Well, I would you did like me.

Marg. So would not I, for your own sake; for I have many ill qualities.

Bene. Which is one?

Marg. I say my prayers aloud.

Bene. I love you the better; the hearers may cry, Amen.

Marg. God match me with a good dancer!

Balth. Amen.

Marg. And God keep him out of my sight when the dance is done! Answer, clerk.

Balth. No more words! The clerk is answered.

Urs. I know you well enough; you are Signior Antonio.

Ant. At a word, I am not.

Urs. I know you by the waggling of your head.

90. *friend:* lover. 99. *visor:* mask. *Philemon.* Ovid in his *Metamorphoses* tells the story of how Jupiter and Mercury visited the lowly cottage of Baucis and Philemon. 104–9. Both Q and F_1 indicate that Benedick carries on this conversation with Margaret. Perhaps in answer to her prayer for a good dancer, Balthasar, the "hearer," not only cries "amen," but takes Margaret away from Benedick and dances away with her. Theobald's conjecture that the speaker throughout is Balthasar is generally adopted today. Wilson assigns the lines to Borachio. 114. *clerk:* i.e., the clerk should say "amen."

Ant. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

Urs. You could never do him so ill-well, unless you were the very man. Here's his dry hand up and down! You are he, you are he!

Ant. At a word, I am not.

Urs. Come, come, do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? Can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he; graces will appear, and there's an end.

Beat. Will you not tell me who told you so? 130

Bene. No, you shall pardon me.

Beat. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

Bene. Not now.

Beat. That I was disdainful, and that I had my good wit out of the *Hundred Merry Tales*—well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.

Bene. What's he?

Beat. I am sure you know him well enough.

Bene. Not I, believe me.

Beat. Did he never make you laugh? 140

Bene. I pray you, what is he?

Beat. Why, he is the prince's jester, a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders. None but libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villainy; for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him and beat him. [*Looking out over the company.*] I am sure he is in the fleet; I would he had boarded me.

Bene. When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say. 151

Beat. Do, do; he'll but break a comparison or two on me; which, peradventure, not marked or not laughed at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a partridge wing saved, for

121. *counterfeit:* imitate. 122. *ill-well:* i.e., so successfully imitate his eccentricities. 123. *dry hand:* the sign of old age and impotency. 126. Ursula now tries flattery. 135. *Hundred Merry Tales:* a popular jestbook of the day. 148. *the fleet:* (a) this crowd, (b) Fleet Prison. 149. *boarded:* paid his addresses, accosted; with a figurative allusion to the hostile entry of a ship. 152. *break . . . on me:* a metaphor from breaking a lance at a tournament.

the fool will eat no supper that night. We must follow the leaders.

Bene. In every good thing.

Beat. Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning.

[*There is another dance, during which* Don Pedro *and* Leonato *go out together. The company breaks up, leaving* Don John, Borachio, *and* Claudio *behind.*]

D. John. [*So that he can be overheard*] Sure my brother is amorous on Hero and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it. The ladies follow her and but one visor remains.

Bora. [*Under his breath*] And that is Claudio; I know him by his bearing.

D. John. Are not you Signior Benedick?

Claud. You know me well; I am he.

D. John. Signior, you are very near my brother in his love. He is enamoured on Hero. I pray you, dissuade him from her; she is no equal for his birth. You may do the part of an honest man in it.

Claud. How know you he loves her?

D. John. I heard him swear his affection.

Bora. So did I too; and he swore he would marry her tonight.

D. John. Come, let us to the banquet.

[*Exeunt Don John and Borachio.*

Claud. Thus answer I in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio.
'Tis certain so; the prince woos for himself.
Friendship is constant in all other things
Save in the office and affairs of love;
Therefore, all hearts in love use their own tongues.
Let every eye negotiate for itself
And trust no agent; for Beauty is a witch
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.

164. *visor:* masker. 170. *love:* friendship. 179. Observe Claudio's credulity. 187. *Against:* before. Before the potent charms of Beauty, fidelity in friendship melts away into the passion of appetite.

This is an accident of hourly proof,
Which I mistrusted not. Farewell, therefore, Hero!

Re-enter BENEDICK, *unmasked.*

Bene. Count Claudio?

Claud. Yea, the same.

Bene. Come, will you go with me?

Claud. Whither?

Bene. Even to the next willow, about your own business, county. What fashion will you wear the garland of? About your neck, like an usurer's chain? Or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

Claud. I wish him joy of her.

Bene. Why, that's spoken like an honest drovier; so they sell bullocks. But did you think the prince would have served you thus?

Claud. I pray you, leave me.

Bene. Ho, now you strike like the blind man; 'twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

Claud. If it will not be, I'll leave you. [*Exit.*

Bene. Alas, poor hurt fowl! Now will he creep into sedges. But that my Lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The prince's fool? Ha! It may be I go under that title because I am merry. Yea, but so I am apt to do myself wrong; I am not so reputed. It is the base, though bitter, disposition of Beatrice that puts the world into her person, and so gives me out. Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

Re-enter DON PEDRO *with* LEONATO *and* HERO.

D. Pedro. Now, signior, where's the count? Did you see him?

188. *accident:* happening. *hourly proof:* demonstrated hourly. 194. *willow:* the emblem of the forsaken lover. 195. *county:* count. 197. *usurer's chain:* golden chains such as were worn by affluent citizens. 210 ff. *But that,* etc.: Beatrice's late sarcasm has sunk deeper into Benedick's mind than anything she has said before. 216. *the world . . . person:* i.e., speaks as if she were expressing the general opinion of me. 218. S. D. F_1 also brings in Don John and Borachio.

Bene. Troth, my lord, I have played the part of Lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren. I told him, and I think I told him true, that your Grace had got the good will of this young lady; and I offered him my company to a willow-tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipped.

D. Pedro. To be whipped? What's his fault?

Bene. The flat transgression of a school-boy, who, being overjoyed with finding a birds' nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

D. Pedro. Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

Bene. Yet it had not been amiss the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stolen his birds' nest.

D. Pedro. I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

Bene. If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

D. Pedro. The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you; the gentleman that danced with her told her she is much wronged by you.

Bene. O, she misused me past the endurance of a block! An oak but with one green leaf on it would have answered her; my very visor began to assume life and scold with her. She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's jester, that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest with such impossible conveyance upon me that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me. She speaks poniards, and every word stabs; if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her; she would infect to the North Star. I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he trans-

244. *to:* with. 253. *impossible conveyance:* extraordinary dexterity; so rapidly that it was impossible to bear up under her jests. 254. *at a mark:* at a target. 256. *terminations:* epithets.

gressed; she would have made Hercules have turned spit, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her; you shall find her the infernal Ate in good apparel. I would to God some scholar would conjure her; for certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary; and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither; so, indeed, all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follows her.

D. Pedro. Look, here she comes.

Re-enter BEATRICE, *bringing in* CLAUDIO.

Bene. Will your Grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes that you can devise to send me on; I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the furthest inch of Asia, bring you the length of Prester John's foot, fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard, do you any embassage to the Pigmies, rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy. You have no employment for me?

D. Pedro. None, but to desire your good company.

Bene. O God, sir, here's a dish I love not; I cannot endure my Lady Tongue. [*Exit.*

D. Pedro. Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick.

Beat. Indeed, my lord, he lent it me awhile; and I gave him use for it, a double heart for his single one. Marry, once before he won it of me with false dice; therefore your Grace may well say I have lost it.

D. Pedro. You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

Beat. So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I

261. *turned spit:* become the lowest menial in the kitchen. 263. *Ate:* goddess of discord. 264. *some . . . her:* some one who knew Latin would exorcise the evil spirit out of her. 266. *as quiet . . . sanctuary:* i.e., hell is a quiet sanctuary compared to earth inhabited by this fury. 276. *Prester John:* a fabulous Christian potentate of great wealth supposed to have lived in far-off Asia. 277. *great Cham:* sovereign of the Mongols. 288. *use:* interest. 292. *You . . . down:* you've won.

should prove the mother of fools. I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

D. Pedro. Why, how now, count, wherefore are you sad?

Claud. Not sad, my lord.

D. Pedro. How then? Sick?

Claud. Neither, my lord.

Beat. The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil count, civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

D. Pedro. I' faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though, I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won; I have broke with her father, and his good-will obtained; name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy.

Leon. Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes; his Grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it.

Beat. Speak, count, 'tis your cue.

Claud. Silence is the perfectest herald of joy; I were but little happy, if I could say how much. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours; I give away myself for you and dote upon the exchange.

Beat. Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.

D. Pedro. In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

Beat. Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

Claud. And so she doth, cousin.

Beat. Good Lord, for alliance! Thus goes every one to the

304. *civil:* a pun on Seville, whence oranges were imported to England. 305. *jealous complexion:* yellow. 307. *blazon:* description (a heraldic term). 309. *conceit:* idea, conception. 310. *broke with:* discussed the matter with. 326. *poor fool:* a term of tenderness. 327. *windy side of care:* windward side, so as to escape easily. 330. *for alliance:* a reply to Claudio, who has just called her "cousin." 330–1. *goes . . . world:* does not lead the secluded life of a nun, but is married.

world but I, and I am sunburnt; I may sit in a corner and cry "heigh-ho for a husband."

D. Pedro. Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

Beat. I would rather have one of your father's getting. Hath your Grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

D. Pedro. Will you have me, lady? 339

Beat. No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days; your Grace is too costly to wear every day. But, I beseech your Grace, pardon me; I was born to speak all mirth and no matter.

D. Pedro. Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

Beat. No, sure, my lord, my mother cried; but then there was a star danced, and under that was I born. Cousins, God give you joy! 350

Leon. Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

Beat. I cry you mercy, uncle. By your Grace's pardon. [*Exit.*

D. Pedro. By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady.

Leon. There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord; she is never sad but when she sleeps, and not ever sad then; for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamed of unhappiness and waked herself with laughing. 361

D. Pedro. She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

Leon. O, by no means; she mocks all her wooers out of suit.

D. Pedro. She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

Leon. O Lord, my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

D. Pedro. County Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

Claud. Tomorrow, my lord; Time goes on crutches till Love have all his rites. 373

331. *sunburnt:* i.e., I have no beauty; no one will marry me. 332. *heigh-ho for a husband:* perhaps quoted from an old ballad, "Heigh-ho for a husband, Or, the willing Maid's wants made known." 336. *getting:* begetting. 353. *cry you mercy:* beg your pardon. Beatrice has forgotten what her uncle bade her do. This is, of course, a simple device to get her out of the way.

Leon. Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just seven-night; and a time too brief, too, to have all things answer my mind.

D. Pedro. Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing; but, I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. I will in the interim undertake one of Hercules' labours, which is to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection th' one with th' other. I would fain have it a match, and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction. 386

Leon. My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings.

Claud. And I, my lord.

D. Pedro. And you too, gentle Hero?

Hero. I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband. 391

D. Pedro. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him: he is of a noble strain, of approved valour, and confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick; and I, with your two helps, will so practice on Benedick that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer; his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *The same.*

Enter Don John *and* Borachio.

D. John. It is so; the Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

Bora. Yea, my lord; but I can cross it.

380. *one of Hercules' labours:* i.e., what appears to be an impossible task. 384. *fashion it:* bring it about. 385. *minister:* give. 394. *approved:* tested, tried. 396. *humour:* manage.

[ii] S. D. Don John and Borachio, as they enter, probably pass the lovers who are going out.

D. John. Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be medicinable to me; I am sick in displeasure to him, and whatsoever comes athwart his affection ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage?

Bora. Not honestly, my lord, but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

D. John. Show me briefly how.

Bora. I think I told your lordship, a year since, how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting-gentlewoman to Hero.

D. John. I remember.

Bora. I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber-window.

D. John. What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage?

Bora. The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the prince your brother; spare not to tell him that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio—whose estimation do you mightily hold up—to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

D. John. What proof shall I make of that?

Bora. Proof enough to misuse the prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero and kill Leonato. Look you for any other issue?

D. John. Only to despite them, I will endeavour anything.

Bora. Go, then; find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the Count Claudio alone. Tell them that you know that Hero loves me; intend a kind of zeal both to the prince and Claudio—as in love of your brother's honour, who hath made this match, and his friend's reputation, who is thus like to be cozened with the semblance of a maid—that you have discovered thus. They will scarcely believe this without trial—offer them instances, which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber-window, hear me call Margaret Hero, hear Margaret term me Claudio; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding—for in the meantime I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be absent—and there shall

25. *stale:* whore. 28. *misuse:* deceive. 35. *intend:* pretend. 39. *cozened:* deceived.

appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty that jealousy shall be called assurance and all the preparation overthrown.

D. John. Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice. Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

Bora. Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

D. John. I will presently go learn their day of marriage.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III. Leonato's *orchard.*

Enter Benedick, *alone.*

Bene. Boy!

Enter Boy.

Boy. Signior?

Bene. In my chamber-window lies a book; bring it hither to me in the orchard.

Boy. I am here already, sir.

Bene. I know that; but I would have thee hence, and here again. [*Exit Boy.*] I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love—and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife, and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe. I have known when he would have walked ten mile a-foot to see a good armour, and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier, and now is he turned orthography; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes.

49–50. *jealousy . . . assurance:* suspicion will be thought certainty. 57. *presently:* immediately.

[iii] 5. *I am here already:* meaning, of course, "I am back already." But he never returns. 14. *the drum and the fife:* i.e., manly martial music, as contrasted with the softer tabor and pipe. 21. *orthography:* orthographer.

May I be so converted and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not. I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well; but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God. Ha! the prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour. [*Withdraws.* 38

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, *and* LEONATO, *followed by* BALTHASAR *with a lute.*

D. Pedro. Come, shall we hear this music?

Claud. Yea, my good lord. How still the evening is, 40
As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!

D. Pedro. See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

Claud. O, very well, my lord; the music ended,
We'll fit the kid-fox with a pennyworth.

D. Pedro. Come, Balthasar, we'll hear that song again.

33. *cheapen:* examine with a view to purchase. 34–5. *noble, angel:* puns upon the usual meanings of these words and the names of Elizabethan gold coins, the *noble,* worth 6s. 8d., and the *angel,* so called because it was stamped with a figure of St. Michael, worth up to 10s. Benedick's meaning is: "If she is not noble in character I wouldn't give 10s. for her; and if she is worth only 6s. 8d., I wouldn't have her if she were an angel." 44. *We'll . . . pennyworth:* we'll give this cub his money's worth. Instead of "Balthasar" F_1 reads "Jack Wilson." The name of the actor who took the role of Balthasar has here intruded into the text, probably from the prompter's notes made upon copy which was later sent to the printer. Jack Wilson has been identified with Dr. John Wilson (1595–1674), royal lutanist who became professor of music at Oxford and composed a setting for Autolycus's "Lawn as white as driven snow" (*Cheerful Ayres,* 1660). He was of course too young to have been a member of the original cast of this play. Chambers (*Elizabethan Stage,* II, 349) believes he has been confused with another John Wilson, born in 1585, who was a minstrel's son and became a city "wait" about 1622.

Balth. O, good my lord, tax not so bad a voice
To slander music any more than once.
D. Pedro. It is the witness still of excellency
To put a strange face on his own perfection.
I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.
Balth. Because you talk of wooing, I will sing;
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit
To her he thinks not worthy, yet he woos,
Yet will he swear he loves.
D. Pedro. Now, pray thee, come;
Or, if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.
Balth. Note this before my notes;
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.
D. Pedro. Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks;
Note, notes, forsooth, and nothing. [*Balthasar plays an air.*
Bene. Now, divine air! Now is his soul ravished! Is it not strange that sheeps' guts should hale souls out of men's bodies? Well, a horn for my money, when all's done.

Balth. [*Sings*] Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea, and one on shore,
To one thing constant never.
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.

48. *still:* ever. 50. *woo:* beg. 56–9. *Note . . . nothing.* The meaning here depends upon the fact that *note, not, nothing* all had the same long *o* vowel sound, the last being pronounced *noting*. The New Cambridge editors suggest that *notes* = "he knows not"; i.e., he pretends not to know his notes or anything. 58. *crotchets:* (a) musical notes, (b) silly notions. 61. *sheeps' guts:* violin strings. *hale:* drag. 62. *horn.* Benedick prefers more manly music. 64 ff. Observe the dramatic appropriateness of this song and the simple humor of having it sung *at* the self-confident Benedick, who is so soon to change his mind.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe,
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy:
Then sigh not so, &c.

D. Pedro. By my troth, a good song.

Balth. And an ill singer, my lord.

D. Pedro. Ha, no, no, faith; thou singest well enough for a shift.

Bene. An he had been a dog that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him; and I pray God his bad voice bode no mischief. I had as lief have heard the night-raven, come what plague could have come after it.

D. Pedro. Yea, marry, dost thou hear, Balthasar? I pray thee, get us some excellent music; for tomorrow night we would have it at the Lady Hero's chamber-window.

Balth. The best I can, my lord.

D. Pedro. Do so; farewell. [*Exit Balthasar.*] Come hither, Leonato. What was it you told me of today, that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick?

Claud. [*Softly*] O, ay; stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits. [*Aloud.*] I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

Leon. No, nor I neither; but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor.

Bene. Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

Leon. By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it but that she loves him with an enraged affection; it is past the infinite of thought.

D. Pedro. May be she doth but counterfeit.

Claud. Faith, like enough.

Leon. O God, counterfeit! There was never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it.

73. ***dumps:*** plaintive melodies. 80. ***for a shift:*** in a pinch. 83. ***bode no mischief:*** as the howling of dogs was believed to do. 84. ***night-raven.*** Its cry was the presage of some calamity. 95. ***stalk:*** move cautiously (like a fowler pursuing game). 107. ***counterfeit:*** pretend.

D. Pedro. Why, what effects of passion shows she?

Claud. Bait the hook well; this fish will bite.

Leon. What effects, my lord? She will sit you, you heard my daughter tell you how.

Claud. She did, indeed.

D. Pedro. How, how, I pray you? You amaze me; I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

Leon. I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

Bene. I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it; knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence.

Claud. He hath ta'en the infection; hold it up.

D. Pedro. Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

Leon. No, and swears she never will; that's her torment.

Claud. 'Tis true, indeed; so your daughter says. "Shall I," says she, "that have so oft encountered him with scorn, write to him that I love him?"

Leon. This says she now when she is beginning to write to him; for she'll be up twenty times a night, and there will she sit in her smock till she have writ a sheet of paper—my daughter tells us all.

Claud. Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

Leon. O, when she had writ it and was reading it over, she found Benedick and Beatrice between the sheet?

Claud. That.

Leon. O, she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence; railed at herself, that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her. "I measure him," says she, "by my own spirit; for I should flout him, if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should."

Claud. Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs,

123. *gull:* trick, deception. 125. *sure:* commonly used for *surely*.
126. *hold it up:* keep it up. 137. *smock:* undershirt.

beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses: " O sweet Benedick! God give me patience!"

Leon. She doth indeed—my daughter says so; and the ecstasy hath so much overborne her that my daughter is sometime afeard she will do a desperate outrage to herself—it is very true.

D. Pedro. It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

Claud. To what end? He would make but a sport of it and torment the poor lady worse.

D. Pedro. An he should, it were an alms to hang him. She's an excellent sweet lady; and, out of all suspicion, she is virtuous.

Claud. And she is exceeding wise.

D. Pedro. In everything but in loving Benedick.

Leon. O, my lord, wisdom and blood combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one that blood hath the victory. I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian.

D. Pedro. I would she had bestowed this dotage on me; I would have daffed all other respects and made her half myself. I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what a' will say.

Leon. Were it good, think you?

Claud. Hero thinks surely she will die; for she says she will die, if he love her not, and she will die, ere she make her love known, and she will die, if he woo her, rather than she will bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

D. Pedro. She doth well; if she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it, for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptible spirit.

Claud. He is a very proper man.

D. Pedro. He hath indeed a good outward happiness.

Claud. Before God, and, in my mind, very wise.

D. Pedro. He doth indeed show some sparks that are like wit.

Claud. And I take him to be valiant.

157. *ecstasy:* frenzy. 161. *discover:* reveal. 176. *daffed:* doffed, put off. 187. *contemptible:* contemptuous. 189. *proper:* handsome. 190–1. *good outward happiness:* fairly attractive exterior.

D. Pedro. As Hector, I assure you; and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise, for either he avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most Christian-like fear.

Leon. If he do fear God, a' must necessarily keep peace; if he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling.

D. Pedro. And so will he do; for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece. Shall we go seek Benedick, and tell him of her love?

Claud. Never tell him, my lord; let her wear it out with good counsel.

Leon. Nay, that's impossible; she may wear her heart out first.

D. Pedro. Well, we will hear further of it by your daughter; let it cool the while. I love Benedick well; and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

Leon. My lord, will you walk? Dinner is ready.

Claud. If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation.

D. Pedro. Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter—that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb-show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner.

[*Exeunt Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato.*

Bene. [*Coming forward*] This can be no trick; the conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady. It seems her affections have their full bent.

196. *Hector.* The great Trojan hero was in Shakespeare's day looked upon as an empty boaster. 206. *large jests:* broad jokes. 209–10. *wear . . . counsel:* endure it with good resolutions. 219. *upon this:* because of this. 223. *carry:* carry out. 224. *one an opinion:* the same opinion. 226. *dumb-show:* pantomime, because they will both be too embarrassed to speak. 229. *sadly borne:* seriously carried on.

Love me! Why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured; they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they say too that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry. I must not seem proud. Happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair—'tis a truth, I can bear them witness—and virtuous—'tis so, I cannot reprove it—and wise, but for loving me. By my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage; but doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour? No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. [*Enter* BEATRICE.] Here comes Beatrice. By this day! she's a fair lady; I do spy some marks of love in her.

Beat. Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

Bene. Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

Beat. I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me; if it had been painful, I would not have come.

Bene. You take pleasure then in the message?

Beat. Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point and choke a daw withal. You have no stomach, signior; fare you well. [*Exit.*

Bene. Ha! "Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner"; there's a double meaning in that. "I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me"; that's as much as to say, "Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks." If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew. I will go get her picture. [*Exit.*

249. *sentences:* maxims. 265. *You have no stomach:* you aren't hungry? 272. *Jew:* the example of the arch-ingrate.

ACT III

Scene I. Leonato's *orchard.*

Enter Hero, Margaret, *and* Ursula.

Hero. Good Margaret, run thee to the parlour;
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
Proposing with the prince and Claudio.
Whisper her ear and tell her I and Ursula
Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse
Is all of her. Say that thou overheard'st us;
And bid her steal into the pleached bower,
Where honeysuckles, ripen'd by the sun,
Forbid the sun to enter, like favourites,
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Against that power that bred it. There will she hide her
To listen our purpose. This is thy office;
Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

Marg. I'll make her come, I warrant you, presently. [*Exit.*

Hero. Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley up and down,
Our talk must only be of Benedick.
When I do name him, let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit.
My talk to thee must be how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice. Of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay.

Enter Beatrice, *taking care not to be seen.*

Now begin,
For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.

Urs. The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish

[III. i] 3. ***Proposing:*** conversing. 7. ***pleached:*** made of intertwined branches. 12. ***listen:*** listen to. 14. ***presently:*** immediately. 16. ***trace:*** walk along, follow.

Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait.
So angle we for Beatrice, who even now
Is couched in the woodbine coverture.
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.
Hero. Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it.
[*Approaching the bower.*
No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful;
I know her spirits are as coy and wild
As haggards of the rock.
Urs. But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?
Hero. So says the prince and my new-trothed lord.
Urs. And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?
Hero. They did entreat me to acquaint her of it;
But I persuaded them, if they loved Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.
Urs. Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full as fortunate a bed
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?
Hero. O god of love! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man,
But Nature never framed a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice.
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising what they look on, and her wit
Values itself so highly that to her
All matter else seems weak; she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-endeared.
Urs. Sure, I think so;
And therefore certainly it were not good
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

36. ***haggards:*** wild female hawks. 52. ***Misprising:*** not setting a proper value upon.

Hero. Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured,
But she would spell him backward. If fair-faced,
She would swear the gentleman should be her sister;
If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antic,
Made a foul blot; if tall, a lance ill-headed;
If low, an agate very vilely cut;
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;
If silent, why, a block moved with none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out
And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

Urs. Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

Hero. No, not to be so odd and from all fashions
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable;
But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She would mock me into air; O, she would laugh me
Out of myself, press me to death with wit.
Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly;
It were a better death than die with mocks,
Which is as bad as die with tickling.

Urs. Yet tell her of it, hear what she will say.

Hero. No, rather I will go to Benedick
And counsel him to fight against his passion.
And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with; one doth not know
How much an ill word may empoison liking.

Urs. O, do not do your cousin such a wrong.
She cannot be so much without true judgment—
Having so swift and excellent a wit

61. *spell him backward:* turn him wrong side out. 63. *black:* dark-complexioned. *antic:* clown, a grotesque. 65. *agate:* an allusion to the small figures engraved upon agate stones. 84. *honest slanders.* Observe that the plot against the pride of Benedick and Beatrice proceeds by honest slander, that against Claudio and Hero by malicious slander.

As she is prized to have—as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.
Hero. He is the only man of Italy,
Always excepted my dear Claudio.
Urs. I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy; Signior Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, argument, and valour
Goes foremost in report through Italy.
Hero. Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.
Urs. His excellence did earn it, ere he had it.
When are you married, madam?
Hero. Why, every day, tomorrow. Come, go in;
I'll show thee some attires, and have thy counsel
Which is the best to furnish me tomorrow.
Urs. She's limed, I warrant you; we have caught her, madam.
Hero. If it proves so, then loving goes by haps;
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.
[*Exeunt Hero and Ursula.*
Beat. [*Coming from hiding*] What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And, Benedick, love on; I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand.
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band;
For others say thou dost deserve, and I
Believe it better than reportingly. [*Exit.*

101. *every day, tomorrow:* i.e., I shall be a married woman every day after tomorrow. 102. *attires:* dresses. 104. *limed:* caught as with birdlime. F_1 reads *tane,* taken. 105. *haps:* accidents, chance. 112. *Taming my wild heart.* The figure is taken from falconry by Beatrice, who has heard herself described as a haggard. 116. *reportingly:* by report.

Scene II. *A room in* Leonato's *house the day before the wedding.*

Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, *and* Leonato.

D. Pedro. I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then go I toward Aragon.

Claud. I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.

D. Pedro. Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage as to show a child his new coat and forbid him to wear it. I will only be bold with Benedick for his company; for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth. He hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him; he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinks his tongue speaks.

Bene. Gallants, I am not as I have been.

Leon. So say I; methinks you are sadder.

Claud. I hope he be in love.

D. Pedro. Hang him, truant! There's no true drop of blood in him, to be truly touched with love; if he be sad, he wants money.

Bene. I have the toothache.

D. Pedro. Draw it.

Bene. Hang it!

Claud. You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

D. Pedro. What? Sigh for the toothache?

Leon. Where is but a humour or a worm.

Bene. Well, every one cannot master a grief but he that has it.

[ii] 15. Observe the change in Benedick; his manner is uneasy, his dress is strangely like that which he has condemned before, and he has been shaved. 23. *Hang it.* Barbers, the dental surgeons of Shakespeare's day, hung extracted teeth upon strings in their shop windows. 27. *humour:* moisture, a secretion. *worm.* The Elizabethans believed that holes in teeth were caused by worms. 28–9. *Well,. . . it.* Most modern editions emend *cannot* to *can;* the meaning, however, is: "Not everyone, but only he who has a grief, can master it."

Claud. Yet say I, he is in love.

D. Pedro. There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises; as, to be a Dutchman today, a Frenchman tomorrow, or in the shape of two countries at once, as a German from the waist downward, all slops, and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet. Unless he have a fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy, as you would have it appear he is.

Claud. If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs. A' brushes his hat o' mornings; what should that bode?

D. Pedro. Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

Claud. No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him, and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis-balls.

Leon. Indeed, he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

D. Pedro. Nay, a' rubs himself with civet; can you smell him out by that?

Claud. That's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in love.

D. Pedro. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

Claud. And when was he wont to wash his face?

D. Pedro. Yea, or to paint himself? For the which, I hear what they say of him.

Claud. Nay, but his jesting spirit, which is now crept into a lute-string and now governed by stops.

D. Pedro. Indeed, that tells a heavy tale for him; conclude, conclude he is in love.

Claud. Nay, but I know who loves him.

D. Pedro. That would I know too; I warrant, one that knows him not.

Claud. Yes, and his ill conditions; and, in despite of all, dies for him.

31. *fancy:* love. 34–7. *or . . . doublet.* Omitted in F_1. 36. *slops:* large loose trousers. 47. *stuffed tennis-balls.* Tennis balls were filled with hair. 50. *civet:* perfume. 56. *wash his face:* use a face lotion. 62. *stops:* frets. The lute was an instrument suitable for accompanying a love song. 68. *ill conditions:* bad qualities.

D. Pedro. She shall be buried with her face upwards.

Bene. Yet is this no charm for the toothache. Old signior, walk aside with me; I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear.

[*He goes out with Leonato.*

D. Pedro. For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

Claud. 'Tis even so. Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice, and then the two bears will not bite one another when they meet.

Enter Don John.

D. John. My lord and brother, God save you!

D. Pedro. Good den, brother.

D. John. If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

D. Pedro. In private?

D. John. If it please you; yet Count Claudio may hear, for what I would speak of concerns him.

D. Pedro. What's the matter?

D. John. [*To Claudio*] Means your lordship to be married tomorrow?

D. Pedro. You know he does.

D. John. I know not that, when he knows what I know.

Claud. If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it.

D. John. You may think I love you not; let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest. For my brother, I think he holds you well, and in dearness of heart hath holp to effect your ensuing marriage—surely suit ill spent and labour ill bestowed.

D. Pedro. Why, what's the matter?

D. John. I came hither to tell you; and, circumstances shortened (for she has been too long a talking of), the lady is disloyal.

75. *hobby-horses:* buffoons, an allusion probably to the grotesque figure of a hobbyhorse in the morris dance. 76. If indeed Benedick is about to speak of Beatrice, he is interrupted. 83. *Good den:* a corruption of "good e'en" or "good evening." 97. *discover:* reveal. 99. *aim better at me:* judge better of me. 102. *holp:* helped. 105. *circumstances shortened:* in brief. 106. *too long . . . of:* talked about too long.

Claud. Who, Hero?

D. John. Even she; Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

Claud. Disloyal?

D. John. The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say she were worse—think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant; go but with me tonight, you shall see her chamber-window entered, even the night before her wedding-day—if you love her then, tomorrow wed her. But it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

Claud. May this be so?

D. Pedro. I will not think it.

D. John. If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know. If you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more and heard more, proceed accordingly.

Claud. If I see anything tonight why I should not marry her tomorrow, in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

D. Pedro. And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

D. John. I will disparage her no farther till you are my witnesses; bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

D. Pedro. O day untowardly turned!

Claud. O mischief strangely thwarting!

D. John. O plague right well prevented! So will you say when you have seen the sequel. [*Exeunt.*

126. It is characteristic of the credulous Claudio that this resolution is quickly formed. 132. *coldly:* calmly.

Scene III. *A street in front of* Leonato's *house the same night.*

Dogberry *and* Verges *are assembled with the* Watch, *armed with bills, one of them bearing a lantern.*

Dog. Are you good men and true?

Verg. Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

Dog. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

Verg. Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry.

Dog. First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable? 10

First Watch. Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacole; for they can write and read.

Dog. Come hither, neighbour Seacole. God hath blessed you with a good name. To be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature.

Sec. Watch. Both which, master constable—

Dog. You have; I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern. This is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name. 27

Sec. Watch. How if a' will not stand?

Dog. Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together and thank God you are rid of a knave.

Verg. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

Dog. True, and they are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects. You shall also make no noise in the streets;

[iii] 3. It is not necessary to call attention to all of Dogberry's and Verges' malapropisms. 19. *favour:* face.

for for the watch to babble and to talk is most tolerable and not to be endured.

Sec. Watch. We will rather sleep than talk; we know what belongs to a watch.

Dog. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend. Only have a care that your bills be not stolen. Well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed.

Sec. Watch. How if they will not?

Dog. Why, then, let them alone till they are sober. If they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for.

Sec. Watch. Well, sir—

Dog. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

Sec. Watch. If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

Dog. Truly, by your office, you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled. The most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is and steal out of your company.

Verg. You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

Dog. Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

Verg. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse and bid her still it.

Sec. Watch. How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?

Dog. Why, then, depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying; for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes will never answer a calf when he bleats.

Verg. 'Tis very true.

Dog. This is the end of the charge:—you, constable, are to

39 ff. Both Q and F_1 head these speeches simply *Watch.*
43. *bills:* watchmen's staves, axe-shaped weapons with long wooden handles.

present the prince's own person—if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him. [*He demonstrates.*

Verg. Nay, by 'r lady, that I think a' cannot.

Dog. Five shillings to one on 't, with any man that knows the statues, he may stay him—marry, not without the prince be willing; for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man; and it is an offense to stay a man against his will.

Verg. By 'r lady, I think it be so.

Dog. Ha, ah, ha! Well, masters, good night; an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me. Keep your fellows' counsels and your own, and good night. Come, neighbour.

Sec. Watch. Well, masters, we hear our charge. Let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

Dog. One word more, honest neighbours. I pray you, watch about Signior Leonato's door; for the wedding being there tomorrow, there is a great coil tonight. Adieu; be vigitant, I beseech you. [*Exeunt Dogberry and Verges.*

Enter Borachio *and* Conrade.

Bora. What, Conrade!

Sec. Watch. [*Softly to his companions*] Peace! Stir not.

Bora. Conrade, I say!

Con. Here, man, I am at thy elbow.

Bora. Mass, and my elbow itched; I thought there would a scab follow.

Con. I will owe thee an answer for that; and now forward with thy tale.

Bora. Stand thee close, then, under this pent-house, for it drizzles rain; and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

Sec. Watch. Some treason, masters; yet stand close.

Bora. Therefore know I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

Con. Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?

Bora. Thou shouldst rather ask if it were possible any villainy should be so rich; for when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

85. *statues.* So F_1; Q reads *statutes.* Dogberry, however, undoubtedly said *statues.* 100. *coil:* to-do.

Con. I wonder at it.

Bora. That shows thou art unconfirmed. Thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

Con. Yes, it is apparel.

Bora. I mean, the fashion.

Con. Yes, the fashion is the fashion. 129

Bora. Tush! I may as well say the fool's the fool. But seest thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is?

Sec. Watch. I know that Deformed; a' has been a vile thief this seven year; a' goes up and down like a gentleman; I remember his name.

Bora. Didst thou not hear somebody?

Con. No; 'twas the vane on the house. 138

Bora. Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? How giddily a' turns about all the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty? Sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy painting, sometime like god Bel's priests in the old church-window, sometime like the shaven Hercules in the smirched worm-eaten tapestry, where his codpiece seems as massy as his club?

Con. All this I see, and I see that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man. But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion? 152

Bora. Not so, neither, but know that I have tonight wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero. She leans me out at her mistress' chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good night—I tell this tale vilely—I should first tell thee how the prince, Claudio, and my master, planted

124. *unconfirmed:* inexperienced. 143. *reechy:* dirty, smoky. 144. *Bel:* Baal, a god worshipped by the Babylonians. The discomfiture of his priests by Elijah was a subject frequently chosen for stained-glass windows. 145. *shaven Hercules.* Hercules, like Samson, was deceived by his mistress, Omphale, shaven, and set to work at the distaff. 146. *worm-eaten tapestry:* moth-eaten wall hanging. *codpiece:* part of male attire sometimes made indelicately large in Shakespeare's time. 155. *leans me out:* leans out to me.

and placed and possessed by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

Con. And thought they Margaret was Hero?

Bora. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio; but the devil my master knew she was Margaret; and partly by his oaths, which first possessed them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villainy, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged, swore he would meet her, as he was appointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw o'er night and send her home again without a husband.

First Watch. We charge you, in the prince's name, stand!

Sec. Watch. Call up the right master constable. We have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

First Watch. And one Deformed is one of them. I know him; a' wears a lock.

Con. Masters, masters—

Sec. Watch. You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

Con. Masters—

First Watch. Never speak; we charge you let us obey you to go with us.

Bora. We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these men's bills.

Con. A commodity in question, I warrant you. Come, we'll obey you. [*Exeunt.*

159. ***possessed:*** (a) informed, (b) possessed by the devil, Don John. 183. ***lock:*** a lovelock. 190. ***commodity:*** merchandise, wares. The allusion is to the foraging of soldiers on the march. To "take up" also meant to "apprehend." 192. ***in question:*** (a) under critical examination, (b) in demand.

SCENE IV. HERO'S *apartment early on the wedding morning.*

HERO, *at her dressing-table;* MARGARET *and* URSULA *assisting her.*

Hero. Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

Urs. I will, lady.

Hero. And bid her come hither.

Urs. Well. [*Exit.*

Marg. Troth, I think your other rabato were better.

Hero. No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

Marg. By my troth, 's not so good; and I warrant your cousin will say so.

Hero. My cousin's a fool, and thou art another; I'll wear none but this.

Marg. I like the new tire within excellently, if the hair were a thought browner; and your gown's a most rare fashion, i' faith. I saw the Duchess of Milan's gown that they praise so.

Hero. O, that exceeds, they say.

Marg. By my troth, 's but a night-gown in respect of yours: cloth o' gold, and cuts, and laced with silver, set with pearls, down sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts, round underborne with a bluish tinsel; but for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on 't.

Hero. God give me joy to wear it! For my heart is exceeding heavy.

Marg. 'Twill be heavier soon by the weight of a man.

Hero. Fie upon thee! Art not ashamed?

Marg. Of what, lady? Of speaking honourably? Is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage? I think you would have me say, "saving your reverence, a husband." An bad thinking do not wrest true speak-

[iv] 6. *rabato:* a kind of stiff collar or ruff worn about 1590–1600. 13. *tire:* headdress, wig. 14. *thought:* trifle. 18. *night-gown:* dressing-gown. 19. *cuts:* ornamental slashes. 21. *underborne with:* stitched onto. 33. *An bad . . . speaking:* i.e., if evil thought does not twist my meaning the wrong way.

ing, I'll offend nobody; is there any harm in "the heavier for a husband"? None, I think, an it be the right husband and the right wife; otherwise 'tis light, and not heavy. Ask my Lady Beatrice else; here she comes.

Enter Beatrice.

Hero. Good morrow, coz.

Beat. Good morrow, sweet Hero.

Hero. Why, how now? Do you speak in the sick tune?

Beat. I am out of all other tune, methinks.

Marg. Clap's into *Light o' Love;* that goes without a burden. Do you sing it, and I'll dance it.

Beat. Ye light o' love with your heels! Then, if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barns.

Marg. O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels.

Beat. 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin; 'tis time you were ready. By my troth, I am exceeding ill, heigh-ho!

Marg. For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?

Beat. For the letter that begins them all, H.

Marg. Well, an you be not turned Turk, there's no more sailing by the star.

Beat. What means the fool, trow?

Marg. Nothing I; but God send every one their heart's desire!

Hero. These gloves the count sent me; they are an excellent perfume.

Beat. I am stuffed, cousin; I cannot smell.

Marg. A maid, and stuffed? There's goodly catching of cold.

Beat. O, God help me! God help me! How long have you professed apprehension?

44. *Clap's into:* strike up. *Light o' Love:* a popular tune. 45. *burden:* refrain. 47. *Ye light o' love:* you wanton. 49. *barns:* children. 54–5. *heigh-ho . . . husband:* see II, i, 332. 56. *H:* a pun on *ache* (pronounced "aitch"). 57. *turned Turk:* changed your nature. 58. *sailing by the star:* believing in signs. 61. *their.* Agreement in number is not always found in Elizabethan pronouns. 64. *I am stuffed:* I have a cold. 67–8. *How . . . apprehension:* how long have you pretended to intelligence?

Marg. Ever since you left it. Doth not my wit become me rarely?

Beat. It is not seen enough, you should wear it in your cap. By my troth, I am sick.

Marg. Get you some of this distilled Carduus Benedictus, and lay it to your heart; it is the only thing for a qualm.

Hero. There thou prickest her with a thistle.

Beat. Benedictus! Why Benedictus? You have some moral in this Benedictus.

Marg. Moral? No, by my troth, I have no moral meaning; I meant, plain holy-thistle. You may think perchance that I think you are in love—nay, by 'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list, nor I list not to think what I can, nor indeed I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in love or that you will be in love or that you can be in love. Yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man; he swore he would never marry, and yet now, in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging; and how you may be converted I know not, but methinks you look with your eyes as other women do.

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

Marg. Not a false gallop.

Re-enter URSULA.

Urs. Madam, withdraw; the prince, the count, Signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants of the town, are come to fetch you to church.

Hero. Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula. [*Exeunt.*

73. *Carduus Benedictus:* the Blessed Thistle, noted for its medicinal properties. 78. *moral:* secret meaning. 79 ff. Observe Margaret's torrent of nonsense as she realizes that she has said too much for Beatrice's quick mind to pass as casual badinage. 94. *false gallop:* canter.

Scene v. *Another room in* Leonato's *house.*

Enter Leonato, *to* Dogberry *and* Verges, *who are awaiting him.*

Leon. What would you with me, honest neighbour?

Dog. Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you that decerns you nearly.

Leon. Brief, I pray you; for you see it is a busy time with me.

Dog. Marry, this it is, sir.

Verg. Yes, in truth it is, sir.

Leon. What is it, my good friends?

Dog. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter—an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

Verg. Yes, I thank God I am as honest as any man living that is an old man and no honester than I.

Dog. Comparisons are odorous. Palabras, neighbour Verges.

Leon. Neighbours, you are tedious.

Dog. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers. But truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find it in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

Leon. All thy tediousness on me, ah?

Dog. Yea, an 'twere a thousand pound more than 'tis; for I hear as good exclamation on your worship as of any man in the city, and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

Verg. And so am I.

Leon. I would fain know what you have to say.

Verg. Marry, sir, our watch tonight, excepting your worship's presence, ha' ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

Dog. A good old man, sir; he will be talking. As they say, "when the age is in, the wit is out." God help us, it is a world

[v] 13. *honest . . . brows.* Furness suggests that this phrase takes its origin from the practice of branding criminals between their brows. 18. *Palabras:* i.e., (mere) words. 37. *when the age is in:* Dogberry's variation of the proverb, "When the ale is in, the wit is out."

to see. Well said, i' faith, neighbour Verges. Well, God's a good man; an two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind. An honest soul, i' faith, sir; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread; but God is to be worshipped; all men are not alike, alas, good neighbour!

Leon. Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

Dog. Gifts that God gives.

Leon. I must leave you.

Dog. One word, sir; our watch, sir, have indeed comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

Leon. Take their examination yourself and bring it me; I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.

Dog. It shall be suffigance.

Leon. Drink some wine ere you go; fare you well.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband.

Leon. I'll wait upon them; I am ready.

[*Exeunt Leonato and Messenger.*

Dog. Go, good partner, go, get you to Francis Seacole; bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the gaol. We are now to examination these men.

Verg. And we must do it wisely.

Dog. We will spare for no wit, I warrant you; here's that shall drive some of them to a noncome. Only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication and meet me at the gaol. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

Scene I. *At the altar of a church.*

Don Pedro, Don John, Leonato, Friar Francis, Claudio, Benedick, Hero, Beatrice, *and Attendants, assembled for the wedding.*

Leon. Come, Friar Francis, be brief; only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

Friar. You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady?

Claud. No.

Leon. To be married to her; friar, you come to marry her.

Friar. Lady, you come hither to be married to this count?

Hero. I do.

Friar. If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoined, I charge you, on your souls, to utter it.

Claud. Know you any, Hero?

Hero. None, my lord.

Friar. Know you any, count?

Leon. I dare make his answer, none.

Claud. O, what men dare do! What men may do! What men daily do, not knowing what they do!

Bene. How now! Interjections? Why, then, some be of laughing, as "ah, ha, he!"

Claud. Stand thee by, friar. Father, by your leave.
Will you with free and unconstrained soul
Give me this maid, your daughter?

Leon. As freely, son, as God did give her me.

Claud. And what have I to give you back, whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?

D. Pedro. Nothing, unless you render her again.

Claud. Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.
There, Leonato, take her back again;
Give not this rotten orange to your friend;

[IV. i] 20–1. *not . . . do.* Omitted in F_1. 31. *learn.* teach.

She's but the sign and semblance of her honour.
Behold how like a maid she blushes here!
O, what authority and show of truth
Can cunning Sin cover itself withal!
Comes not that blood as modest evidence
To witness simple Virtue? Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none;
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed;
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.
Leon. What do you mean, my lord?
Claud. Not to be married,
Not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.
Leon. Dear my lord, if you, in your own proof,
Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth,
And made defeat of her virginity—
Claud. I know what you would say: if I have known her,
You will say she did embrace me as a husband,
And so extenuate the 'forehand sin.
No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large;
But, as a brother to his sister, show'd
Bashful sincerity and comely love.
Hero. And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?
Claud. Out on thee! Seeming? I will write against it.
You seem to me as Dian in her orb,
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood
Than Venus, or those pamper'd animals
That rage in savage sensuality.
Hero. Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide?
Leon. Sweet prince, why speak not you?
D. Pedro. What should I speak?

38. *modest evidence:* evidence of modesty. 42. *luxurious:* lustful 45. *approved:* proved. 46. *in your own proof:* by testing her virtue yourself. 51. *extenuate . . . sin.* Cf. *Measure for Measure,* IV, i, 71–2.

I stand dishonour'd, that have gone about
To link my dear friend to a common stale.
Leon. Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?
D. John. Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.
Bene. This looks not like a nuptial.
Hero. True, O God!
Claud. Leonato, stand I here?
Is this the prince? Is this the prince's brother?
Is this face Hero's? Are our eyes our own?
Leon. All this is so; but what of this, my lord?
Claud. Let me but move one question to your daughter;
And, by that fatherly and kindly power
That you have in her, bid her answer truly.
Leon. I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.
Hero. O, God defend me, how am I beset!
What kind of catechising call you this?
Claud. To make you answer truly to your name.
Hero. Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name
With any just reproach?
Claud. Marry, that can Hero;
Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.
What man was he talk'd with you yesternight
Out at your window betwixt twelve and one?
Now, if you are a maid, answer to this.
Hero. I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.
D. Pedro. Why, then are you no maiden. Leonato,
I am sorry you must hear; upon mine honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grieved count
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window—
Who hath indeed, most like a liberal villain,
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had
A thousand times in secret.
D. John. Fie, fie! They are not to be named, my lord,
Not to be spoke of;
There is not chastity enough in language

75. ***kindly:*** natural. 93. ***liberal:*** unrestrained, licentious.

Without offense to utter them. Thus, pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.
Claud. O Hero, what a Hero hadst thou been,
If half thy outward graces had been placed
About thy thoughts and counsels of thy heart!
But fare thee well, most foul, most fair, farewell,
Thou pure impiety and impious purity!
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eyelids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never shall it more be gracious.
Leon. Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?
[*Hero swoons.*
Beat. Why, how now, cousin, wherefore sink you down?
D. John. Come, let us go. These things, come thus to light,
Smother her spirits up.
[*Exeunt Don Pedro, Don John, and Claudio.*
Bene. How doth the lady?
Beat. Dead, I think. Help, uncle!
Hero! Why, Hero! Uncle! Signior Benedick! Friar!
Leon. O Fate, take not away thy heavy hand!
Death is the fairest cover for her shame
That may be wish'd for.
Beat. How now, cousin Hero!
Friar. Have comfort, lady.
Leon. Dost thou look up?
Friar. Yea, wherefore should she not?
Leon. Wherefore? Why, doth not every earthly thing
Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny
The story that is printed in her blood?
Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes;
For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,
Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,
Strike at thy life. Grieved I, I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame?

107. *conjecture:* suspicion. 128. *on the rearward of:* on top of.

O, one too much by thee! Why had I one?
Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?
Why had I not with charitable hand
Took up a beggar's issue at my gates,
Who smirched thus and mired with infamy,
I might have said "No part of it is mine;
This shame derives itself from unknown loins"?
But mine and mine I loved and mine I praised
And mine that I was proud on, mine so much
That I myself was to myself not mine,
Valuing of her—why, she, O, she is fallen
Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again
And salt too little which may season give
To her foul-tainted flesh!
Bene. Sir, sir, be patient.
For my part, I am so attired in wonder,
I know not what to say.
Beat. O, on my soul, my cousin is belied!
Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?
Beat. No, truly not; although, until last night,
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.
Leon. Confirm'd, confirm'd! O, that is stronger made
Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron!
Would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie,
Who loved her so, that, speaking of her foulness,
Wash'd it with tears? Hence from her, let her die!
Friar. Hear me a little—for I have only been
Silent so long and given way unto
This course of fortune—
By noting of the lady, I have mark'd
A thousand blushing apparitions
To start into her face, a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness beat away those blushes;
And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire,

134. *issue:* child. 159. Most editors believe a line or more has been omitted after *fortune.*

To burn the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth. Call me a fool;
Trust not my reading nor my observations,
Which with experimental seal doth warrant
The tenour of my book; trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor divinity,
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here
Under some biting error.
Leon. Friar, it cannot be.
Thou seest that all the grace that she hath left
Is that she will not add to her damnation
A sin of perjury; she not denies it.
Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse
That which appears in proper nakedness?
Friar. Lady, what man is he you are accused of?
Hero. They know that do accuse me; I know none.
If I know more of any man alive
Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sins lack mercy! O my father,
Prove you that any man with me conversed
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death!
Friar. There is some strange misprision in the princes.
Bene. Two of them have the very bent of honour;
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lives in John the bastard,
Whose spirits toil in frame of villainies.
Leon. I know not. If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her; if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eat up my invention,

168. *experimental seal:* the stamp of experience. *warrant:* guarantee, test. 169. *tenour of my book:* the general drift or purport of my reading. 187. *misprision:* misunderstanding. 188. *the very bent:* every mark. 190. *practice:* contriving. 191. *frame:* framing.

Nor fortune made such havoc of my means,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall find, awaked in such a kind,
Both strength of limb and policy of mind,
Ability in means and choice of friends,
To quit me of them throughly.
Friar. Pause awhile,
And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Your daughter here the princes left for dead.
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it that she is dead indeed;
Maintain a mourning ostentation
And on your family's old monument
Hang mournful epitaphs and do all rites
That appertain unto a burial.
Leon. What shall become of this? What will this do?
Friar. Marry, this well carried shall on her behalf
Change slander to remorse—that is some good.
But not for that dream I on this strange course,
But on this travail look for greater birth.
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Upon the instant that she was accused,
Shall be lamented, pitied, and excused
Of every hearer; for it so falls out
That what we have we prize not to the worth
Whiles we enjoy it, but being lack'd and lost,
Why, then we rack the value, then we find
The virtue that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours. So will it fare with Claudio.
When he shall hear she died upon his words,
The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination,
And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,

202. *throughly:* thoroughly. 207. *mourning ostentation:* display of mourning. 213. *remorse:* pity. 222. *rack:* stretch, exaggerate. 227. *study of imagination:* imaginative reflection.

More moving-delicate and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
Than when she lived indeed; then shall he mourn,
If ever love had interest in his liver,
And wish he had not so accused her,
No, though he thought his accusation true.
Let this be so, and doubt not but success
Will fashion the event in better shape
Than I can lay it down in likelihood.
But if all aim but this be levell'd false,
The supposition of the lady's death
Will quench the wonder of her infamy.
And if it sort not well, you may conceal her,
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some reclusive and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

Bene. Signior Leonato, let the friar advise you;
And though you know my inwardness and love
Is very much unto the prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this
As secretly and justly as your soul
Should with your body.

Leon. Being that I flow in grief,
The smallest twine may lead me.

Friar. 'Tis well consented. Presently away;
For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.
Come, lady, die to live; this wedding-day
Perhaps is but prolong'd; have patience and endure.

[*Exeunt all but Benedick and Beatrice.*

Bene. Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

Beat. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

Bene. I will not desire that.

Beat. You have no reason; I do it freely.

Bene. Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wronged.

233. *liver:* the supposed seat of the passions. 236. *success:* developments, what follows. 237. *event:* outcome. 239. *levell'd:* aimed. 256. *prolong'd:* postponed.

Beat. Ah, how much might the man deserve of me that would right her!

Bene. Is there any way to show such friendship?

Beat. A very even way, but no such friend.

Bene. May a man do it?

Beat. It is a man's office, but not yours.

Bene. I do love nothing in the world so well as you; is not that strange?

Beat. As strange as the thing I know not. It were as possible for me to say I loved nothing so well as you—but believe me not —and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing. I am sorry for my cousin.

Bene. By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

Beat. Do not swear, and eat it.

Bene. I will swear by it that you love me, and I will make him eat it that says I love not you.

Beat. Will you not eat your word?

Bene. With no sauce that can be devised to it. I protest I love thee.

Beat. Why, then, God forgive me!

Bene. What offense, sweet Beatrice?

Beat. You have stayed me in a happy hour; I was about to protest I loved you.

Bene. And do it with all thy heart.

Beat. I love you with so much of my heart that none is left to protest.

Bene. Come, bid me do anything for thee.

Beat. Kill Claudio.

Bene. Ha! Not for the wide world.

Beat. You kill me to deny it. Farewell.

Bene. Tarry, sweet Beatrice.

Beat. I am gone, though I am here; there is no love in you— nay, I pray you, let me go.

Bene. Beatrice—

268. ***but not yours.*** Beatrice probably means nothing more than that Benedick, not being Hero's kinsman, is not obliged to avenge her. 285. ***happy hour:*** fortunate time.

Beat. In faith, I will go.

Bene. We'll be friends first.

Beat. You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy.

Bene. Is Claudio thine enemy?

Beat. Is a' not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O, that I were a man! What, bear her in hand until they come to take hands; and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour—O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.

Bene. Hear me, Beatrice—

Beat. Talk with a man out at a window! A proper saying!

Bene. Nay, but, Beatrice—

Beat. Sweet Hero! She is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone.

Bene. Beat—

Beat. Princes and counties! Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count, Count Comfect; a sweet gallant, surely! O, that I were a man for his sake! Or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into curtsies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too; he is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

Bene. Tarry, good Beatrice. By this hand, I love thee.

Beat. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

Bene. Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

Beat. Yea, as sure as I have a thought or a soul.

Bene. Enough, I am engaged; I will challenge him. I will kiss your hand, and so I leave you. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account. As you hear of me, so think of me.

306. ***bear her in hand:*** build up her hopes. 307. ***uncovered:*** public, open 318. ***Count Comfect:*** "Lord Lollipop." 335. ***engaged:*** pledged.

Go, comfort your cousin. I must say she is dead—and so, farewell. [*Exeunt.* 340

Scene II. *A prison some time later.*

Dogberry, Verges, *and the* Sexton *are assembled in their official robes; the* Watch *bring in* Conrade *and* Borachio.

Dog. Is our whole dissembly appeared?

Verg. O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton.

[*They are brought, and the Sexton seats himself.*

Sex. Which be the malefactors?

Dog. Marry, that am I and my partner.

Verg. Nay, that's certain; we have the exhibition to examine.

Sex. But which are the offenders that are to be examined? Let them come before master constable.

Dog. Yea, marry, let them come before me. What is your name, friend? 11

Bora. Borachio.

Dog. Pray, write down "Borachio." Yours, sirrah?

Con. I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

Dog. Write down, "Master Gentleman Conrade." Masters, do you serve God?

Con. } Yea, sir, we hope. 19
Bora. }

Dog. Write down, that they hope they serve God—and write "God" first, for God defend but God should go before such villains! Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

[ii] In this scene both Q and F_1 assign the speeches of Dogberry to *Kemp* or *Andrew* (i.e., "Merry Andrew," or clown), and those of Verges to *Cowley*. Will Kempe and Richard Cowley were members of the Shakespearean company, and their names have here intruded into the text, probably from the playhouse prompt-copy. S. D. *Sexton*. The stage directions of both Q and F_1 (not the speech-prefixes) call him "Town-Clerk." 15. *gentleman*. Conrade is insulted at being addressed as "sirrah." 19–22. *Yea . . . villains*. Omitted in F_1.

Con. Marry, sir, we say we are none.

Dog. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him. Come you hither, sirrah; a word in your ear. Sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

Bora. Sir, I say to you we are none.

Dog. Well, stand aside. 'Fore God, they are both in a tale. Have you writ down, that they are none?

Sex. Master constable, you go not the way to examine; you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

Dog. Yea, marry, that's the eftest way. Let the watch come forth. Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

First Watch. This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

Dog. Write down "Prince John a villain." Why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain.

Bora. Master constable—

Dog. Pray thee, fellow, peace; I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

Sex. What heard you him say else?

Sec. Watch. Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully.

Dog. Flat burglary as ever was committed.

Verg. Yea, by th' mass, that it is.

Sex. What else, fellow?

First Watch. And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

Dog. O villain! Thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.

Sex. What else?

Watch. This is all.

Sex. And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away; Hero was in this

28. *go about with:* get the better of. 32. *they . . . tale:* they tell the same tale. 38. *eftest:* an unexplained blunder, perhaps "quickest."

manner accused, in this very manner refused, and upon the grief of this suddenly died. Master constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's; I will go before and show him their examination. [*Exit.*

Dog. Come, let them be opinioned.

Verg. Let them be in the hands— 70

Con. Off, coxcomb!

Dog. God's my life, where's the sexton? Let him write down the prince's officer "coxcomb." Come, bind them. Thou naughty varlet!

Con. Away! You are an ass, you are an ass.

Dog. Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years? O that he were here to write me down an ass! But, masters, remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass. No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow, and, which is more, an officer, and, which is more, a householder, and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina, and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that hath two gowns, and everything handsome about him. Bring him away. O that I had been writ down an ass! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

Scene I. *The street before* Leonato's *house.*

Enter Leonato *and* Antonio, *in conversation.*

Ant. If you go on thus, you will kill yourself;
And 'tis not wisdom thus to second grief
Against yourself.

Leon. I pray thee, cease thy counsel,

69. ***opinioned:*** pinioned. 70. Both Q and F_1 read: ***Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe.*** Q gives the line to *Cowley* (Verges); F_1, to *Sexton.* 74. ***naughty:*** good-for-nothing.

[V. i] 2. ***second:*** assist.

Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve; give not me counsel;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a father that so loved his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of patience;
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine
And let it answer every strain for strain,
As thus for thus and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form—
If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
Bid Sorrow wag, cry "hem!" when he should groan,
Patch Grief with proverbs, make Misfortune drunk
With candle-wasters; bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man; for, brother, men
Can counsel and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptial medicine to Rage,
Fetter strong Madness in a silken thread,
Charm Ache with air and Agony with words.
No, no, 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow,
But no man's virtue nor sufficiency
To be so moral when he shall endure
The like himself. Therefore give me no counsel;
My griefs cry louder than advertisement.

Ant. Therein do men from children nothing differ.

Leon. I pray thee, peace. I will be flesh and blood;
For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the toothache patiently,

16. A corrupt line. 17–18. ***make*** . . . ***candle-wasters:*** i.e., with the stupefying platitudes of bookworms who burn the midnight oil. 24. ***preceptial medicine:*** medicine of precepts. 28. ***wring:*** writhe. 32. ***advertisement:*** advice. 34. ***flesh and blood:*** human.

However they have writ the style of gods
And made a push at chance and sufferance.
Ant. Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;
Make those that do offend you suffer too.
Leon. There thou speak'st reason; nay, I will do so.
My soul doth tell me Hero is belied—
And that shall Claudio know; so shall the prince
And all of them that thus dishonour her.
Ant. Here comes the prince and Claudio hastily.

Enter Don Pedro *and* Claudio.

D. Pedro. Good den, good den.
Claud. Good day to both of you.
Leon. Hear you, my lords—
D. Pedro. We have some haste, Leonato.
Leon. Some haste, my lord! Well, fare you well, my lord.
Are you so hasty now? Well, all is one.
D. Pedro. Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man.
Ant. If he could right himself with quarrelling,
Some of us would lie low.
Claud. Who wrongs him?
Leon. Marry, thou dost wrong me; thou dissembler, thou—
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword;
I fear thee not.
Claud. Marry, beshrew my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of fear.
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.
Leon. Tush, tush, man; never fleer and jest at me.
I speak not like a dotard nor a fool,
As under privilege of age to brag
What I have done being young, or what would do
Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head,
Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me
That I am forced to lay my reverence by

37. *writ . . . gods:* pretended to be above human infirmities. 38. *push:* "pish." *sufferance:* suffering. 46. *Good den:* a corruption of "good e'en." 49. *all is one:* that's all right; what of it? 55. *beshrew:* curse. 62. *head:* face.

And, with grey hairs and bruise of many days,
Do challenge thee to trial of a man.
I say thou hast belied mine innocent child;
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lies buried with her ancestors;
O, in a tomb where never scandal slept,
Save this of hers, framed by thy villainy!
Claud. My villainy?
Leon. Thine, Claudio; thine, I say.
D. Pedro. You say not right, old man.
Leon. My lord, my lord,
I'll prove it on his body, if he dare,
Despite his nice fence and his active practice,
His May of youth and bloom of lustihood.
Claud. Away! I will not have to do with you.
Leon. Canst thou so daff me? Thou hast kill'd my child;
If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.
Ant. He shall kill two of us, and men indeed,
But that's no matter; let him kill one first;
Win me and wear me; let him answer me.
Come, follow me, boy; come, sir boy, come, follow me,
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence—
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.
Leon. Brother—
Ant. Content yourself. God knows I loved my niece;
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains,
That dare as well answer a man indeed
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue—
Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops!
Leon. Brother Antony—
Ant. Hold you content. What, man! I know them, yea,
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple—
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-monging boys,
That lie, and cog, and flout, deprave, and slander,

75. *nice fence:* skillful defense. 78. *daff:* thrust aside. 84. *foining:* thrusting. 94. *Scambling:* contentious. *out-facing:* bluffing. 95. *cog:* deceive.

Go anticly, show outward hideousness,
And speak off half a dozen dangerous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst;
And this is all.

Leon. But, brother Antony—

Ant. Come, 'tis no matter; 100
Do not you meddle; let me deal in this.

D. Pedro. Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience.
My heart is sorry for your daughter's death;
But, on my honour, she was charged with nothing
But what was true and very full of proof.

Leon. My lord, my lord—

D. Pedro. I will not hear you.

Leon. No? Come, brother; away! I will be heard.

Ant. And shall, or some of us will smart for it.

[*Exeunt Leonato and Antonio into the house.*

D. Pedro. See, see; here comes the man we went to seek. 110

Enter Benedick.

Claud. Now, signior, what news?

Bene. Good day, my lord.

D. Pedro. Welcome, signior; you are almost come to part almost a fray.

Claud. We had like to have had our two noses snapped off with two old men without teeth.

D. Pedro. Leonato and his brother. What thinkest thou? Had we fought, I doubt we should have been too young for them.

Bene. In a false quarrel there is no true valour. I came to seek you both. 121

Claud. We have been up and down to seek thee; for we are high-proof melancholy and would fain have it beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit?

96. *anticly:* in absurd dress. *hideousness:* bellicosity. 102. *wake:* rouse. 111 ff. Observe the contrast here between the earnest, almost grim, Benedick and the Prince and Claudio, who, much in need of some one to cheer them up, greet him as if he were the same old sport-maker. 118. *doubt:* suspect. 123. *high-proof:* very.

Bene. It is in my scabbard; shall I draw it?

D. Pedro. Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?

Claud. Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit. I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels; draw, to pleasure us.

D. Pedro. As I am an honest man, he looks pale. Art thou sick, or angry? 131

Claud. What, courage, man! What though care killed a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

Bene. Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, an you charge it against me. I pray you choose another subject.

Claud. Nay, then, give him another staff; this last was broke cross.

D. Pedro. By this light, he changes more and more; I think he be angry indeed.

Claud. If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle. 143

Bene. Shall I speak a word in your ear?

Claud. God bless me from a challenge!

Bene. [*Aside to Claudio*] You are a villain; I jest not; I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare. Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me hear from you. 151

Claud. Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

D. Pedro. What, a feast, a feast?

Claud. I' faith, I thank him; he hath bid me to a calf's head and a capon, the which if I do not carve most curiously, say my knife's naught. Shall I not find a woodcock too?

Bene. Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily. 159

D. Pedro. I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised thy wit the other

135. *in the career:* i.e., head on. Benedick is thinking of the charge at a tournament. 138. *staff:* a jousting lance. 139. *broke cross:* broken in half—a continuation of the jousting figure. To break a lance across indicated awkwardness. 143. *turn his girdle:* i.e., prepare for a fight by swinging his dagger around convenient to his hand, or for wrestling by turning the buckle to the back. 149. *protest:* proclaim. 157. *curiously:* carefully. 158. *naught:* worthless. *woodcock:* fool.

day. I said, thou hadst a fine wit. "True," said she, "a fine little one." "No," said I, "a great wit." "Right," says she, "a great gross one." "Nay," said I, "a good wit." "Just," said she, "it hurts nobody." "Nay," said I, "the gentleman is wise." "Certain," said she, "a wise gentleman." "Nay," said I, "he hath the tongues." "That I believe," said she, "for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he forswore on Tuesday morning; there's a double tongue; there's two tongues." Thus did she, an hour together, trans-shape thy particular virtues—yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in Italy.

Claud. For the which she wept heartily and said she cared not.

D. Pedro. Yea, that she did; but yet, for all that, an if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly—the old man's daughter told us all.

Claud. All, all; and, moreover, God saw him when he was hid in the garden.

D. Pedro. But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

Claud. Yea, and text underneath, "Here dwells Benedick the married man"?

Bene. Fare you well, boy; you know my mind. I will leave you now to your gossip-like humour. You break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not. My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you. I must discontinue your company; your brother the bastard is fled from Messina; you have among you killed a sweet and innocent lady. For my Lord Lackbeard there, he and I shall meet—and, till then, peace be with him. [*Exit.*

D. Pedro. He is in earnest.

Claud. In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.

D. Pedro. And hath challenged thee.

Claud. Most sincerely.

167. *hath the tongues:* knows languages. 172. *trans-shape:* distort. 174. *properest:* handsomest. 183. *savage bull.* Cf. I, i, 263 ff. 194. *Lord Lackbeard:* boy, a contemptuous epithet.

D. Pedro. What a pretty thing man is when he goes in his doublet and hose and leaves off his wit!

Claud. He is then a giant to an ape; but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.

D. Pedro. But, soft you, let me be; pluck up, my heart, and be sad. Did he not say my brother was fled?

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, *and the* Watch, *with* CONRADE *and* BORACHIO *in custody.*

Dog. Come you, sir; if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance; nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be looked to.

D. Pedro. How now? Two of my brother's men bound? Borachio one?

Claud. Harken after their offense, my lord.

D. Pedro. Officers, what offense have these men done?

Dog. Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things; and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.

D. Pedro. First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offense; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

Claud. Rightly reasoned, and in his own division; and, by my troth, there's one meaning well suited.

D. Pedro. Who have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? This learned constable is too cunning to be understood. What's your offense?

Bora. Sweet prince, let me go no farther to mine answer; do you hear me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes; what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light—who in the night overheard me confessing to this man how Don John your brother

206. *doctor:* a learned man. 209. *sad:* serious. 216. *Harken:* inquire. 221. *slanders:* slanderers. 231. *well suited:* (a) well fitted (to Dogberry's), (b) "put into many different dresses" (Johnson). 233. *to your answer:* to make defense against a charge.

incensed me to slander the Lady Hero, how you were brought into the orchard and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments, how you disgraced her, when you should marry her. My villainy they have upon record, which I had rather seal with my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

D. Pedro. Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

Claud. I have drunk poison whiles he utter'd it.

D. Pedro. But did my brother set thee on to this?

Bora. Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.

D. Pedro. He is composed and framed of treachery,
And fled he is upon this villainy.

Claud. Sweet Hero! How thy image doth appear
In the rare semblance that I loved it first.

Dog. Come, bring away the plaintiffs. By this time our sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter; and, masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

Verg. Here, here comes master Signior Leonato, and the sexton too.

LEONATO *and* ANTONIO, *with the* Sexton,
approach from the house.

Leon. Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes,
That, when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him. Which of these is he?

Bora. If you would know your wronger, look on me.

Leon. Art thou the slave that with thy breath hast kill'd
Mine innocent child?

Bora. Yea, even I alone.

Leon. No, not so, villain; thou beliest thyself.
Here stand a pair of honourable men;
A third is fled, that had a hand in it.
I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death;

242. *incensed:* incited. 255. *for the practice of it:* for carrying it out.

Record it with your high and worthy deeds.
'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.
Claud. I know not how to pray your patience;
Yet I must speak. Choose your revenge yourself;
Impose me to what penance your invention
Can lay upon my sin; yet sinn'd I not
But in mistaking.
D. Pedro. By my soul, nor I;
And yet, to satisfy this good old man,
I would bend under any heavy weight
That he'll enjoin me to.
Leon. I cannot bid you bid my daughter live;
That were impossible. But, I pray you both,
Possess the people in Messina here
How innocent she died; and if your love
Can labour aught in sad invention,
Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb
And sing it to her bones, sing it tonight.
Tomorrow morning come you to my house,
And since you could not be my son-in-law,
Be yet my nephew. My brother hath a daughter,
Almost the copy of my child that's dead,
And she alone is heir to both of us;
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.
Claud. O noble sir,
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me!
I do embrace your offer, and dispose
For henceforth of poor Claudio.
Leon. Tomorrow then I will expect your coming;
Tonight I take my leave. This naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who I believe was pack'd in all this wrong.
Hired to it by your brother.
Bora. No, by my soul, she was not,

291. *Possess:* inform. 293. *invention:* literary composition. 307. *naughty:* good-for-nothing. 309. *was pack'd:* was an accomplice.

Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me,
But always hath been just and virtuous
In anything that I do know by her.

Dog. Moreover, sir, which indeed is not under white and black, this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass; I beseech you, let it be remembered in his punishment. And also, the watch heard them talk of one Deformed; they say he wears a key in his ear and a lock hanging by it, and borrows money in God's name, the which he hath used so long and never paid that now men grow hard-hearted and will lend nothing for God's sake. Pray you, examine him upon that point. 323

Leon. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

Dog. Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth; and I praise God for you.

Leon. There's for thy pains. [*Giving him money.*

Dog. God save the foundation!

Leon. Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee. 330

Dog. I leave an arrant knave with your worship, which I beseech your worship to correct yourself, for the example of others. God keep your worship! I wish your worship well; God restore you to health! I humbly give you leave to depart; and if a merry meeting may be wished, God prohibit it! Come, neighbour. [*Exeunt Dogberry and Verges.*

Leon. Until tomorrow morning, lords, farewell.

Ant. Farewell, my lords; we look for you tomorrow.

D. Pedro. We will not fail.

Claud. Tonight I'll mourn with Hero.
[*Don Pedro and Claudio walk away.*

Leon. [*To the Watch*] Bring you these fellows on. We'll talk with Margaret,
How her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow. 342
[*Leonato and Antonio go in, followed by the Sexton, the Watch, and their prisoners.*

328. *God save the foundation:* a customary phrase used by those who received alms at the gates of monasteries. Wilson calls attention to the humor of this: "The pressure of the coin on his palm

SCENE II. *The same street in front of* LEONATO'S *house.*

Enter BENEDICK *and* MARGARET, *meeting.*

Bene. Pray thee, sweet Mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

Marg. Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty?

Bene. In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall come over it; for, in most comely truth, thou deservest it.

Marg. To have no man come over me! Why, shall I always keep below stairs? 10

Bene. Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth; it catches.

Marg. And yours as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not.

Bene. A most manly wit, Margaret; it will not hurt a woman; and so, I pray thee, call Beatrice; I give thee the bucklers.

Marg. Give us the swords; we have bucklers of our own.

Bene. If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes with a vice; and they are dangerous weapons for maids. 22

Marg. Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I think hath legs.

Bene. And therefore will come.

[*Exit Margaret into Leonato's house.*

[*Sings*] The god of love,
That sits above,
And knows me, and knows me,
How pitiful I deserve— 29

---

brings the accustomed patter to Dogberry's lips, and shows how 'one that hath two gowns and everything handsome about him' actually maintained himself. It is a finishing touch." 329. *discharge:* relieve. 340. *with:* for. 342. *lewd:* worthless.

[ii] 6. *style:* (a) manner, (b) stile. 7. *come over it:* surpass it. 10. *keep below stairs:* remain a servant, not marry (Furness). 17. *I . . . bucklers:* acknowledge you the victor. 21. *pikes:* the spiked bosses in the center of bucklers. *vice:* screw. 26 ff. Benedick's song was a fashionable one in Shakespeare's day, written by William Elderton.

I mean in singing. But in loving, Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of pandars, and a whole bookful of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse, why, they were never so truly turned over and over as my poor self in love. Marry, I cannot show it in rhyme; I have tried; I can find out no rhyme to "lady" but "baby," an innocent rhyme; for "scorn," "horn," a hard rhyme; for "school," "fool," a babbling rhyme; very ominous endings. No, I was not born under a rhyming planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms.

Enter Beatrice.

Sweet Beatrice, wouldst thou come when I called thee?

Beat. Yea, signior, and depart when you bid me.

Bene. O, stay but till then!

Beat. "Then" is spoken; fare you well now—and yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came, which is, with knowing what hath passed between you and Claudio.

Bene. Only foul words; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

Beat. Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome; therefore I will depart unkissed.

Bene. Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit. But I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes my challenge, and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward. And, I pray thee now, tell me for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

Beat. For them all together, which maintained so politic a state of evil that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

32. *carpet-mongers:* carpet knights, whose prowess belongs to the boudoir rather than to the field of battle. 38. *innocent:* silly. 41. *planet:* an allusion to the influence the stars were supposed to have upon a man's life. 57. *undergoes:* sustains. 59. *subscribe him a coward:* accuse him of cowardice.

Bene. "Suffer love!" A good epithet! I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will.

Beat. In spite of your heart, I think. Alas, poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours; for I will never love that which my friend hates. 72

Bene. Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

Beat. It appears not in this confession; there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

Bene. An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbours. If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings and the widow weeps. 82

Beat. And how long is that, think you?

Bene. Question; why, an hour in clamour and a quarter in rheum. Therefore is it most expedient for the wise, if Don Worm, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary, to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself. So much for praising myself, who, I myself will bear witness, is praiseworthy. And now tell me, how doth your cousin? 91

Beat. Very ill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Very ill too.

Bene. Serve God, love me, and mend. There will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

Enter URSULA.

Urs. Madam, you must come to your uncle; yonder's old coil at home. It is proved my Lady Hero hath been falsely accused, the prince and Claudio mightily abused; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone. Will you come presently? 102

Beat. Will you go hear this news, signior?

Bene. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes; and moreover I will go with thee to thy uncle's. [*Exeunt.*

79. *time . . . neighbours:* long ago when neighbors were friendly. 85. *rheum:* tears. 86. *Don . . . conscience.* The worm of conscience was a medieval conception based perhaps upon Mark 9: 48. 98. *old coil:* a great to-do. 100. *abused:* deceived. 102. *presently:* at once.

SCENE III. *A church at night; before the tomb of the Leonati.*

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, *and three or four other* Lords *with torches, followed by Musicians.*

Claud. Is this the monument of Leonato?
A Lord. It is, my lord.

Claud. [*Reading the Epitaph from a scroll*]

Done to death by slanderous tongues
Was the Hero that here lies:
Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,
Gives her fame which never dies.
So the life that died with shame
Lives in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there upon the tomb,
Praising her when I am dumb.

Now, music, sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

SONG.

Pardon, goddess of the night,
Those that slew thy virgin knight;
For the which, with songs of woe,
Round about her tomb they go.
Midnight, assist our moan;
Help us to sigh and groan,
Heavily, heavily:
Graves, yawn and yield your dead,
Till death be uttered,
Heavily, heavily.

Claud. Now, unto thy bones good night!
Yearly will I do this rite.

[iii] 10. ***dumb.*** Q reads ***dead.*** 12. ***goddess of the night:*** Diana. 13. ***virgin knight:*** one of Diana's followers, a pure maiden. 20. ***Till death be uttered:*** till the Last Judgment. 21. F_1 reads ***Heavenly, heavenly.***

D. Pedro. Good morrow, masters; put your torches out.
The wolves have prey'd, and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.
Thanks to you all, and leave us; fare you well.
Claud. Good morrow, masters; each his several way.
D. Pedro. Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds;
And then to Leonato's we will go.
Claud. And Hymen now with luckier issue speed's
Than this for whom we render'd up this woe. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The hall in* LEONATO'S *house.*

LEONATO, ANTONIO, BENEDICK, BEATRICE, MARGARET, URSULA, FRIAR FRANCIS, *and* HERO, *assembled for the wedding.*

Friar. Did I not tell you she was innocent?
Leon. So are the prince and Claudio, who accused her
Upon the error that you heard debated;
But Margaret was in some fault for this,
Although against her will, as it appears
In the true course of all the question.
Ant. Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.
Bene. And so am I, being else by faith enforced
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.
Leon. Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves,
And when I send for you, come hither mask'd.
[*Exeunt Ladies*
The prince and Claudio promised by this hour
To visit me. You know your office, brother:
You must be father to your brother's daughter,
And give her to young Claudio.
Ant. Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.
Bene. Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.
Friar. To do what, signior?

29. *several:* separate. 30. *weeds:* garments.
[iv] 7. *sort:* turn out. 17. *confirm'd countenance:* a straight face.

Bene. To bind me, or undo me; one of them.
Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.
Leon. That eye my daughter lent her; 'tis most true.
Bene. And I do with an eye of love requite her.
Leon. The sight whereof I think you had from me,
From Claudio and the prince; but what's your will?
Bene. Your answer, sir, is enigmatical.
But, for my will, my will is your good-will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd
In the state of honourable marriage,
In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.
Leon. My heart is with your liking.
Friar. And my help.
Here comes the prince and Claudio.

Enter Don Pedro *and* Claudio, *and two or three others.*

D. Pedro. Good morrow to this fair assembly.
Leon. Good morrow, prince; good morrow, Claudio;
We here attend you. Are you yet determined
Today to marry with my brother's daughter?
Claud. I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiope.
Leon. Call her forth, brother; here's the friar ready.
[*Exit Antonio.*
D. Pedro. Good morrow, Benedick. Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness?
Claud. I think he thinks upon the savage bull.
Tush, fear not, man; we'll tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee,
As once Europa did at lusty Jove,
When he would play the noble beast in love.
Bene. Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low;

33. Omitted in F_1. 36. *attend:* await. 43. *savage bull.* Benedick's friends never permit him to forget his boast; cf. I, i, 263. 46. *Europa.* Jupiter assumed the form of a white bull to carry off Europa.

And some such strange bull leap'd your father's cow,
And got a calf in that same noble feat
Much like to you, for you have just his bleat.
Claud. For this I owe you; here comes other reckonings.

Re-enter ANTONIO, *with the* Ladies *masked.*

Which is the lady I must seize upon?
Ant. This same is she, and I do give you her.
Claud. Why, then she's mine. Sweet, let me see your face.
Leon. No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar and swear to marry her.
Claud. Give me your hand; before this holy friar,
I am your husband, if you like of me.
Hero. And when I lived, I was your other wife;
[*Unmasking.*
And when you loved, you were my other husband.
Claud. Another Hero!
Hero. Nothing certainer;
One Hero died defiled, but I do live,
And surely as I live, I am a maid.
D. Pedro. The former Hero! Hero that is dead!
Leon. She died, my lord, but whiles her slander lived.
Friar. All this amazement can I qualify;
When after that the holy rites are ended,
I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death.
Meantime let wonder seem familiar,
And to the chapel let us presently.
Bene. Soft and fair, friar. Which is Beatrice?
Beat. [*Unmasking*] I answer to that name. What is your will?
Bene. Do not you love me?
Beat. Why, no; no more than reason.
Bene. Why, then your uncle and the prince and Claudio
Have been deceived; they swore you did.

52. *owe you:* i.e., we'll settle this score later. 67. *qualify:* moderate, abate. 69. *largely:* at length. 70. *let . . . familiar:* i.e., pretend that these strange happenings are not strange. 71. *presently:* immediately.

Beat. Do not you love me?

Bene. Troth, no; no more than reason.

Beat. Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula
Are much deceived, for they did swear you did.

Bene. They swore that you were almost sick for me.

Beat. They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

Bene. 'Tis no such matter. Then you do not love me?

Beat. No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

Leon. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

Claud. And I'll be sworn upon 't that he loves her;
For here's a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

Hero. And here's another
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

Bene. A miracle! Here's our own hands against our hearts. Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

Beat. I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion, and partly to save your life, for I was told you were in a consumption.

Bene. Peace! I will stop your mouth. [*Kissing her.*

D. Pedro. How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?

Bene. I'll tell thee what, prince; a college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour. Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram? No, if a man will be beaten with brains, a' shall wear nothing handsome about him. In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it; for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion. For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten

86. That Benedick and Beatrice, in the approved Elizabethan manner, have turned sonneteers is proof positive of their love for one another. 98. Both Q and F_1 give this speech to Leonato. 101. *a college of wit-crackers:* a whole collection of wits. 104. *beaten with brains:* i.e., teased. 104–5. *a' shall . . . him:* i.e., for fear it will be soiled.

thee; but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin.

Claud. I had well hoped thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgelled thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double-dealer—which, out of question, thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee.

Bene. Come, come, we are friends. Let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives' heels.

Leon. We'll have dancing afterward.

Bene. First, of my word; therefore play, music. Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife. There is no staff more reverend than one tipped with horn.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight,
And brought with armed men back to Messina.

Bene. Think not on him till tomorrow. I'll devise thee brave punishments for him. Strike up, pipers.

[*Music and a dance.*

116. *double-dealer:* one unfaithful in love. 130. *brave:* suitable, satisfactorv.

The Tragedy of Julius Cæsar

Introduction

Dramatic Type

The Roman plays, *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Coriolanus*, together constitute a distinct Shakespearean type, not only because they deal with similar subjects and draw upon the same great source, but also because, to a certain extent, the dramatic art displayed by them is of a peculiar sort. In their treatment of materials they resemble the English history plays; in concentration upon a central hero, and in the development of the tragic conflict, they are similar to the tragedies. Like the histories, they lack a purely romantic story possessing an interest independent of history; the principal characters are historical personages, inseparable from the social and political forces of their times; and the facts of history (as Shakespeare received them) are the source of the action rather than the mere background for an unhistorical story. On the other hand, like the tragedies, they present appealing individuals caught in the meshes of woeful circumstance and their own mistakes, or overwhelmed by a fate to which their own characters are the principal contributing factors. The editors of the First Folio distributed the Roman historical dramas among the tragedies, and for this arrangement there is ample justification, but there is at least equal warrant for grouping them with the history plays.

As in the histories, so in the Roman plays Shakespeare deals with what actually had been, and hence follows sources more closely than he does in other types of drama. He leaves himself free, however, to choose the point of view which best suits his dramatic ends; he compresses events, selects details, and gives them a fresh emphasis; but he does not give his invention a free rein, and he never consciously alters the sense of what he

works with. His purpose is to quicken into life the dry bones of history, and, if in these plays he does so occasionally in terms of Elizabethan rather than of Roman life, his justification is that he is not a scholarly historian but an imaginative dramatist, interpreting the meaning and spirit of history, and presenting the constants of human nature and conduct. Yet it may be remarked that there is probably more effort to achieve historical verisimilitude or even local color in Shakespeare's Roman plays than in those dealing with English history.

Source

For his Roman plays Shakespeare made use of an English translation of one of the most influential books of the Renaissance, *The Parallel Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* by Plutarch of Chæronea. This work, written in Greek in the third quarter of the first century of the Christian era, was frequently translated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries into Latin, Spanish, German, and French, and the most famous of these versions—that made in French by Bishop Jacques Amyot (1559)—served as the original for the vigorous English translation by Sir Thomas North, first published in 1579 and reprinted during Shakespeare's lifetime in 1595, 1603, and 1612.

For the Renaissance world, Plutarch's collection of biographies had a fascination which can hardly be overestimated. Not only was the subject an appealing one in an age that drew its intellectual inspiration from the classics and idealized the heroes of antiquity into models of conduct, but also the treatment of these themes by an ethical teacher bent upon enforcing useful lessons for the management of ordinary lives was attractive to the humanist mind. Something of the appeal of Plutarch's book is summed up in North's "Address to the Reader" of his translation:

> There is no profane study better than Plutarch. All other learning is private, fitter for Universities than cities, fuller of con-

templation than experience, more commendable in the students themselves, than profitable unto others. Whereas stories [i.e., histories], are fit for every place, reach to all persons, serve for all times, teach the living, revive the dead, so far excelling all other books as it is better to see learning in noble men's lives than to read it in Philosophers' writings.

This practical value in ordering men's private and public lives was reinforced by the author's treatment of his materials. The biographies are given direction and emphasis by presenting the characters in pairs, a Greek and a Roman—two conquerors, Alexander and Cæsar; two patriots, Dion and Brutus; two victims of their country's ingratitude, Alcibiades and Coriolanus; two world rulers fallen from their high estate, Demetrius and Antony. But above all, it was Plutarch's interest in the great, not as figures upon pedestals, but as men among men, that made his book first-rate material for a dramatist:

> The noblest deeds do not always show men's virtues and vices, but often times a light occasion, a word, or some sport, makes men's natural dispositions and manners appear more plain, than the famous battles won. . . . For like as painters or drawers of pictures . . . do take the resemblances of the face and favor of the countenance, in the which consisteth the judgment of their manners and disposition; even so they must give us leave to seek out the signs and tokens of the mind only, and thereby show the life of either of them, referring you unto others to write the wars, battles and other great things they did. (*Life of Alexander.*)

Three of these biographies—the lives of Cæsar, Brutus, and, to a less extent, Antony—furnish nearly all of the details for Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*, and that it was substance that merely required the dramatist's shaping hand can readily be appreciated by an inventory. All of the *dramatis personæ*, with the exception of Lucius (who is Shakespeare's characteristic inven-

tion), come from Plutarch, and some of their minutest traits, such as Cassius's leanness and Antony's sleekness and fondness for pleasure, Brutus's fondness for books, Cæsar's arrogance and physical infirmity. The same is true of the events—not only of the main story of the conspiracy, its momentary success, and the final defeat of the republicans, but also of a host of minor details, and, in the main, of the sequence in which they are presented: the disapproval of the triumph over Pompey's sons, the soothsayer's prophecy, the offer of the crown to Cæsar, the respect in which Brutus was held, the methods used to win him over to the conspiracy, the drawing in of Ligarius, the exclusion of Cicero, the tender relations of Brutus and Portia, the enthusiasm of the conspirators, Brutus's refusal to bind them by oath, their exemption of Antony at Brutus's request, the portents that preceded the assassination, Calpurnia's dream and her efforts to detain Cæsar at home, the counter-persuasion of Decius Brutus, the warning of Artemidorus, the second meeting with the soothsayer, the conspirators' fear that Popilius Lena had betrayed them, Portia's anxiety, the details of the assassination, the speeches of Brutus and Antony, the effects of Cæsar's funeral and the reading of the will, the murder of the poet Cinna, the proscriptions by the Triumvirate, the quarrel of Brutus and Cassius, its interruption, the appearance of Cæsar's ghost, the death of Portia, the omen of the eagles, Brutus's imprudence at Philippi, the deaths of Cassius and Brutus, the capture of Lucilius, Antony's eulogy of Brutus—in short, there is hardly a detail of the action that does not appear in Plutarch. Even the very language of North's translation Shakespeare merely paraphrased in numerous passages, a few of which are pointed out in the notes. Shakespeare's debt to Plutarch cannot be overestimated; the material was clay to his fingers. But even when he appropriated most, it will be found that he was a creator, giving life to what he borrowed, altering and adding to it, and stamping the product as emphatically his own.

Modification of the Material

Shakespeare adapted this rich material to the stage largely by selecting suitable details, compressing the time-intervals between events, and giving them dramatic direction.

(1) Incidents are rearranged and crowded together to create an artificial dramatic rapidity of action. The triumph over Pompey's sons (October, 45 B.C.) is combined with the celebration of the Feast of the Lupercal (February, 44 B.C.); the events of the Ides of March follow close upon those of the Lupercalia; the success of the murder is followed immediately by Antony's oration and the reversal of popular opinion; the twenty months of rivalry and intrigue before the establishment of the Triumvirate are dismissed as irrelevant; and the two pitched battles at Philippi, twenty days apart, are compressed into one. In history the story told in *Julius Cæsar* covers a period of three years, from October, 45 B.C., to October, 42 B.C.; in Shakespeare's play it is all concentrated into five eventful days, which, while not consecutive, at least produce the effect of a close sequence.

(2) Events and details which Plutarch considered quite isolated are sometimes rearranged with the suggestion of an inner connection between them. Cæsar's triumph, its fickle celebrants, the silencing of the tribunes, Cæsar's desire for an heir, the offer of the crown, and the hatching of the conspiracy, are presented in the play to create the illusion of a rapid sequence of causes and effects. Similarly, the nobility of Brutus, the reverence he inspires in others, and the conspirators' scorn of a vow—unrelated details in Plutarch—are associated in the drama as one of the most telling instances of Brutus's character in action. Again, the details of Plutarch's complete description of the portents preceding Cæsar's death are distributed among various reporters and re-emphasized by the panic they inspire in the cynic Casca and the devoted Calpurnia.

(3) Mere hints in Plutarch are also occasionally developed

with marked dramatic effect. Cassius's description of the swimming match, Brutus's soliloquy in his orchard, his noble speech on the oath, his oration and Antony's, the quarrel between the generals—to all of these Shakespeare added characteristic details.

In the larger aspects of his theme, however, Shakespeare's reorganization of Plutarch's material may be seen to the best advantage. The career and the personality of Cæsar held an extraordinary fascination for Shakespeare; no other character in history is more frequently alluded to in his plays than this conqueror of whom "Death makes no conquest." As an Elizabethan, also, Shakespeare could appreciate the urgent need for both the man and his methods in Rome and understand the political crisis upon which his story turns. But for the purpose of his drama he holds in reserve his personal admiration, develops and even stresses Plutarch's emphasis upon the unheroic aspects of Cæsar's character, but at the same time clearly demonstrates that his greatness depends upon no petty considerations. Like Plutarch, he represents the conspiracy not merely as a personal quarrel between the conspirators and Cæsar to "have one man but a man" (i.e., not a god), but also as a conflict between Republicanism, the old order, and Imperialism, the new. And he also represents it as a forlorn attempt to oppose a Man of Destiny.

> We all stand up against the spirit of Cæsar;
> And in the spirit of men there is no blood,

Brutus reminds his colleagues, but the consequences of their act prove him mistaken. Cæsarism may be checked, but not defeated; the spirit of Cæsar, in the Senecan manner, ranges abroad for revenge and in the end turns their swords into their own proper entrails. Not Cæsar's greatness in life, but his greatness even in death, is the central theme of the tragedy. Cassius's belief,

> The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
> But in ourselves, that we are underlings,

accounts for both more and less than he dreams.

As a natural consequence, the political issues in the drama are definitely of secondary importance. The relative merits of the Republic and the Empire are not decided or even presented, but first place, as is characteristic of Shakespeare, is given to the more universal aspects of human character. What interests him more is the fact that there are high-minded men who unselfishly oppose the practical politicians the imperfect world requires and can understand. Hence Brutus, the ardent republican of Plutarch, is transformed by Shakespeare into a character not unlike Hamlet, a dispassionate worshipper of ideals and traditions, gifted with many attractive qualities, but not those of practical leadership, yet nevertheless selected as the leader of a conspiracy merely to lend respectability to it. Born into times which are out of joint, Brutus is blindly devoted to a hopeless cause, and is easily hoodwinked by the unworthy associates into mistaking envy, ambition, and rivalry of Cæsar for a high-minded love of liberty. The noblest Roman of them all hears the mob approve his deed with the disillusioning shout of "Let him be Cæsar," sees his beloved Rome torn to bits by the butchering Triumvirs, and understands at last the real motives of those who made him their leader. His bitterness when he can no longer cherish the belief that his course has been for Rome's good is one of the most pathetic tragedies in Shakespeare. Like Hamlet, Brutus is the martyr to his own freedom from all contriving.

To some critics, therefore, among their number Voltaire, *The Tragedy of Julius Cæsar* is misnamed; it should be called *The Tragedy of Marcus Brutus*. The triumph of Cæsarism, or of "the spirit of Cæsar," may be the central theme of the tragedy, but its hero is Brutus. From the beginning interest is focused upon him and his acts, and throughout it is his personality which attracts our sympathy and concern. Yet in this respect as in others, *Julius Cæsar* is similar to the historical dramas. In several of them the king who gives his name to the play is not its principal character. In *King John* he is Philip the Bastard;

in *Henry IV*, Prince Hal; in *Henry VIII*, Cardinal Wolsey or Queen Katherine. The title serves as a familiar means of dating the action; in this play it also suggests the hero's futile opposition to the political order of the hour.

From Plutarch, too, Shakespeare developed other hints which furnished some of his most brilliant individual contrasts. The noble Brutus, fully alive to the evils of conspiracy but thinking only of the good of Rome, is thrown into relief against Cassius, who is also a reader and a philosopher, but one who "looks quite through the deeds of men," and feels Cæsar's greatness as a personal affront. Lean, gaunt, dangerous Cassius, who loves no plays and hears no music, is placed opposite to the sleek Antony, "that revels long o' nights," but who is nevertheless a shrewd contriver and a demagogue of genius when occasion offers. Antony, in turn, is the foil to the coldly practical Octavius; and tender Brutus and his Portia find a parallel in Cæsar and Calpurnia. Other characters are equally noteworthy. Cynical Casca; Cicero, who "will never follow anything that other men begin"; Ligarius, who leaves his sickbed because Brutus bids him; Lepidus, "a slight unmeritable man, meet to be sent on errands"—all are living types, even when unhistorical.

Although *Julius Cæsar* is not among the most popular of Shakespeare's dramas, it has been quite effective on the stage. Scenes of spectacle which appeal to the eye are blended with dramatic happenings that engage the mind. The holiday crowd clashes with the tribunes; the stately procession of the conqueror is interrupted by the mysterious warning of the soothsayer; the crafty Cassius skilfully manipulates the manly Brutus; while portents fill the air, Brutus overcomes his indecision; the muffled conspirators seal their pact in a midnight meeting; the murder occurs in the midst of the busy Senate-chamber; the fickle mob is swayed first by Brutus and then by Antony; the generals quarrel and are reconciled; and armies clash in battle—all are masterly scenes, and they form a connected sequence of thrill-

ing action. The play's principal failing, however, from the point of view of the theatre, is its hero. Admirable as he is, the stoical Brutus cannot help being, in Dr. Johnson's phrase, "somewhat cold and unaffecting." Unlike Hamlet, he is too reserved to move an audience deeply.

Date and Text

The date of composition of *Julius Cæsar* appears to have been about 1599. In September of that year Thomas Platter, a Swiss physician visiting London, saw a play on the subject in a thatched playhouse on the Bankside, probably the Globe, and about the same time there are also several allusions in the books of contemporaries to lines in the drama. Further, the general tone of the play, its theme, and its dramatic technique place it between the later histories, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*, and the earliest of the great tragedies, *Hamlet*. No edition of ***Julius Cæsar*** earlier than that in the Folio of 1623 is known.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

JULIUS CÆSAR, leader in Rome.
CALPURNIA, his wife.
MARCUS BRUTUS, conspirator against Cæsar.
PORTIA, his wife.
CAIUS CASSIUS, prime mover of the conspiracy, and brother-in-law of Brutus.

CASCA
CINNA
DECIUS BRUTUS
CAIUS LIGARIUS
METELLUS CIMBER
TREBONIUS
} other conspirators against Cæsar.

MARCUS ANTONIUS, friend of Cæsar, leader of the opposition against the conspirators
OCTAVIUS CÆSAR, grand-nephew and heir of Julius Cæsar
M. ÆMILIUS LEPIDUS
} Triumvirs after the death of Cæsar.

CICERO
POPILIUS LENA
PUBLIUS
} Roman senators.

FLAVIUS
MARULLUS
} tribunes opposed to Cæsar.

YOUNG CATO
LUCILIUS
MESSALA
TITINIUS
VOLUMNIUS
} friends and followers of Brutus and Cassius.

CLAUDIUS
CLITUS
DARDANIUS
LUCIUS
STRATO
VARRO
} servants of Brutus.

PINDARUS, bondman of Cassius.
ARTEMIDORUS OF CNIDOS, a teacher of rhetoric.
CINNA THE POET, ANOTHER POET, A SOOTHSAYER, Senators, Plebeians, Guards, Attendants.

Scene of the Action: Rome, the neighborhood of Sardis, the plains of Philippi.

Time: 45 B.C. TO 42 B.C.

The Tragedy of Julius Cæsar

ACT I

SCENE I. *A street in Rome.*

Enter FLAVIUS *and* MARULLUS, *encountering several* Commoners.

Flav. Hence! Home! You idle creatures, get you home!
Is this a holiday? What, know you not,
Being mechanical, you ought not walk
Upon a labouring day without the sign
Of your profession? Speak, what trade art thou?

Car. Why, sir, a carpenter.

Mar. Where is thy leather apron, and thy rule?
What dost thou with thy best apparel on?
You, sir, what trade are you? 9

Cob. Truly, sir, in respect of a fine workman, I am but, as you would say, a cobbler.

Mar. But what trade art thou? Answer me directly.

Cob. A trade, sir, that, I hope, I may use with a safe conscience; which is, indeed, sir, a mender of bad soles.

Mar. What trade, thou knave? Thou naughty knave, what trade?

Cob. Nay, I beseech you, sir, be not out with me; yet, if you be out, sir, I can mend you.

Mar. What meanest thou by that? Mend me, thou saucy fellow! 21

Cob. Why, sir, cobble you.

Flav. Thou art a cobbler, art thou?

Cob. Truly, sir, all that I live by is with the awl. I meddle

[I. i] 3. ***mechanical:*** of the laboring class. 10. ***in respect of:*** in comparison to. 16. ***naughty:*** good-for-nothing. 18. ***be out:*** (a) be angry, (b) be worn out (of shoes).

with no tradesman's matters, nor women's matters, but withal I am, indeed, sir, a surgeon to old shoes; when they are in great danger, I recover them. As proper men as ever trod upon neat's leather have gone upon my handiwork.

Flav. But wherefore art not in thy shop today?
Why dost thou lead these men about the streets?

Cob. Truly, sir, to wear out their shoes, to get myself into more work. But, indeed, sir, we make holiday to see Cæsar and to rejoice in his triumph.

Mar. Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?
What tributaries follow him to Rome,
To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels?
You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!
O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,
Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft
Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,
To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops,
Your infants in your arms, and there have sat
The live-long day, with patient expectation,
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome;
And when you saw his chariot but appear,
Have you not made an universal shout,
That Tiber trembled underneath her banks,
To hear the replication of your sounds
Made in her concave shores?
And do you now put on your best attire?
And do you now cull out a holiday?
And do you now strew flowers in his way

26. *withal:* i.e., (a) with awl, (b) with all. 29. *proper:* handsome, elegant. *neat's leather:* cowhide. 42. *Pompey.* As a conqueror in Spain, Africa, and Asia, Cneius Pompeius (the Great) in 61 B.C. enjoyed the most magnificent triumph Rome had ever witnessed. With Cæsar and Crassus, Pompey had formed the first triumvirate in 60 B.C., but Cæsar's increasing power made a struggle between the two men inevitable. Pompey became the leader of the aristocratic and conservative party, and civil war with Cæsar began in 49. Pompey was defeated at Pharsalus in 48 and murdered soon after. 51. *replication:* reverberation.

That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?
Be gone!
Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,
Pray to the gods to intermit the plague
That needs must light on this ingratitude.
Flav. Go, go, good countrymen, and, for this fault,
Assemble all the poor men of your sort;
Draw them to Tiber banks, and weep your tears
Into the channel, till the lowest stream
Do kiss the most exalted shores of all.
[*Exeunt all the Commoners.*
See, whether their basest metal be not mov'd;
They vanish tongue-tied in their guiltiness.
Go you down that way towards the Capitol;
This way will I. Disrobe the images,
If you do find them deck'd with ceremonies.
Mar. May we do so?
You know it is the feast of Lupercal.
Flav. It is no matter; let no images
Be hung with Cæsar's trophies. I'll about,
And drive away the vulgar from the streets;
So do you too, where you perceive them thick.
These growing feathers pluck'd from Cæsar's wing
Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,
Who else would soar above the view of men
And keep us all in servile fearfulness. [*Exeunt.*

56. ***Pompey's blood.*** The immediate occasion of Cæsar's triumph was the defeat at Munda (45 B.C.) of Pompey the Younger and his execution soon after. Plutarch's record of the event throws light upon the antagonism of Shakespeare's tribunes: "The triumph he made into Rome for the same did as much offend the Romans, and more, than anything he had ever done before; because he had not overcome captains that were strangers, nor barbarous kings, but had destroyed the sons of the noblest man in Rome, whom fortune had overthrown. And because he had plucked up his race by the roots men did not think it meet for him to triumph so for the calamities of his country." 67. ***tongue-tied:*** silent. 70. ***ceremonies:*** festal ornaments. 72. ***Lupercal:*** an annual feast (February 15) sacred to Lupercus, the wolf-deity of Rome. 75. ***vulgar:*** common people. 78. ***pitch:*** height.

SCENE II. *A public place in Rome.*

Preceded by a flourish of trumpets, enter CÆSAR, *accompanied by* ANTONY, *dressed for the race of the Lupercal;* CALPURNIA, PORTIA, DECIUS, CICERO, CASCA, BRUTUS, *and* CASSIUS; *a great crowd following, among them a* Soothsayer.

Cæs. Calpurnia!
Casca. Peace, ho! Cæsar speaks.
Cæs. Calpurnia!
Cal. Here, my lord.
Cæs. Stand you directly in Antonius' way,
When he doth run his course. Antonius!
Ant. Cæsar, my lord?
Cæs. Forget not, in your speed, Antonius,
To touch Calpurnia; for our elders say,
The barren, touched in this holy chase,
Shake off their sterile curse.
Ant. I shall remember;
When Cæsar says "do this," it is perform'd.
Cæs. Set on, and leave no ceremony out. [*Flourish.*
Sooth. Cæsar!
Cæs. Ha! who calls?
Casca. Bid every noise be still; peace yet again!
Cæs. Who is it in the press that calls on me?
I hear a tongue, shriller than all the music,
Cry "Cæsar!" Speak; Cæsar is turn'd to hear.
Sooth. Beware the Ides of March.
Cæs. What man is that?
Bru. A soothsayer bids you beware the Ides of March.
Cæs. Set him before me; let me see his face.
Cas. Fellow, come from the throng; look upon Cæsar.
Cæs. What say'st thou to me now? Speak once again.

[ii] 9. *sterile curse.* Plutarch (*Life of Julius Cæsar*) describes this ceremony and alludes to the belief here referred to, but does not mention Cæsar's instruction to Calpurnia. Antony was a priest of the Lupercal. 15. *press:* crowd, throng. 18. *Ides of March:* March 15.

Sooth. Beware the Ides of March.
Cæs. He is a dreamer; let us leave him. Pass.
[*Sennet. Exeunt all except Brutus and Cassius.*
Cas. Will you go see the order of the course?
Bru. Not I.
Cas. I pray you, do.
Bru. I am not gamesome; I do lack some part
Of that quick spirit that is in Antony.
Let me not hinder, Cassius, your desires;
I'll leave you.
Cas. Brutus, I do observe you now of late;
I have not from your eyes that gentleness
And show of love as I was wont to have.
You bear too stubborn, and too strange, a hand
Over your friend that loves you.
Bru. Cassius,
Be not deceived. If I have veil'd my look,
I turn the trouble of my countenance
Merely upon myself. Vexed I am
Of late with passions of some difference,
Conceptions only proper to myself,
Which give some soil perhaps to my behaviours;
But let not therefore my good friends be grieved—
Among which number, Cassius, be you one—
Nor construe any further my neglect,
Than that poor Brutus, with himself at war,
Forgets the shows of love to other men.
Cas. Then, Brutus, I have much mistook your passion;
By means whereof this breast of mine hath buried

28. *gamesome:* frolicsome, gay. 29. *quick:* lively. 30. *Let . . . desires:* don't let me keep you from going. 34. *love:* friendship. In Plutarch one of the causes of Cassius's personal animosity against Cæsar was his selection of Brutus for a prætorship, an office Cassius desired. The first step in the conspiracy against Cæsar, therefore, was the reconciliation of Cassius and Brutus. 39. *Merely:* entirely, absolutely. 39–40. *Vexed . . . difference:* I am of late torn by conflicting emotions. 41. *proper:* peculiar. 48. *passion:* emotion, sorrow.

Thoughts of great value, worthy cogitations.
Tell me, good Brutus, can you see your face?
Bru. No, Cassius; for the eye sees not itself
But by reflection, by some other things.
Cas. 'Tis just,
And it is very much lamented, Brutus,
That you have no such mirrors as will turn
Your hidden worthiness into your eye,
That you might see your shadow. I have heard,
Where many of the best respect in Rome
(Except immortal Cæsar), speaking of Brutus
And groaning underneath this age's yoke,
Have wish'd that noble Brutus had his eyes.
Bru. Into what dangers would you lead me, Cassius,
That you would have me seek into myself
For that which is not in me?
Cas. Therefore, good Brutus, be prepared to hear;
And since you know you cannot see yourself
So well as by reflection, I, your glass,
Will modestly discover to yourself
That of yourself which you yet know not of.
And be not jealous on me, gentle Brutus.
Were I a common laugher, or did use
To stale with ordinary oaths my love
To every new protester; if you know
That I do fawn on men and hug them hard
And after scandal them; or if you know
That I profess myself in banqueting
To all the rout, then hold me dangerous.
[*A flourish of trumpets and a great shout is heard.*
Bru. What means this shouting? I do fear, the people
Choose Cæsar for their king.

54. *just:* right. 58. *shadow:* reflection. 59. *best respect:* most respected. 68. *glass:* mirror. 69. *modestly:* with moderation. *discover:* reveal. 73. *stale:* make common. 76. *scandal:* defame. 77. *profess . . . banqueting:* talk openly or boast at feasts. 79 ff. Observe how dramatically Shakespeare has conceived this scene. While Cassius is sounding out Brutus, behind the scenes Cæsar is commit-

Cas. Ay, do you fear it?
Then must I think you would not have it so.
Bru. I would not, Cassius; yet I love him well.
But wherefore do you hold me here so long?
What is it that you would impart to me?
If it be aught toward the general good,
Set honour in one eye, and death i' the other,
And I will look on both indifferently;
For let the gods so speed me as I love
The name of honour more than I fear death.
Cas. I know that virtue to be in you, Brutus,
As well as I do know your outward favour.
Well, honour is the subject of my story.
I cannot tell what you and other men
Think of this life; but, for my single self,
I had as lief not be as live to be
In awe of such a thing as I myself.
I was born free as Cæsar; so were you;
We both have fed as well, and we can both
Endure the winter's cold as well as he.
For once, upon a raw and gusty day,
The troubled Tiber chafing with her shores,
Cæsar said to me, "Darest thou, Cassius, now
Leap in with me into this angry flood,
And swim to yonder point?" Upon the word,
Accoutred as I was, I plunged in
And bade him follow; so indeed he did.
The torrent roar'd, and we did buffet it

ting the gravest mistake of his career—revealing the fact that he would like a crown. Neither the audience nor Brutus is permitted to see what occurs; they hear of it through the cynical Casca.

86. *honour*. The word has two meanings in this passage: in line 86 the sense is "honors," i.e., "high position," and in line 89 it is "integrity." Hence Brutus's speech may be paraphrased: "If it is something that concerns the public good, I will accept indifferently public acclaim or death, because I value my personal integrity more than I fear death." 88. *speed:* prosper. 95. *lief . . . live:* a pun depending upon an Elizabethan similarity of pronunciation which is now indistinct. 105. *Accoutred:* dressed, equipped.

With lusty sinews, throwing it aside,
And stemming it with hearts of controversy.
But ere we could arrive the point proposed,
Cæsar cried, "Help me, Cassius, or I sink!"
I, as Æneas, our great ancestor,
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tiber
Did I the tired Cæsar. And this man
Is now become a god, and Cassius is
A wretched creature, and must bend his body,
If Cæsar carelessly but nod on him.
He had a fever when he was in Spain,
And when the fit was on him, I did mark
How he did shake—'tis true, this god did shake.
His coward lips did from their colour fly,
And that same eye, whose bend doth awe the world,
Did lose his lustre. I did hear him groan.
Ay, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans
Mark him, and write his speeches in their books,
Alas, it cried, "Give me some drink, Titinius,"
As a sick girl. Ye gods, it doth amaze me,
A man of such a feeble temper should
So get the start of the majestic world
And bear the palm alone. [*Another shout and flourish.*

Bru. Another general shout?
I do believe that these applauses are
For some new honours that are heap'd on Cæsar.

Cas. Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus, and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.
Men at some time are masters of their fates;

109. *controversy:* courage, defiance. 110. *arrive:* reach, arrive at. 122. *did . . . fly:* i.e., grew pale. 123. *bend:* glance. 124. *his:* its. 136. *Colossus:* an allusion to the famous Colossus of Rhodes, a gigantic statue of Apollo held to be one of the wonders of the ancient world. It was said to bestride the harbor at Rhodes.

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
Brutus and Cæsar—what should be in that "Cæsar"?
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
Write them together—yours is as fair a name;
Sound them—it doth become the mouth as well;
Weigh them—it is as heavy; conjure with 'em—
Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Cæsar.
Now, in the names of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat doth this our Cæsar feed,
That he is grown so great? Age, thou art shamed!
Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
When went there by an age, since the great flood,
But it was famed with more than with one man?
When could they say (till now) that talk'd of Rome,
That her wide walks encompass'd but one man?
Now is it Rome indeed, and room enough,
When there is in it but one only man.
O, you and I have heard our fathers say
There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd
The eternal Devil to keep his state in Rome
As easily as a king.

Bru. That you do love me, I am nothing jealous;
What you would work me to, I have some aim;
How I have thought of this and of these times,
I shall recount hereafter. For this present,
I would not, so with love I might entreat you,
Be any further mov'd. What you have said
I will consider; what you have to say
I will with patience hear, and find a time
Both meet to hear, and answer such high things.

146–7. *conjure . . . Cæsar:* used as an incantation either is as effective as the other. 156. *Rome . . . room:* a pun depending upon a similarity of pronunciation which has now disappeared. 159. *Brutus:* Lucius Junius Brutus, who drove the Tarquins out of Rome and was so just that he condemned his own sons to death for conspiring to restore them. *brook'd:* endured, tolerated. 162. *nothing jealous:* not at all doubtful. 163. *aim:* idea, notion.

Till then, my noble friend, chew upon this:
Brutus had rather be a villager
Than to repute himself a son of Rome
Under these hard conditions as this time
Is like to lay upon us.

Cas. I am glad that my weak words
Have struck but thus much show of fire from Brutus.

Bru. The games are done, and Cæsar is returning.

Cas. As they pass by, pluck Casca by the sleeve;
And he will, after his sour fashion, tell you
What hath proceeded worthy note today.

Re-enter CÆSAR *and his Train.*

Bru. I will do so. But, look you, Cassius,
The angry spot doth glow on Cæsar's brow,
And all the rest look like a chidden train;
Calpurnia's cheek is pale, and Cicero
Looks with such ferret and such fiery eyes
As we have seen him in the Capitol,
Being cross'd in conference by some senators.

Cas. Casca will tell us what the matter is.

Cæs. Antonius!

Ant. Cæsar?

Cæs. Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights.
Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look;
He thinks too much; such men are dangerous.

Ant. Fear him not, Cæsar; he's not dangerous;
He is a noble Roman and well given.

Cæs. Would he were fatter! But I fear him not.
Yet if my name were liable to fear,
I do not know the man I should avoid

171. ***chew upon this:*** ruminate on this. 194. ***Yond Cassius.*** "'As for those fat men and smooth-combed heads,' quoth he, 'I never reckon of them: but these pale-visaged and carrion lean people, I fear them most': meaning Brutus and Cassius" (Plutarch). 197. ***well given:*** well disposed. 199. ***liable:*** subject.

So soon as that spare Cassius. He reads much,
He is a great observer, and he looks
Quite through the deeds of men. He loves no plays,
As thou dost, Antony; he hears no music;
Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort
As if he mock'd himself and scorn'd his spirit
That could be moved to smile at anything.
Such men as he be never at heart's ease
Whiles they behold a greater than themselves,
And therefore are they very dangerous.
I rather tell thee what is to be fear'd
Than what I fear; for always I am Cæsar.
Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf,
And tell me truly what thou think'st of him.

[*Sennet. As Cæsar and his Train go out, Brutus pulls Casca's sleeve, and he remains.*

Casca. You pull'd me by the cloak; would you speak with me?

Bru. Ay, Casca; tell us what hath chanced today,
That Cæsar looks so sad.

Casca. Why, you were with him, were you not?

Bru. I should not then ask Casca what had chanced.

Casca. Why, there was a crown offered him; and being offered him, he put it by with the back of his hand, thus; and then the people fell a-shouting.

Bru. What was the second noise for?

Casca. Why, for that too.

Cas. They shouted thrice; what was the last cry for?

Casca. Why, for that too.

Bru. Was the crown offered him thrice?

Casca. Ay, marry, was 't, and he put it by thrice, every time gentler than other, and at every putting-by mine honest neighbours shouted.

205. *sort:* manner. 209. *Whiles . . . greater.* Cf. I, ii, 95 ff. 213. *deaf.* Cæsar's infirmity is frequently alluded to; cf. I, ii, 111, 121, 256. 216. *chanced:* happened. 220. *crown.* In Plutarch the crown is a diadem wreathed about with laurel. 231. *honest:* used here as a term of contempt for people who mean well, but lack judgment.

Cas. Who offered him the crown?

Casca. Why, Antony.

Bru. Tell us the manner of it, gentle Casca.

Casca. I can as well be hanged as tell the manner of it. It was mere foolery; I did not mark it. I saw Mark Antony offer him a crown—yet 'twas not a crown neither, 'twas one of these coronets—and, as I told you, he put it by once. But, for all that, to my thinking, he would fain have had it. Then he offered it to him again; then he put it by again; but, to my thinking, he was very loath to lay his fingers off it. And then he offered it the third time; he put it the third time by; and still as he refused it, the rabblement hooted, and clapped their chopped hands, and threw up their sweaty night-caps, and uttered such a deal of stinking breath, because Cæsar refused the crown, that it had almost choked Cæsar; for he swounded and fell down at it; and for mine own part, I durst not laugh, for fear of opening my lips and receiving the bad air.

Cas. But, soft, I pray you; what, did Cæsar swound?

Casca. He fell down in the market-place, and foamed at mouth, and was speechless.

Bru. 'Tis very like; he hath the falling sickness.

Cas. No, Cæsar hath it not; but you and I
And honest Casca, we have the falling sickness.

Casca. I know not what you mean by that; but, I am sure, Cæsar fell down. If the tag-rag people did not clap him and hiss him, according as he pleased and displeased them, as they use to do the players in the theatre, I am no true man.

Bru. What said he when he came unto himself?

Casca. Marry, before he fell down, when he perceived the common herd was glad he refused the crown, he plucked me ope his doublet, and offered them his throat to cut. An I had

235–6. *It . . . foolery:* i.e., neither Antony nor Cæsar was serious. 236. *mark:* regard seriously. 245. *still:* always. *rabblement:* the rabble, the crowd. 246. *chopped:* chapped, rough. 247. *uttered:* emitted. 249. *swounded:* swooned. 256. *falling sickness:* epilepsy. 267. *plucked . . . doublet:* i.e., bared his throat. The redundant *me* is the old ethical dative. The doublet, of course, was an Elizabethan, and not a Roman, garment. 268. *An:* if.

been a man of any occupation, if I would not have taken him at a word, I would I might go to hell among the rogues. And so he fell. When he came to himself again, he said, if he had done or said anything amiss, he desired their worships to think it was his infirmity. Three or four wenches, where I stood, cried, "Alas, good soul!" and forgave him with all their hearts. But there's no heed to be taken of them; if Cæsar had stabbed their mothers, they would have done no less.

Bru. And after that, he came, thus sad, away?

Casca. Ay.

Cas. Did Cicero say anything?

Casca. Ay, he spoke Greek.

Cas. To what effect?

Casca. Nay, an I tell you that, I'll ne'er look you i' the face again. But those that understood him smiled at one another and shook their heads; but, for mine own part, it was Greek to me. I could tell you more news too; Marullus and Flavius, for pulling scarfs off Cæsar's images, are put to silence. Fare you well. There was more foolery yet, if I could remember it.

Cas. Will you sup with me tonight, Casca?

Casca. No, I am promised forth.

Cas. Will you dine with me tomorrow?

Casca. Ay, if I be alive, and your mind hold, and your dinner worth the eating.

Cas. Good, I will expect you.

Casca. Do so. Farewell, both. [*Exit.*

Bru. What a blunt fellow is this grown to be!
He was quick mettle when he went to school.

Cas. So is he now, in execution
Of any bold or noble enterprise,
However he puts on this tardy form.
This rudeness is a sauce to his good wit,
Which gives men stomach to digest his words
With better appetite.

269. *a man . . . occupation:* (a) a working man, (b) a man of action. 300. *He . . . mettle:* i.e., he had a keen mind. 301. *execution:* performance. 303. *tardy form:* appearance of tardiness or sloth.

Bru. And so it is. For this time I will leave you.
Tomorrow, if you please to speak with me,
I will come home to you; or, if you will,
Come home to me, and I will wait for you.
Cas. I will do so; till then, think of the world. [*Exit Brutus.*
Well, Brutus, thou art noble; yet I see
Thy honourable metal may be wrought
From that it is disposed; therefore it is meet
That noble minds keep ever with their likes,
For who so firm that cannot be seduced?
Cæsar doth bear me hard; but he loves Brutus.
If I were Brutus now, and he were Cassius,
He should not humour me. I will this night,
In several hands, in at his windows throw,
As if they came from several citizens,
Writings, all tending to the great opinion
That Rome holds of his name; wherein obscurely
Cæsar's ambition shall be glanced at.
And after this, let Cæsar seat him sure;
For we will shake him, or worse days endure. [*Exit.*

Scene III. *A street in Rome, the night before the Ides of March.*

Thunder and lightning; Casca, *with his sword drawn, meets* Cicero.

Cic. Good even, Casca; brought you Cæsar home?
Why are you breathless? And why stare you so?
Casca. Are not you moved, when all the sway of earth
Shakes like a thing unfirm? O Cicero,
I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds
Have rived the knotty oaks, and I have seen
The ambitious ocean swell, and rage, and foam,
To be exalted with the threatening clouds;

314. *that it is disposed:* what it is disposed to. 317. *doth ... hard:* bears an ill will to me. 320. *several:* various, different.

[iii] 1. *brought ... home:* did you accompany Cæsar home? 5 ff. These portents are detailed in Plutarch.

But never till tonight, never till now,
Did I go through a tempest dropping fire.
Either there is a civil strife in heaven,
Or else the world, too saucy with the gods,
Incenses them to send destruction.

Cic. Why, saw you anything more wonderful?

Casca. A common slave—you know him well by sight—
Held up his left hand, which did flame and burn
Like twenty torches join'd; and yet his hand,
Not sensible of fire, remain'd unscorch'd.
Besides—I ha' not since put up my sword—
Against the Capitol I met a lion,
Who glazed upon me, and went surly by,
Without annoying me. And there were drawn
Upon a heap a hundred ghastly women,
Transformed with their fear, who swore they saw
Men all in fire walk up and down the streets.
And yesterday the bird of night did sit
Even at noon-day upon the market-place,
Hooting, and shrieking. When these prodigies
Do so conjointly meet, let not men say,
"These are their reasons; they are natural";
For, I believe, they are portentous things
Unto the climate that they point upon.

Cic. Indeed, it is a strange-disposed time.
But men may construe things after their fashion,
Clean from the purpose of the things themselves.
Comes Cæsar to the Capitol tomorrow?

Casca. He doth; for he did bid Antonius
Send word to you he would be there tomorrow.

Cic. Good night then, Casca; this disturbed sky
Is not to walk in.

Casca. Farewell, Cicero. [*Exit Cicero.*

18. *sensible:* capable of feeling. 20. *Against:* near. 21. *glazed:* glared. 23. *Upon a heap:* crowded together. 24. *Transformed . . fear:* frightened out of their wits. 26. *bird of night:* owl. 35. *Clean:* entirely.

Enter CASSIUS.

Cas. Who's there?
Casca. A Roman.
Cas. Casca, by your voice.
Casca. Your ear is good. Cassius, what night is this!
Cas. A very pleasing night to honest men.
Casca. Who ever knew the heavens menace so?
Cas. Those that have known the earth so full of faults.
For my part, I have walk'd about the streets,
Submitting me unto the perilous night;
And, thus unbraced, Casca, as you see,
Have bared my bosom to the thunder-stone;
And when the cross blue lightning seem'd to open
The breast of heaven, I did present myself
Even in the aim and very flash of it.
Casca. But wherefore did you so much tempt the heavens?
It is the part of men to fear and tremble,
When the most mighty gods, by tokens, send
Such dreadful heralds to astonish us.
Cas. You are dull, Casca, and those sparks of life
That should be in a Roman you do want,
Or else you use not. You look pale, and gaze,
And put on fear, and cast yourself in wonder,
To see the strange impatience of the heavens;
But if you would consider the true cause,
Why all these fires, why all these gliding ghosts,
Why birds and beasts from quality and kind,
Why old men, fools, and children calculate,
Why all these things change from their ordinance,
Their natures, and preformed faculties
To monstrous quality—why, you shall find
That heaven hath infused them with these spirits,
To make them instruments of fear and warning

48. *unbraced:* unbuttoned. 49. *thunder-stone:* thunderbolt, a stone or similar missile popularly thought to accompany lightning. 56. *astonish:* stun, dismay. 58. *want:* lack. 65. *calculate:* prophesy.

Unto some monstrous state.
Now could I, Casca, name to thee a man
Most like this dreadful night,
That thunders, lightens, opens graves, and roars,
As doth the lion in the Capitol—
A man no mightier than thyself or me
In personal action; yet prodigious grown,
And fearful, as these strange eruptions are.
Casca. 'Tis Cæsar that you mean; is it not, Cassius?
Cas. Let it be who it is, for Romans now
Have thews and limbs like to their ancestors;
But, woe the while, our fathers' minds are dead,
And we are govern'd with our mothers' spirits;
Our yoke and sufferance show us womanish.
Casca. Indeed, they say the senators tomorrow
Mean to establish Cæsar as a king;
And he shall wear his crown by sea, and land,
In every place, save here in Italy.
Cas. I know where I will wear this dagger then;
Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius.
Therein, ye gods, you make the weak most strong;
Therein, ye gods, you tyrants do defeat.
Nor stony tower, nor walls of beaten brass,
Nor airless dungeon, nor strong links of iron,
Can be retentive to the strength of spirit;
But life, being weary of these worldly bars,
Never lacks power to dismiss itself.
If I know this, know all the world besides,
That part of tyranny that I do bear
I can shake off at pleasure. [*Thunder still.*
Casca. So can I;
So every bondman in his own hand bears
The power to cancel his captivity.
Cas. And why should Cæsar be a tyrant then?
Poor man! I know he would not be a wolf,
But that he sees the Romans are but sheep;

84. *sufferance:* patience. 95. *spirit:* vital energy, life.

He were no lion, were not Romans hinds.
Those that with haste will make a mighty fire
Begin it with weak straws. What trash is Rome?
What rubbish, and what offal, when it serves
For the base matter to illuminate
So vile a thing as Cæsar? But, O Grief,
Where hast thou led me? I perhaps speak this
Before a willing bondman; then I know
My answer must be made. But I am arm'd,
And dangers are to me indifferent.

Casca. You speak to Casca, and to such a man
That is no fleering tell-tale. Hold, my hand;
Be factious for redress of all these griefs,
And I will set this foot of mine as far
As who goes farthest.

Cas. There's a bargain made.
Now know you, Casca, I have moved already
Some certain of the noblest-minded Romans
To undergo, with me, an enterprise
Of honourable-dangerous consequence;
And I do know by this, they stay for me
In Pompey's porch; for now, this fearful night,
There is no stir or walking in the streets;
And the complexion of the element
In favour's like the work we have in hand,
Most bloody, fiery, and most terrible.

Enter Cinna.

Casca. Stand close awhile, for here comes one in haste.

Cas. 'Tis Cinna; I do know him by his gait;
He is a friend. Cinna, where haste you so?

106. *hinds:* (a) deer, (b) slaves or weaklings. 114. *My . . . made:* i.e., I must give satisfaction for the offense I am giving. 115. *indifferent:* of no concern. 117. *fleering:* sneering. 118. *factious:* active, i.e., in fact or deed. 120. *As who:* i.e., as he who (an elliptical construction common in Elizabethan English). 124. *honourable-dangerous:* both honorable and dangerous. 125. *stay:* wait. 128. *complexion of the element:* color of the sky. 129. *In favour's:* in appearance is.

Cin. To find out you. Who's that? Metellus Cimber?
Cas. No, it is Casca, one incorporate
To our attempts. Am I not stay'd for, Cinna?
Cin. I am glad on't. What a fearful night is this!
There's two or three of us have seen strange sights.
Cas. Am I not stay'd for? Tell me.
Cin. Yes, you are.
O Cassius, if you could
But win the noble Brutus to our party—
Cas. Be you content. Good Cinna, take this paper,
And look you lay it in the prætor's chair,
Where Brutus may but find it; and throw this
In at his window; set this up with wax
Upon old Brutus' statue. All this done,
Repair to Pompey's porch, where you shall find us.
Is Decius Brutus and Trebonius there?
Cin. All but Metellus Cimber; and he's gone
To seek you at your house. Well, I will hie,
And so bestow these papers as you bade me.
Cas. That done, repair to Pompey's theatre. [*Exit Cinna.*
Come, Casca, you and I will yet, ere day,
See Brutus at his house; three parts of him
Is ours already, and the man entire
Upon the next encounter yields him ours.
Casca. O, he sits high in all the people's hearts;
And that which would appear offense in us,
His countenance, like richest alchemy,
Will change to virtue and to worthiness.
Cas. Him, and his worth, and our great need of him,
You have right well conceited. Let us go,
For it is after midnight; and ere day
We will awake him and be sure of him. [*Exeunt.*

136. *stay'd:* waited. 146. *old Brutus:* see above, I, ii, 159. 152. *repair:* go. 156. *encounter:* meeting, interview. 159. *countenance:* authority, patronage. 162. *conceited:* formed an opinion of.

ACT II

Scene I. *Rome;* Brutus's *orchard.*

Brutus *is walking about,* *alone.*

Bru. What, Lucius, ho!
I cannot, by the progress of the stars,
Give guess how near to day. Lucius, I say!
I would it were my fault to sleep so soundly.
When, Lucius, when? Awake, I say! What, Lucius!

Enter Lucius.

Luc. Call'd you, my lord?
Bru. Get me a taper in my study, Lucius;
When it is lighted, come and call me here.
Luc. I will, my lord. [*Exit.*
Bru. It must be by his death; and for my part,
I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
But for the general. He would be crown'd—
How that might change his nature, there's the question.
It is the bright day that brings forth the adder;
And that craves wary walking. Crown him?—that;
And then, I grant, we put a sting in him,
That at his will he may do danger with.
The abuse of greatness is when it disjoins
Remorse from power; and, to speak truth of Cæsar,
I have not known when his affections sway'd
More than his reason. But 'tis a common proof,
That Lowliness is young Ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;
But when he once attains the upmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend. So Cæsar may;

[II. i] 12. *general:* the commonwealth, the people. *would be:* wants to be. 19. *Remorse:* obligation, conscientiousness. 21. *common proof:* common experience. 26. *degrees:* steps.

Then, lest he may, prevent. And, since the quarrel
Will bear no colour for the thing he is,
Fashion it thus: that what he is, augmented,
Would run to these, and these extremities;
And therefore think him as a serpent's egg
Which, hatch'd, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,
And kill him in the shell.

Re-enter LUCIUS *with a paper.*

Luc. The taper burneth in your closet, sir.
Searching the window for a flint, I found
This paper, thus seal'd up; and I am sure
It did not lie there when I went to bed. [*Gives him the letter.*

Bru. Get you to bed again; it is not day.
Is not tomorrow, boy, the Ides of March?

Luc. I know not, sir.

Bru. Look in the calendar, and bring me word.

Luc. I will, sir. [*Exit.*

Bru. The exhalations, whizzing in the air,
Give so much light that I may read by them.
[*Opens the letter and reads.*
"Brutus, thou sleep'st; awake, and see thyself.
Shall Rome, &c. Speak, strike, redress!
Brutus, thou sleep'st; awake!"
Such instigations have been often dropp'd
Where I have took them up.
"Shall Rome, &c." Thus must I piece it out:
Shall Rome stand under one man's awe? What, Rome?
My ancestors did from the streets of Rome
The Tarquin drive, when he was call'd a king.
"Speak, strike, redress!" Am I entreated
To speak, and strike? O Rome, I make thee promise;
If the redress will follow, thou receivest
Thy full petition at the hand of Brutus!

28. *quarrel:* charge, accusation. 29. *Will . . . is:* will find no justification in what Cæsar at present is. 30. *Fashion it thus:* put it this way. 33. *as his kind:* like the rest of his species (serpents). 44. *exhalations:* meteors.

Re-enter LUCIUS.

Luc. Sir, March is wasted fourteen days.

[*Knocking is heard.*

Bru. 'Tis good. Go to the gate; somebody knocks.

[*Exit Lucius.*

Since Cassius first did whet me against Cæsar,
I have not slept.
Between the acting of a dreadful thing,
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream.
The Genius and the mortal instruments
Are then in council; and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.

Re-enter LUCIUS.

Luc. Sir, 'tis your brother Cassius at the door,
Who doth desire to see you.

Bru. Is he alone?

Luc. No, sir, there are moe with him.

Bru. Do you know them?

Luc. No, sir; their hats are pluck'd about their ears,
And half their faces buried in their cloaks,
That by no means I may discover them
By any mark of favour.

Bru. Let 'em enter. [*Exit Lucius.*

They are the faction. O Conspiracy,
Shamest thou to show thy dangerous brow by night,
When evils are most free? O, then by day
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough

64. *motion:* proposal. 66. *The Genius . . . instruments:* the spirit and the bodily powers. The classical belief that a tutelary god or spirit was allotted to every man at his birth is here alluded to. Cf. *A & C.*, II, iii, 19; *TN.*, III, iv, 142; *T & C.*, IV, iv, 52; *Macb.*, III, i, 56; *Temp.*, IV, i, 27; *C of E.*, V, i, 332. 70. *brother Cassius.* Cassius was Brutus's brother-in-law. 75. *discover:* recognize. 76. *favour:* face.

To mask thy monstrous visage? Seek none, Conspiracy;
Hide it in smiles and affability;
For if thou path, thy native semblance on,
Not Erebus itself were dim enough
To hide thee from prevention.

Enter the conspirators, CASSIUS, CASCA, DECIUS, CINNA, METELLUS CIMBER, *and* TREBONIUS.

Cas. I think we are too bold upon your rest.
Good morrow, Brutus; do we trouble you?
Bru. I have been up this hour, awake all night.
Know I these men that come along with you?
Cas. Yes, every man of them, and no man here
But honours you; and every one doth wish
You had but that opinion of yourself
Which every noble Roman bears of you.
This is Trebonius.
Bru. He is welcome hither.
Cas. This, Decius Brutus.
Bru. He is welcome too.
Cas. This, Casca; this, Cinna; and this, Metellus Cimber.
Bru. They are all welcome.
What watchful cares do interpose themselves
Betwixt your eyes and night?
Cas. Shall I entreat a word? [*Brutus and Cassius whisper.*
Dec. Here lies the east; doth not the day break here?
Casca. No.
Cin. O, pardon, sir, it doth; and yon gray lines
That fret the clouds are messengers of day.
Casca. You shall confess that you are both deceived.
Here, as I point my sword, the sun arises,
Which is a great way growing on the south,
Weighing the youthful season of the year.
Some two months hence up higher toward the north

83. *path . . . on:* set about a thing without disguise. 84. *Erebus:* one of the divisions of Hades, frequently alluded to by Shakespeare as typifying darkness. 85. *prevention:* discovery.

He first presents his fire; and the high east
Stands, as the Capitol, directly here.
Bru. [*Turning to them again*] Give me your hands all over, one by one.
Cas. And let us swear our resolution.
Bru. No, not an oath. If not the face of men,
The sufferance of our souls, the time's abuse—
If these be motives weak, break off betimes,
And every man hence to his idle bed;
So let high-sighted Tyranny range on,
Till each man drop by lottery. But if these
(As I am sure they do) bear fire enough
To kindle cowards, and to steel with valour
The melting spirits of women, then, countrymen,
What need we any spur, but our own cause,
To prick us to redress? What other bond
Than secret Romans, that have spoke the word,
And will not palter? And what other oath
Than honesty to honesty engaged,
That this shall be, or we will fall for it?
Swear priests and cowards and men cautelous,
Old feeble carrions, and such suffering souls
That welcome wrongs; unto bad causes swear
Such creatures as men doubt; but do not stain
The even virtue of our enterprise,
Nor the insuppressive mettle of our spirits,
To think that or our cause or our performance
Did need an oath; when every drop of blood
That every Roman bears, and nobly bears,
Is guilty of a several bastardy,

114 ff. "The only name and great calling of Brutus did bring on the most of them to give consent to this conspiracy. Who having never taken oaths together, nor taken or given any caution or assurance, nor binding themselves one to another by any religious oaths, they all kept the matter . . . secret" (Plutarch). 115. *sufferance:* suffering. 117. *idle bed:* bed of idleness. 119. *lottery:* chance. 129. *cautelous:* crafty, deceitful. 135. *To think:* by thinking. *or . . . or:* either . . . or.

If he do break the smallest particle
Of any promise that hath pass'd from him.
Cas. But what of Cicero? Shall we sound him?
I think he will stand very strong with us.
Casca. Let us not leave him out.
Cin. No, by no means.
Met. O, let us have him, for his silver hairs
Will purchase us a good opinion
And buy men's voices to commend our deeds.
It shall be said his judgment ruled our hands;
Our youths and wildness shall no whit appear,
But all be buried in his gravity.
Bru. O, name him not; let us not break with him,
For he will never follow anything
That other men begin.
Cas. Then leave him out.
Casca. Indeed, he is not fit.
Dec. Shall no man else be touch'd but only Cæsar?
Cas. Decius, well urged. I think it is not meet,
Mark Antony, so well beloved of Cæsar,
Should outlive Cæsar; we shall find of him
A shrewd contriver. And, you know, his means,
If he improve them, may well stretch so far
As to annoy us all; which to prevent,
Let Antony and Cæsar fall together.
Bru. Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius,
To cut the head off, and then hack the limbs,
Like wrath in death, and envy afterwards;
For Antony is but a limb of Cæsar.
Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius.
We all stand up against the spirit of Cæsar;
And in the spirit of men there is no blood.
O, that we then could come by Cæsar's spirit,
And not dismember Cæsar! But, alas,

146. *voices:* support, votes. 150. *break with him:* reveal the plot to him, take him into confidence. 155. *meet:* fitting. 162. Brutus's fine idealism leads him to make his first mistake.

Cæsar must bleed for it! And, gentle friends,
Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully;
Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods,
Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds;
And let our hearts, as subtle masters do,
Stir up their servants to an act of rage,
And after seem to chide 'em. This shall make
Our purpose necessary and not envious;
Which so appearing to the common eyes,
We shall be call'd purgers, not murderers.
And for Mark Antony, think not of him;
For he can do no more than Cæsar's arm,
When Cæsar's head is off.
Cas. Yet I fear him;
For in the ingrafted love he bears to Cæsar—
Bru. Alas, good Cassius, do not think of him.
If he love Cæsar, all that he can do
Is to himself, take thought and die for Cæsar;
And that were much he should, for he is given
To sports, to wildness, and much company.
Treb. There is no fear in him; let him not die;
For he will live, and laugh at this hereafter. [*Clock strikes.*
Bru. Peace! Count the clock.
Cas. The clock hath stricken three.
Treb. 'Tis time to part.
Cas. But it is doubtful yet,
Whether Cæsar will come forth today, or no;
For he is superstitious grown of late,
Quite from the main opinion he held once
Of fantasy, of dreams, and ceremonies.
It may be, these apparent prodigies,
The unaccustom'd terror of this night,
And the persuasion of his augurers,
May hold him from the Capitol today.

178. *envious:* malignant. 190. *no fear:* no need for fear. 192. *Count the clock:* an anachronism; the Roman water-clock did not strike. 197. *fantasy:* imagination. *ceremonies:* portents.

Dec. Never fear that. If he be so resolved,
I can o'ersway him; for he loves to hear
That unicorns may be betray'd with trees,
And bears with glasses, elephants with holes,
Lions with toils, and men with flatterers.
But when I tell him he hates flatterers,
He says he does, being then most flattered.
Let me work,
For I can give his humour the true bent;
And I will bring him to the Capitol.
Cas. Nay, we will all of us be there to fetch him.
Bru. By the eighth hour; is that the uttermost?
Cin. Be that the uttermost, and fail not then.
Met. Caius Ligarius doth bear Cæsar hard,
Who rated him for speaking well of Pompey;
I wonder none of you have thought of him.
Bru. Now, good Metullus, go along by him.
He loves me well, and I have given him reasons;
Send him but hither, and I'll fashion him.
Cas. The morning comes upon 's; we'll leave you, Brutus.
And, friends, disperse yourselves; but all remember
What you have said, and show yourselves true Romans.
Bru. Good gentlemen, look fresh and merrily;
Let not our looks put on our purposes,
But bear it as our Roman actors do,
With untired spirits and formal constancy,
And so good morrow to you every one. [*Exeunt all but Brutus.*
Boy! Lucius! Fast asleep? It is no matter;
Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of slumber.
Thou hast no figures nor no fantasies,
Which busy Care draws in the brains of men;
Therefore thou sleep'st so sound.

204. *trees.* The hunter stepped behind a tree as the beast charged him and impaled itself by driving its horn into the trunk. 205. *glasses.* Bears were blinded by sunlight reflected from mirrors. *holes:* pitfalls. 206. *toils:* snares. 210. *bent:* inclination. 213. *uttermost:* very latest. 215. *doth ... hard:* has a grudge against Cæsar. 216. *rated:* rebuked. 231. *figures:* figments. *fantasies:* fancies.

Enter PORTIA.

Por. Brutus, my lord!

Bru. Portia, what mean you? Wherefore rise you now?
It is not for your health thus to commit
Your weak condition to the raw cold morning.

Por. Nor for yours neither. You've ungently, Brutus,
Stole from my bed; and yesternight, at supper,
You suddenly arose and walk'd about,
Musing and sighing, with your arms across,
And when I ask'd you what the matter was,
You stared upon me with ungentle looks.
I urged you further; then you scratch'd your head,
And too impatiently stamp'd with your foot;
Yet I insisted, yet you answer'd not,
But, with an angry wafture of your hand,
Gave sign for me to leave you. So I did,
Fearing to strengthen that impatience
Which seem'd too much enkindled, and withal
Hoping it was but an effect of humour,
Which sometime hath his hour with every man.
It will not let you eat, nor talk, nor sleep;
And could it work so much upon your shape,
As it hath much prevail'd on your condition,
I should not know you, Brutus. Dear my lord,
Make me acquainted with your cause of grief.

Bru. I am not well in health, and that is all.

Por. Brutus is wise, and, were he not in health,
He would embrace the means to come by it.

Bru. Why, so I do. Good Portia, go to bed.

Por. Is Brutus sick? And is it physical
To walk unbraced, and suck up the humours
Of the dank morning? What, is Brutus sick?
And will he steal out of his wholesome bed,
To dare the vile contagion of the night,

237. *ungently:* unkindly. 250. *humour:* mood, caprice. 254. *condition:* constitution. 261. *physical:* healthful. 262. *unbraced:* unbuttoned. *humours:* moisture.

And tempt the rheumy and unpurged air,
To add unto his sickness? No, my Brutus,
You have some sick offense within your mind,
Which, by the right and virtue of my place,
I ought to know of; and, upon my knees,
I charm you, by my once-commended beauty,
By all your vows of love, and that great vow
Which did incorporate and make us one,
That you unfold to me, yourself, your half,
Why you are heavy, and what men tonight
Have had resort to you; for here have been
Some six or seven, who did hide their faces
Even from darkness. [*She kneels.*

Bru. Kneel not, gentle Portia.

Por. I should not need, if you were gentle Brutus.
Within the bond of marriage, tell me, Brutus,
Is it excepted I should know no secrets
That appertain to you? Am I yourself
But, as it were, in sort or limitation,

266. *rheumy:* damp, unwholesome. 268. *sick offense:* offense causing sickness—a characteristic Elizabethan construction. 279–302. This passage, which seems so characteristically Shakespeare's, follows very closely a passage in Plutarch: "Then perceiving her husband was marvellously out of quiet, . . . she spake in this sort unto him: 'I being, O Brutus, . . . the daughter of Cato, was married unto thee, not to be thy bedfellow and companion in bed and at board only, like a harlot, but to be partaker also with thee of thy good and evil fortune. Now for thyself, I can find no cause of fault in thee touching our match: but for my part, how may I shew my duty towards thee, and how much I would do for thy sake, if I cannot constantly bear a secret mischance or grief with thee, which requireth secrecy and fidelity? I confess that a woman's wit commonly is too weak to keep a secret safely: and yet, Brutus, good education and the company of virtuous men have some power to reform the defect of nature. And for myself, I have this benefit moreover: that I am the daughter of Cato, and wife of Brutus. This notwithstanding, I did not trust to any of these things before: until that now I have found by experience, that no pain nor grief whatsoever can overcome me.' With those words she showed him her wound on her thigh, and told him what she had done to prove herself."

To keep with you at meals, comfort your bed,
And talk to you sometimes? Dwell I but in the suburbs
Of your good pleasure? If it be no more,
Portia is Brutus' harlot, not his wife.
Bru. You are my true and honourable wife,
As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
That visit my sad heart.
Por. If this were true, then should I know this secret.
I grant I am a woman, but withal
A woman that Lord Brutus took to wife.
I grant I am a woman, but withal
A woman well-reputed, Cato's daughter.
Think you I am no stronger than my sex,
Being so father'd and so husbanded?
Tell me your counsels; I will not disclose 'em.
I have made strong proof of my constancy,
Giving myself a voluntary wound
Here, in the thigh. [*She discloses the wound.*] Can I bear that with patience,
And not my husband's secrets?
Bru. O ye gods,
Render me worthy of this noble wife! [*Knocking within.*
Hark, hark! One knocks. Portia, go in awhile;
And by and by thy bosom shall partake
The secrets of my heart.
All my engagements I will construe to thee,
All the charactery of my sad brows.
Leave me with haste. [*Exit Portia.*] Lucius, who's that knocks?

285. *Dwell . . . suburbs.* Shakespeare doubtless has in mind Elizabethan, and not Roman, conditions. In the suburbs of London, across the Thames, were the houses of ill-fame. 289. *ruddy drops.* The theory of the circulation of the blood, though first expounded by Harvey in 1616, must have been popularly understood earlier. 295. *Cato's daughter.* Portia was the daughter of the great defender of the Republic who supported Pompey against Cæsar, and at the latter's success committed suicide. 299. *proof:* test, trial. 305. *partake:* take some of. 307. *engagements . . . construe:* I will explain all that I am pledged to do. 308. *charactery:* writing (figuratively).

Re-enter LUCIUS *with* LIGARIUS.

Luc. Here is a sick man that would speak with you.
Bru. Caius Ligarius, that Metellus spake of.
Boy, stand aside. Caius Ligarius! How?
Lig. Vouchsafe good morrow from a feeble tongue.
Bru. O, what a time have you chose out, brave Caius,
To wear a kerchief! Would you were not sick!
Lig. I am not sick, if Brutus have in hand
Any exploit worthy the name of honour.
Bru. Such an exploit have I in hand, Ligarius,
Had you a healthful ear to hear of it.
Lig. By all the gods that Romans bow before,
I here discard my sickness! Soul of Rome!
Brave son, derived from honourable loins!
Thou, like an exorcist, hast conjured up
My mortified spirit. Now bid me run,
And I will strive with things impossible—
Yea, get the better of them. What's to do?
Bru. A piece of work that will make sick men whole.
Lig. But are not some whole that we must make sick?
Bru. That must we also. What it is, my Caius,
I shall unfold to thee, as we are going
To whom it must be done.
Lig. Set on your foot,
And with a heart new-fired, I follow you,
To do I know not what; but it sufficeth
That Brutus leads me on. [*Thunder.*
Bru. Follow me, then. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A room in* CÆSAR'S *house.*

Thunder and lightning. Enter CÆSAR, *in his night-gown.*

Cæs. Nor heaven nor earth have been at peace tonight.
Thrice hath Calpurnia in her sleep cried out,
"Help, ho! they murder Cæsar!" Who's within?

323. *exorcist:* one skilled in raising spirits. 324. *mortified:* dead.
[ii] S. D. *night-gown:* dressing gown.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My lord?

Cæs. Go bid the priests do present sacrifice,
And bring me their opinions of success.

Serv. I will, my lord. [*Exit.*

Enter Calpurnia.

Cal. What mean you, Cæsar? Think you to walk forth?
You shall not stir out of your house today.

Cæs. Cæsar shall forth. The things that threaten'd me
Ne'er look'd but on my back; when they shall see
The face of Cæsar, they are vanished.

Cal. Cæsar, I never stood on ceremonies,
Yet now they fright me. There is one within,
Besides the things that we have heard and seen,
Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.
A lioness hath whelped in the streets;
And graves have yawn'd, and yielded up their dead;
Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds,
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;
The noise of battle hurtled in the air,
Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan,
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.
O, Cæsar, these things are beyond all use,
And I do fear them.

Cæs. What can be avoided
Whose end is purposed by the mighty gods?
Yet Cæsar shall go forth; for these predictions
Are to the world in general as to Cæsar.

Cal. When beggars die, there are no comets seen;
The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes.

Cæs. Cowards die many times before their deaths;
The valiant never taste of death but once.

5. *present:* immediate. 13. *stood on ceremonies:* made much of omens. 16. *horrid:* horrible. 22. *hurtled:* clattered. 25. *beyond all use:* beyond all that is usual.

Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear,
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come.

Re-enter Servant.

What say the augurers?

Serv. They would not have you to stir forth today.
Plucking the entrails of an offering forth,
They could not find a heart within the beast.

Cæs. The gods do this in shame of cowardice;
Cæsar should be a beast without a heart,
If he should stay at home today for fear.
No, Cæsar shall not; Danger knows full well
That Cæsar is more dangerous than he.
We are two lions litter'd in one day,
And I the elder and more terrible;
And Cæsar shall go forth.

Cal. Alas, my lord,
Your wisdom is consumed in confidence.
Do not go forth today; call it my fear
That keeps you in the house, and not your own.
We'll send Mark Antony to the senate-house;
And he shall say you are not well today.
Let me, upon my knee, prevail in this. [*She kneels.*

Cæs. Mark Antony shall say I am not well;
And, for thy humour, I will stay at home.

Enter DECIUS.

Here's Decius Brutus, he shall tell them so.

Dec. Cæsar, all hail! Good morrow, worthy Cæsar!
I come to fetch you to the senate-house.

Cæs. And you are come in very happy time
To bear my greeting to the senators,
And tell them that I will not come today.

48 ff. Note the parallel between this scene of Cæsar with his wife and the previous one of Brutus with his. 56. *humour:* whim.

Cannot, is false; and that I dare not, falser.
I will not come today. Tell them so, Decius.
Cal. Say he is sick.
Cæs. Shall Cæsar send a lie?
Have I in conquest stretch'd mine arm so far,
To be afeard to tell graybeards the truth?
Decius, go tell them Cæsar will not come.
Dec. Most mighty Cæsar, let me know some cause,
Lest I be laugh'd at when I tell them so.
Cæs. The cause is in my will. I will not come;
That is enough to satisfy the senate.
But for your private satisfaction,
Because I love you, I will let you know.
Calpurnia here, my wife, stays me at home.
She dreamt tonight she saw my statuë,
Which, like a fountain with an hundred spouts,
Did run pure blood; and many lusty Romans
Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it;
And these does she apply for warnings, and portents,
And evils imminent; and on her knee
Hath begg'd that I will stay at home today.
Dec. This dream is all amiss interpreted;
It was a vision fair and fortunate.
Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,
In which so many smiling Romans bathed,
Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck
Reviving blood, and that great men shall press
For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance.
This by Calpurnia's dream is signified.
Cæs. And this way have you well expounded it.
Dec. I have, when you have heard what I can say;
And know it now. The senate have concluded

67. *afeard:* afraid. 75. *stays:* keeps. 78. *lusty:* happy (as well as vigorous). 89. *tinctures, stains:* (1) colors in armorial bearings (i.e., for advancement); with an allusion to (2) the practice of dipping handkerchiefs in the blood of martyrs. *cognizance:* in heraldry, a distinguishing device worn by retainers.

To give this day a crown to mighty Cæsar.
If you shall send them word you will not come,
Their minds may change. Besides, it were a mock
Apt to be render'd, for some one to say,
"Break up the senate till another time,
When Cæsar's wife shall meet with better dreams."
If Cæsar hide himself, shall they not whisper,
"Lo, Cæsar is afraid"?
Pardon me, Cæsar; for my dear dear love
To your proceeding bids me tell you this;
And reason to my love is liable.

Cæs. How foolish do your fears seem now, Calpurnia!
I am ashamed I did yield to them.
Give me my robe, for I will go.

Enter PUBLIUS, BRUTUS, LIGARIUS, METELLUS, CASCA, TREBONIUS, *and* CINNA.

And look where Publius is come to fetch me.

Pub. Good morrow, Cæsar.

Cæs. Welcome, Publius.
What, Brutus, are you stirr'd so early too?
Good morrow, Casca. Caius Ligarius,
Cæsar was ne'er so much your enemy
As that same ague which has made you lean.
What is't o'clock?

Bru. Cæsar, 'tis strucken eight.

Cæs. I thank you for your pains and courtesy.

Enter ANTONY.

See! Antony, that revels long o' nights,
Is notwithstanding up. Good morrow, Antony.

Ant. So to most noble Cæsar.

Cæs. Bid them prepare within;
I am to blame to be thus waited for.

102. *dear dear.* Repetition for emphasis is a characteristic Elizabethan device. 103. *proceeding:* advancement, career. 104. *liable:* subject.

Now, Cinna; now, Metellus; what, Trebonius,
I have an hour's talk in store for you;
Remember that you call on me today:
Be near me, that I may remember you.
Treb. Cæsar, I will; [*Aside.*] and so near will I be,
That your best friends shall wish I had been further.
Cæs. Good friends, go in, and taste some wine with me;
And we, like friends, will straightway go together.
Bru. [*Aside*] That every like is not the same, O Cæsar,
The heart of Brutus yearns to think upon! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *A street near the Capitol.*

Enter Artemidorus, *reading a paper.*

Art. "Cæsar, beware of Brutus; take heed of Cassius; come not near Casca; have an eye to Cinna; trust not Trebonius; mark well Metellus Cimber; Decius Brutus loves thee not; thou hast wronged Caius Ligarius. There is but one mind in all these men, and it is bent against Cæsar. If thou beest not immortal, look about you; Security gives way to Conspiracy. The mighty gods defend thee! Thy lover, Artemidorus."

Here will I stand till Cæsar pass along,
And as a suitor will I give him this.
My heart laments that virtue cannot live
Out of the teeth of emulation.
If thou read this, O Cæsar, thou mayst live;
If not, the Fates with traitors do contrive. [*Exit.*

Scene IV. *Another part of the same street, before the house of* Brutus.

Portia *and* Lucius *come out of the house.*

Por. I prithee, boy, run to the senate-house;
Stay not to answer me, but get thee gone.
Why dost thou stay?

129. *yearns.* F_1 reads *earnes*.

[iii] 8. *Security:* self-confidence, lack of caution. 14. *emulation:* jealous rivalry.

Luc. To know my errand, madam.
Por. I would have had thee there, and here again,
Ere I can tell thee what thou shouldst do there.
O constancy, be strong upon my side,
Set a huge mountain 'tween my heart and tongue!
I have a man's mind, but a woman's might.
How hard it is for women to keep counsel!
Art thou here yet?
Luc. Madam, what should I do?
Run to the Capitol, and nothing else?
And so return to you, and nothing else?
Por. Yes, bring me word, boy, if thy lord look well,
For he went sickly forth; and take good note
What Cæsar doth, what suitors press to him.
Hark, boy, what noise is that?
Luc. I hear none, madam.
Por. Prithee, listen well;
I heard a bustling rumour, like a fray,
And the wind brings it from the Capitol.
Luc. Sooth, madam, I hear nothing.

Enter the Soothsayer.

Por. Come hither, fellow; which way hast thou been?
Sooth. At mine own house, good lady.
Por. What is 't o'clock?
Sooth. About the ninth hour, lady.
Por. Is Cæsar yet gone to the Capitol?
Sooth. Madam, not yet; I go to take my stand,
To see him pass on to the Capitol.
Por. Thou hast some suit to Cæsar, hast thou not?
Sooth. That I have, lady; if it will please Cæsar
To be so good to Cæsar as to hear me,
I shall beseech him to befriend himself.
Por. Why, know'st thou any harm's intended towards him?
Sooth. None that I know will be, much that I fear may chance.

[iv] 9. ***keep counsel:*** keep a secret.

Good morrow to you. Here the street is narrow;
The throng that follows Cæsar at the heels,
Of senators, of prætors, common suitors,
Will crowd a feeble man almost to death.
I'll get me to a place more void, and there
Speak to great Cæsar as he comes along. [*Exit.*

Por. I must go in. Ay me, how weak a thing
The heart of woman is! O Brutus,
The heavens speed thee in thine enterprise!
[*To herself.*] Sure, the boy heard me. [*To Lucius.*] Brutus hath a suit
That Cæsar will not grant. O, I grow faint.
Run, Lucius, and commend me to my lord;
Say I am merry; come to me again,
And bring me word what he doth say to thee.
[*She enters the house; Lucius goes to the Capitol.*

ACT III

Scene I. *Rome. Before the Capitol; the Senate sitting in session.*

A crowd of people; among them Artemidorus *and the* Soothsayer. *There is a flourish of trumpets as* Cæsar *appears with his Train, including* Brutus, Cassius, Casca, Decius, Metellus, Trebonius, Cinna, Antony, Lepidus, Popilius, Publius, *and others. Petitioners crowd around him.*

Cæs. [*To the Soothsayer*] The Ides of March are come.
Sooth. Ay, Cæsar; but not gone.

37. *more void:* less crowded. 42. *Sure:* surely. The adjective form for the adverb is frequent in Elizabethan English.

[III. i] This scene is an example of the "split scenes" so common in Elizabethan drama, in which the locale changes during the dialogue. Its representation in the Elizabethan theatre was probably simple enough. As Cæsar bade the petitioners, "Come to the Capitol," he walked toward the curtain of the inner stage, which drew, revealing the Senate in session. The platform, which a moment before had represented the street outside the Capitol, thus became part of the Senate-chamber.

Art. Hail, Cæsar! Read this schedule.
Dec. Trebonius doth desire you to o'er-read,
At your best leisure, this his humble suit.
Art. O Cæsar, read mine first; for mine's a suit
That touches Cæsar nearer; read it, great Cæsar.
Cæs. What touches us ourself shall be last served.
Art. Delay not, Cæsar; read it instantly.
Cæs. What, is the fellow mad?
Pub. Sirrah, give place.
Cas. What, urge you your petitions in the street?
Come to the Capitol.

CÆSAR *goes up to the Senate-house, the rest following.*

Pop. I wish your enterprise today may thrive.
Cas. What enterprise, Popilius?
Pop. Fare you well.
[*Advances to Cæsar.*
Bru. What said Popilius Lena?
Cas. He wish'd today our enterprise might thrive;
I fear our purpose is discovered.
Bru. Look, how he makes to Cæsar; mark him.
Cas. Casca, be sudden, for we fear prevention.
Brutus, what shall be done? If this be known,
Cassius or Cæsar never shall turn back,
For I will slay myself.
Bru. Cassius, be constant.
Popilius Lena speaks not of our purposes;
For, look, he smiles, and Cæsar doth not change.
Cas. Trebonius knows his time; for, look you, Brutus,
He draws Mark Antony out of the way.
[*Exeunt Antony and Trebonius.*
Dec. Where is Metellus Cimber? Let him go,
And presently prefer his suit to Cæsar.
Bru. He is address'd; press near and second him.

3. ***schedule:*** scroll. 8. ***us ourself:*** the imperial plural. 19. ***prevention:*** forestalling. 22. ***constant:*** steady. 28. ***presently:*** immediately. ***prefer:*** present. 29. ***address'd:*** ready.

Cin. Casca, you are the first that rears your hand.
Cæs. Are we all ready? What is now amiss
That Cæsar and his senate must redress?
Met. Most high, most mighty, and most puissant Cæsar,
Metellus Cimber throws before thy seat
An humble heart— [*He kneels, but Cæsar stops him.*
Cæs. I must prevent thee, Cimber.
These couchings and these lowly courtesies
Might fire the blood of ordinary men,
And turn pre-ordinance and first decree
Into the law of children. Be not fond,
To think that Cæsar bears such rebel blood
That will be thaw'd from the true quality
With that which melteth fools; I mean, sweet words,
Low-crooked curtsies, and base spaniel-fawning.
Thy brother by decree is banished;
If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him,
I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.
Know, Cæsar doth not wrong, nor without cause
Will he be satisfied.
Met. Is there no voice more worthy than my own,
To sound more sweetly in great Cæsar's ear
For the repealing of my banish'd brother?
Bru. I kiss thy hand, but not in flattery, Cæsar;
Desiring thee that Publius Cimber may
Have an immediate freedom of repeal.
Cæs. What, Brutus?
Cas. Pardon, Cæsar; Cæsar, pardon.
As low as to thy foot doth Cassius fall,
To beg enfranchisement for Publius Cimber.
Cæs. I could be well moved, if I were as you;
If I could pray to move, prayers would move me.
But I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true-fix'd and resting quality

35. *prevent:* anticipate. 36. *couchings:* low bowings. 39. *law of children:* a famous crux. *fond:* foolish. 51. *repealing:* recalling from exile.

There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks;
They are all fire, and every one doth shine,
But there's but one in all doth hold his place.
So, in the world; 'tis furnish'd well with men,
And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;
Yet in the number, I do know but one
That unassailable holds on his rank,
Unshaked of motion; and that I am he,
Let me a little show it, even in this:
That I was constant Cimber should be banish'd,
And constant do remain to keep him so.

Cin. O Cæsar—

Cæs. Hence! Wilt thou lift up Olympus?

Dec. Great Cæsar—

Cæs. Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?

Casca. Speak, hands, for me!

[*Casca first, then the other Conspirators and Marcus Brutus stab Cæsar.*

Cæs. *Et tu, Brute?* Then fall, Cæsar! [*Dies.*

Cin. Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead!
Run hence, proclaim, cry it about the streets.

Cas. Some to the common pulpits, and cry out,
"Liberty, freedom, and enfranchisement!"

Bru. People and senators, be not affrighted;
Fly not; stand still; Ambition's debt is paid.

Casca. Go to the pulpit, Brutus.

Dec. And Cassius too.

Bru. Where's Publius?

Cin. Here, quite confounded with this mutiny.

Met. Stand fast together, lest some friend of Cæsar's
Should chance—

Bru. Talk not of standing. Publius, good cheer;

62. *fellow:* mate, match. 63. *painted:* decorated. 67. *apprehensive:* intelligent. 70. *Unshaked of motion:* unmoved. 74. *lift up Olympus:* i.e., move the gods. Olympus was believed to be their abode. 75. *bootless:* unavailing. 86. *confounded with:* confused by.

There is no harm intended to your person,
Nor to no Roman else; so tell them, Publius.
Cas. And leave us, Publius; lest that the people,
Rushing on us, should do your age some mischief.
Bru. Do so; and let no man abide this deed,
But we the doers.

Re-enter Trebonius.

Cas. Where is Antony?
Treb. Fled to his house amazed.
Men, wives, and children stare, cry out, and run,
As it were doomsday.
Bru. Fates, we will know your pleasures.
That we shall die, we know; 'tis but the time
And drawing days out, that men stand upon.
Cas. Why, he that cuts off twenty years of life,
Cuts off so many years of fearing death.
Bru. Grant that, and then is death a benefit;
So are we Cæsar's friends, that have abridged
His time of fearing death. Stoop, Romans, stoop,
[*They dip their hands and swords in Cæsar's blood.*
And let us bathe our hands in Cæsar's blood
Up to the elbows, and besmear our swords;
Then walk we forth, even to the market-place,
And, waving our red weapons o'er our heads,
Let's all cry, "Peace, freedom, and liberty!"
Cas. Stoop, then, and wash. How many ages hence
Shall this our lofty scene be acted over
In states unborn and accents yet unknown!
Bru. How many times shall Cæsar bleed in sport,
That now on Pompey's basis lies along
No worthier than the dust!
Cas. So oft as that shall be,

94. *abide:* answer for. 96. *amazed:* bewildered. 115. *basis:* the base of the statue. The murder of Cæsar actually took place in the porch to Pompey's theatre. Shakespeare chose the more fitting place.

So often shall the knot of us be call'd
The men that gave their country liberty.
Dec. What, shall we forth?
Cas. Ay, every man away.
Brutus shall lead; and we will grace his heels
With the most boldest and best hearts of Rome.

Enter a Servant.

Bru. Soft! Who comes here? A friend of Antony's.
Serv. Thus, Brutus, did my master bid me kneel;
Thus did Mark Antony bid me fall down;
And, being prostrate, thus he bade me say:
Brutus is noble, wise, valiant, and honest;
Cæsar was mighty, bold, royal, and loving.
Say I love Brutus, and I honour him;
Say I fear'd Cæsar, honour'd him, and loved him.
If Brutus will vouchsafe that Antony
May safely come to him, and be resolved
How Cæsar hath deserved to lie in death,
Mark Antony shall not love Cæsar dead
So well as Brutus living; but will follow
The fortunes and affairs of noble Brutus
Thorough the hazards of this untrod state
With all true faith. So says my master Antony.
Bru. Thy master is a wise and valiant Roman;
I never thought him worse.
Tell him, so please him come unto this place,
He shall be satisfied; and, by my honour,
Depart untouch'd.
Serv. I'll fetch him presently. [*Exit.*
Bru. I know that we shall have him well to friend.
Cas. I wish we may; but yet have I a mind
That fears him much; and my misgiving still
Falls shrewdly to the purpose.

117. *knot:* band. 121. *most boldest.* The double superlative for emphasis is common in Elizabethan English. 136. *Thorough:* through. 140. *so please him:* if he will. 142. *presently:* at once. 143. *to friend:* as a friend. 146. *shrewdly:* very much (a common intensive).

Re-enter Antony.

Bru. But here comes Antony. Welcome, Mark Antony.
Ant. O mighty Cæsar! Dost thou lie so low?
Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils,
Shrunk to this little measure? Fare thee well.
I know not, gentlemen, what you intend,
Who else must be let blood, who else is rank;
If I myself, there is no hour so fit
As Cæsar's death's hour, nor no instrument
Of half that worth as those your swords, made rich
With the most noble blood of all this world.
I do beseech ye, if you bear me hard,
Now, whilst your purpled hands do reek and smoke,
Fulfil your pleasure. Live a thousand years,
I shall not find myself so apt to die.
No place will please me so, no mean of death,
As here by Cæsar, and by you cut off,
The choice and master spirits of this age.
Bru. O Antony, beg not your death of us.
Though now we must appear bloody and cruel,
As, by our hands and this our present act,
You see we do; yet see you but our hands
And this the bleeding business they have done.
Our hearts you see not; they are pitiful,
And pity to the general wrong of Rome—
As fire drives out fire, so pity pity—
Hath done this deed on Cæsar. For your part,
To you our swords have leaden points, Mark Antony.
Our arms, in strength of malice, and our hearts,
Of brothers' temper, do receive you in,
With all kind love, good thoughts, and reverence.

152. *let blood:* an allusion to bleeding as a sovereign remedy. *rank:* puffed up, swollen, i.e., ripe for lancing. 158. *purpled:* red, bloody. 159. *Live . . . years:* if I were to live a thousand years. 160. *apt:* ready. 169. *pitiful:* full of compassion. 170. *general wrong:* wrong to the commonweal. 174–5. *Our arms . . . temper:* our arms have the strength of malice, but our hearts the spirit of brotherhood.

Cas. Your voice shall be as strong as any man's
In the disposing of new dignities.
Bru. Only be patient till we have appeased
The multitude, beside themselves with fear,
And then we will deliver you the cause
Why I, that did love Cæsar when I struck him,
Have thus proceeded.
Ant. I doubt not of your wisdom.
Let each man render me his bloody hand.
First, Marcus Brutus, will I shake with you;
Next, Caius Cassius, do I take your hand;
Now, Decius Brutus, yours; now yours, Metellus;
Yours, Cinna; and, my valiant Casca, yours;
Though last, not least in love, yours, good Trebonius.
Gentlemen all—alas, what shall I say?
My credit now stands on such slippery ground
That one of two bad ways you must conceit me,
Either a coward, or a flatterer.
That I did love thee, Cæsar, O, 'tis true;
If then thy spirit look upon us now,
Shall it not grieve thee dearer than thy death,
To see thy Antony making his peace,
Shaking the bloody fingers of thy foes—
Most noble—in the presence of thy corse?
Had I as many eyes as thou hast wounds,
Weeping as fast as they stream forth thy blood,
It would become me better than to close
In terms of friendship with thine enemies.
Pardon me, Julius! Here wast thou bay'd, brave hart;
Here didst thou fall; and here thy hunters stand,
Sign'd in thy spoil, and crimson'd in thy lethe.
O world, thou wast the forest to this hart;

177–8. *Your . . . dignities.* While Brutus talks of principles, it is characteristic of Cassius that he makes a practical, and not an idealistic, appeal to Antony. 191. *credit:* honor. 192. *conceit:* believe. 196. *dearer:* more. 202. *close:* agree, conclude. 204. *bay'd:* held at bay. Antony likens Cæsar to a deer brought to bay by his hunters. 206. *Sign'd . . . spoil:* marked with your blood. *lethe:* death.

And this, indeed, O world, the heart of thee.
How like a deer, strucken by many princes,
Dost thou here lie!

Cas. Mark Antony—

Ant. Pardon me, Caius Cassius;
The enemies of Cæsar shall say this;
Then, in a friend, it is cold modesty.

Cas. I blame you not for praising Cæsar so;
But what compact mean you to have with us?
Will you be prick'd in number of our friends;
Or shall we on, and not depend on you?

Ant. Therefore I took your hands, but was, indeed,
Sway'd from the point, by looking down on Cæsar.
Friends am I with you all, and love you all,
Upon this hope, that you shall give me reasons
Why and wherein Cæsar was dangerous.

Bru. Or else were this a savage spectacle.
Our reasons are so full of good regard,
That were you, Antony, the son of Cæsar,
You should be satisfied.

Ant. That's all I seek,
And am moreover suitor that I may
Produce his body to the market-place;
And in the pulpit, as becomes a friend,
Speak in the order of his funeral.

Bru. You shall, Mark Antony.

Cas. Brutus, a word with you.
[*Aside to Brutus.*] You know not what you do; do not consent
That Antony speak in his funeral.
Know you how much the people may be moved
By that which he will utter?

211. *Pardon me.* Antony, misunderstanding, thinks Cassius is rebuking him for praising Cæsar. Cassius's practical mind, however, has other thoughts. 213. *modesty:* moderation. 215. *compact:* arrangement, agreement. 216. *prick'd:* checked, put down. 224. *full . . . regard:* entitled to favorable notice. 231. This generosity is characteristic of the guileless Brutus. It is his second great mistake.

Bru. By your pardon;
I will myself into the pulpit first,
And show the reason of our Cæsar's death.
What Antony shall speak, I will protest
He speaks by leave and by permission,
And that we are contented Cæsar shall
Have all true rites and lawful ceremonies.
It shall advantage more than do us wrong.
Cas. I know not what may fall; I like it not.
Bru. Mark Antony, here, take you Cæsar's body.
You shall not in your funeral speech blame us,
But speak all good you can devise of Cæsar,
And say you do't by our permission;
Else shall you not have any hand at all
About his funeral; and you shall speak
In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
After my speech is ended.
Ant. Be it so;
I do desire no more.
Bru. Prepare the body then, and follow us.
[*Exeunt all but Antony.*
Ant. O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!
Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
That ever lived in the tide of times.
Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!
Over thy wounds now do I prophesy—
Which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips,
To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue—
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;
Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;
Blood and destruction shall be so in use,
And dreadful objects so familiar,
That mothers shall but smile when they behold
Their infants quarter'd with the hands of war—

238. *protest:* explain. 242. *advantage:* benefit. 257. *tide:* course

All pity choked with custom of fell deeds;
And Cæsar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
With Ate by his side come hot from hell,
Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice
Cry "Havoc," and let slip the dogs of war,
That this foul deed shall smell above the earth
With carrion men, groaning for burial.

Enter a Servant.

You serve Octavius Cæsar, do you not?

Serv. I do, Mark Antony.

Ant. Cæsar did write for him to come to Rome.

Serv. He did receive his letters, and is coming;
And bid me say to you by word of mouth—
O Cæsar!— [*Seeing the body.*

Ant. Thy heart is big; get thee apart and weep.
Passion, I see, is catching; for mine eyes,
Seeing those beads of sorrow stand in thine,
Began to water. Is thy master coming?

Serv. He lies tonight within seven leagues of Rome.

Ant. Post back with speed, and tell him what hath chanced.
Here is a mourning Rome, a dangerous Rome,
No Rome of safety for Octavius yet;
Hie hence, and tell him so. Yet, stay awhile;
Thou shalt not back till I have borne this corse
Into the market-place. There shall I try,
In my oration, how the people take
The cruel issue of these bloody men;
According to the which, thou shalt discourse
To young Octavius of the state of things.
Lend me your hand. [*Exeunt with Cæsar's body.*

269. *with . . . deeds:* from being accustomed to evil deeds. 271. *Ate:* goddess of discord. 283. *Passion:* sorrow. 286. *lies:* lodges. 292. *try:* test. 294. *issue:* action, deed.

SCENE II. *The Forum.*

Enter BRUTUS *and* CASSIUS, *and a throng of* Plebeians.

Plebs. We will be satisfied! Let us be satisfied!

Bru. Then follow me, and give me audience, friends.
Cassius, go you into the other street,
And part the numbers.
Those that will hear me speak, let 'em stay here;
Those that will follow Cassius, go with him;
And public reasons shall be rendered
Of Cæsar's death.

First Pleb. I will hear Brutus speak.

Sec. Pleb. I will hear Cassius; and compare their reasons,
When severally we hear them rendered. 10

[*Exit Cassius, with some of the Plebeians. Brutus goes into the pulpit.*

Third Pleb. The noble Brutus is ascended; silence!

Bru. Be patient till the last.
Romans, countrymen, and lovers! Hear me for my cause, and be silent, that you may hear. Believe me for mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe. Censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Cæsar's, to him I say that Brutus' love to Cæsar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Cæsar, this is my answer: Not that I loved Cæsar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Cæsar were living, and die all slaves, than that Cæsar were dead, to live all free men? As Cæsar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him

[ii] 1. *will:* wish to. 10. *severally:* separately. 13 ff. Note that Brutus's rational, laconic explanation of his acts is in prose; Antony's skillful play upon mob-mind is in blank verse. 13. *lovers:* friends. 16. *Censure:* judge, estimate.

have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

All. None, Brutus, none.

Bru. Then none have I offended. I have done no more to Cæsar than you shall do to Brutus. The question of his death is enrolled in the Capitol; his glory not extenuated, wherein he was worthy; nor his offenses enforced, for which he suffered death.

Enter Antony *and others, with* Cæsar's *body.*

Here comes his body, mourned by Mark Antony, who, though he had no hand in his death, shall receive the benefit of his dying, a place in the commonwealth; as which of you shall not? With this I depart, that, as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself, when it shall please my country to need my death.

All. Live, Brutus, live, live!

First Pleb. Bring him with triumph home unto his house.

Sec. Pleb. Give him a statue with his ancestors.

Third Pleb. Let him be Cæsar.

Fourth Pleb. Cæsar's better parts
Shall be crown'd in Brutus.

First Pleb. We'll bring him to his house
With shouts and clamours.

Bru. My countrymen—

Sec. Pleb. Peace, silence! Brutus speaks.

First Pleb. Peace, ho!

Bru. Good countrymen, let me depart alone,
And, for my sake, stay here with Antony.
Do grace to Cæsar's corpse, and grace his speech
Tending to Cæsar's glories; which Mark Antony,
By our permission, is allow'd to make.
I do entreat you, not a man depart,
Save I alone, till Antony have spoke. [*Exit.*

41. *question:* cause. 43. *enforced:* stressed. 49. *lover:* friend. 56. *better parts:* virtues. 60. *let . . . alone:* Brutus's third mistake.

First Pleb. Stay, ho! and let us hear Mark Antony.
Third Pleb. Let him go up into the public chair;
We'll hear him. Noble Antony, go up.
Ant. For Brutus' sake, I am beholding to you.
[*Goes into the pulpit.*
Fourth Pleb. What does he say of Brutus?
Third Pleb. He says, for Brutus' sake,
He finds himself beholding to us all.
Fourth Pleb. 'Twere best he speak no harm of Brutus here.
First Pleb. This Cæsar was a tyrant.
Third Pleb. Nay, that's certain;
We are blest that Rome is rid of him.
Sec. Pleb. Peace! Let us hear what Antony can say.
Ant. You gentle Romans—
All. Peace, ho! Let us hear him.
Ant. Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears!
I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Cæsar. The noble Brutus
Hath told you Cæsar was ambitious.
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Cæsar answer'd it.
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest—
For Brutus is an honourable man;
So are they all, all honourable men—
Come I to speak in Cæsar's funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me;
But Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man.
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill;
Did this in Cæsar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Cæsar hath wept;
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;

68. *chair:* rostrum. 87. *honourable:* worthy of honor, eminent.

And Brutus is an honourable man.
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And, sure, he is an honourable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without cause;
What cause withholds you then, to mourn for him?
O judgment! Thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Cæsar,
And I must pause, till it come back to me.

First Pleb. Methinks there is much reason in his sayings.

Sec. Pleb. If thou consider rightly of the matter,
Cæsar has had great wrong.

Third Pleb. Has he, masters?
I fear there will a worse come in his place.

Fourth Pleb. Mark'd ye his words? He would not take the crown;
Therefore 'tis certain he was not ambitious.

First Pleb. If it be found so, some will dear abide it.

Sec. Pleb. Poor soul! His eyes are red as fire with weeping.

Third Pleb. There's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony.

Fourth Pleb. Now mark him, he begins again to speak.

Ant. But yesterday the word of Cæsar might
Have stood against the world; now lies he there,
And none so poor to do him reverence.
O masters, if I were disposed to stir
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,
I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong—
Who, you all know, are honourable men.
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,
Than I will wrong such honourable men.
But here's a parchment, with the seal of Cæsar;

110. *Bear:* be patient. 119. *abide:* answer.

I found it in his closet, 'tis his will.
Let but the commons hear this testament—
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read—
And they would go and kiss dead Cæsar's wounds
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood,
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
And, dying, mention it within their wills,
Bequeathing it as a rich legacy
Unto their issue.
Fourth Pleb. We'll hear the will! Read it, Mark Antony.
All. The will, the will! We will hear Cæsar's will.
Ant. Have patience, gentle friends, I must not read it;
It is not meet you know how Cæsar loved you.
You are not wood, you are not stones, but men;
And, being men, hearing the will of Cæsar,
It will inflame you—it will make you mad.
'Tis good you know not that you are his heirs;
For, if you should, O, what would come of it!
Fourth Pleb. Read the will; we'll hear it, Antony.
You shall read us the will, Cæsar's will.
Ant. Will you be patient? Will you stay awhile?
I have o'ershot myself to tell you of it.
I fear I wrong the honourable men
Whose daggers have stabb'd Cæsar; I do fear it.
Fourth Pleb. They were traitors—honourable men!
All. The will! The testament!
Sec. Pleb. They were villains, murderers. The will! Read the will.
Ant. You will compel me, then, to read the will?
Then make a ring about the corpse of Cæsar,
And let me show you him that made the will.
Shall I descend? And will you give me leave?
All. Come down.
Sec. Pleb. Descend.
Third Pleb. You shall have leave.
[*Antony comes down and picks up the robe of Cæsar.*

135. ***commons:*** common people. 138. ***napkins:*** handkerchiefs.

Fourth Pleb. A ring! Stand round!
First Pleb. Stand from the hearse, stand from the body.
Sec. Pleb. Room for Antony, most noble Antony.
Ant. Nay, press not so upon me; stand far off.
All. Stand back! Room! Bear back.
Ant. If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.
You all do know this mantle; I remember
The first time ever Cæsar put it on.
'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent,
That day he overcame the Nervii.
Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through;
See what a rent the envious Casca made;
Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabb'd;
And as he pluck'd his cursed steel away,
Mark how the blood of Cæsar follow'd it,
As rushing out of doors, to be resolved
If Brutus so unkindly knock'd, or no;
For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel.
Judge, O you gods, how dearly Cæsar loved him!
This was the most unkindest cut of all;
For when the noble Cæsar saw him stab,
Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
Quite vanquish'd him. Then burst his mighty heart;
And, in his mantle muffling up his face,
Even at the base of Pompey's statuë,
Which all the while ran blood, great Cæsar fell.
O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,
Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us.
O, now you weep, and I perceive you feel
The dint of pity. These are gracious drops.
Kind souls, what, weep you when you but behold
Our Cæsar's vesture wounded? Look you here,
[*Revealing the corpse of Cæsar.*
Here is himself, marr'd, as you see, with traitors.

179. *envious:* spiteful. 187. *most unkindest:* most unnatural (a double superlative for emphasis). 198. *dint:* stroke, force.

First Pleb. O piteous spectacle!
Sec. Pleb. O noble Cæsar!
Third Pleb. O woeful day!
Fourth Pleb. O traitors! Villains!
First Pleb. O most bloody sight!
Sec. Pleb. We will be revenged.
All. Revenge! About! Seek! Burn! Fire! Kill! Slay! Let not a traitor live!
Ant. Stay, countrymen.
First Pleb. Peace there! Hear the noble Antony.
Sec. Pleb. We'll hear him, we'll follow him, we'll die with him.
Ant. Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up
To such a sudden flood of mutiny.
They that have done this deed are honourable.
What private griefs they have, alas, I know not,
That made them do it; they are wise and honourable,
And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.
I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts.
I am no orator, as Brutus is;
But (as you know me all) a plain blunt man,
That love my friend; and that they know full well
That gave me public leave to speak of him;
For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,
To stir men's blood. I only speak right on;
I tell you that which you yourselves do know;
Show you sweet Cæsar's wounds, poor poor dumb mouths,
And bid them speak for me. But were I Brutus,
And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
In every wound of Cæsar that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.
All. We'll mutiny.
First Pleb. We'll burn the house of Brutus.

217. ***griefs:*** grievances. 225. ***wit:*** understanding, intelligence 226. ***Action:*** gesture, gesticulation.

Third Pleb. Away, then! Come, seek the conspirators.

Ant. Yet hear me, countrymen; yet hear me speak.

All. Peace, ho! Hear Antony. Most noble Antony!

Ant. Why, friends, you go to do you know not what.
Wherein hath Cæsar thus deserved your loves?
Alas, you know not; I must tell you, then.
You have forgot the will I told you of.

All. Most true. The will! Let's stay and hear the will.

Ant. Here is the will, and under Cæsar's seal.
To every Roman citizen he gives,
To every several man, seventy-five drachmas.

Sec. Pleb. Most noble Cæsar! We'll revenge his death.

Third Pleb. O royal Cæsar!

Ant. Hear me with patience.

All. Peace, ho!

Ant. Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,
His private arbours, and new-planted orchards,
On this side Tiber; he hath left them you,
And to your heirs for ever—common pleasures,
To walk abroad and recreate yourselves.
Here was a Cæsar! When comes such another?

First Pleb. Never, never. Come, away, away!
We'll burn his body in the holy place,
And with the brands fire the traitors' houses.
Take up the body.

Sec. Pleb. Go fetch fire.

Third Pleb. Pluck down benches.

Fourth Pleb. Pluck down forms, windows, anything.

[*Exeunt Plebeians with the body.*

Ant. Now let it work. Mischief, thou art afoot,
Take thou what course thou wilt!

Enter a Servant.

How now, fellow!

Serv. Sir, Octavius is already come to Rome.

247. *several:* single, individual. *drachmas:* Greek coins of varying value. The sum was not considerable.

Ant. Where is he?
Serv. He and Lepidus are at Cæsar's house.
Ant. And thither will I straight to visit him;
He comes upon a wish. Fortune is merry,
And in this mood will give us anything.
Serv. I heard him say Brutus and Cassius
Are rid like madmen through the gates of Rome.
Ant. Belike they had some notice of the people,
How I had moved them. Bring me to Octavius. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A street.*

Enter CINNA THE POET, *and after him the* Plebeians.

Cin. I dreamt tonight that I did feast with Cæsar,
And things unluckily charge my fantasy.
I have no will to wander forth of doors,
Yet something leads me forth.
First Pleb. What is your name?
Sec. Pleb. Whither are you going?
Third Pleb. Where do you dwell?
Fourth Pleb. Are you a married man or a bachelor?
Sec. Pleb. Answer every man directly.
First Pleb. Ay, and briefly.
Fourth Pleb. Ay, and wisely.
Third Pleb. Ay, and truly, you were best.
Cin. What is my name? Whither am I going? Where do I dwell? Am I a married man or a bachelor? Then, to answer every man directly and briefly, wisely and truly: wisely I say, I am a bachelor.
Sec. Pleb. That's as much as to say, they are fools that marry. You'll bear me a bang for that, I fear. Proceed; directly.
Cin. Directly, I am going to Cæsar's funeral.
First Pleb. As a friend or an enemy?
Cin. As a friend.
Sec. Pleb. That matter is answered directly.

[iii] 2. *fantasy:* imagination 20. *You'll . . . that:* you'll get a blow for that.

Fourth Pleb. For your dwelling—briefly.

Cin. Briefly, I dwell by the Capitol.

Third Pleb. Your name, sir, truly.

Cin. Truly, my name is Cinna.

First Pleb. Tear him to pieces; he's a conspirator. 31

Cin. I am Cinna the poet, I am Cinna the poet.

Fourth Pleb. Tear him for his bad verses, tear him for his bad verses.

Cin. I am not Cinna the conspirator.

Fourth Pleb. It is no matter, his name's Cinna; pluck but his name out of his heart, and turn him going. 39

Third Pleb. Tear him, tear him! Come, brands, ho! Firebrands! To Brutus', to Cassius'; burn all. Some to Decius' house, and some to Casca's; some to Ligarius'. Away, go! [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I. *A house in Rome.*

ANTONY, OCTAVIUS, *and* LEPIDUS, *seated at a table, looking over proscription lists.*

Ant. These many, then, shall die; their names are prick'd.

Oct. Your brother too must die; consent you, Lepidus?

Lep. I do consent—

Oct. Prick him down, Antony.

Lep. Upon condition Publius shall not live,
Who is your sister's son, Mark Antony.

Ant. He shall not live; look, with a spot I damn him.
But, Lepidus, go you to Cæsar's house;
Fetch the will hither, and we shall determine
How to cut off some charge in legacies.

Lep. What, shall I find you here? 10

[IV. i] This scene, in which the Triumvirs ruthlessly check off the names on their proscription lists, should be contrasted with the earlier scene (II, i) in which the conspirators are prevented by Brutus's idealism from following a similar bloody course. 1. *prick'd:* checked. 6. *damn:* condemn.

Oct. Or here or at the Capitol. [*Exit Lepidus.*
Ant. This is a slight unmeritable man,
Meet to be sent on errands. Is it fit,
The three-fold world divided, he should stand
One of the three to share it?
Oct. So you thought him;
And took his voice who should be prick'd to die,
In our black sentence and proscription.
Ant. Octavius, I have seen more days than you,
And though we lay these honours on this man,
To ease ourselves of divers slanderous loads,
He shall but bear them as the ass bears gold,
To groan and sweat under the business,
Either led or driven, as we point the way;
And having brought our treasure where we will,
Then take we down his load, and turn him off,
Like to the empty ass, to shake his ears,
And graze in commons.
Oct. You may do your will;
But he's a tried and valiant soldier.
Ant. So is my horse, Octavius; and for that
I do appoint him store of provender.
It is a creature that I teach to fight,
To wind, to stop, to run directly on,
His corporal motion govern'd by my spirit.
And, in some taste, is Lepidus but so;
He must be taught and train'd and bid go forth—
A barren-spirited fellow, one that feeds
On abjects, orts, and imitations,
Which, out of use and staled by other men,
Begin his fashion. Do not talk of him
But as a property. And now, Octavius,

11. *Or:* either. 16. *voice:* advice. 27. *commons:* the common lands owned by a community as a whole. 30. *appoint:* grant. 32. *wind:* turn. 34. *taste:* measure. 37. *abjects:* things thrown away. *orts:* fragments, worthless things. 38. *staled:* made stale. 40. *property:* a mere means to an end.

Listen great things. Brutus and Cassius
Are levying powers; we must straight make head.
Therefore let our alliance be combined,
Our best friends made, our means stretch'd;
And let us presently go sit in council
How covert matters may be best disclosed
And open perils surest answered.
Oct. Let us do so; for we are at the stake,
And bay'd about with many enemies;
And some that smile have in their hearts, I fear,
Millions of mischiefs. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The camp near Sardis. Before* BRUTUS'S *tent.*

Drum. BRUTUS, LUCILIUS, *and* LUCIUS *march in with the army;* TITINIUS *and* PINDARUS *meet them.*

Bru. Stand, ho!
Lucil. Give the word, ho! And stand.
Bru. What now, Lucilius? Is Cassius near?
Lucil. He is at hand; and Pindarus is come
To do you salutation from his master.
Bru. He greets me well. Your master, Pindarus,
In his own change, or by ill officers,
Hath given me some worthy cause to wish
Things done, undone; but, if he be at hand,
I shall be satisfied.
Pin. I do not doubt
But that my noble master will appear
Such as he is, full of regard and honour.
Bru. He is not doubted. A word, Lucilius; [*They go apart.*
How he received you, let me be resolved.
Lucil. With courtesy and with respect enough;
But not with such familiar instances,

41. *Listen:* hear. 42. *powers:* armies. 46. *covert:* hidden. 49. *bay'd:* threatened, barked at, as a bull or a bear at a stake.
[ii] 7. *change:* changing humor, caprice. 14. *resolved:* informed, freed from anxiety. 16. *familiar instances:* tokens of familiarity.

Nor with such free and friendly conference,
As he hath used of old.

Bru. Thou hast described
A hot friend cooling. Ever note, Lucilius,
When love begins to sicken and decay,
It useth an enforced ceremony.
There are no tricks in plain and simple faith;
But hollow men, like horses hot at hand,
Make gallant show and promise of their mettle;
[*A low march is heard.*
But when they should endure the bloody spur,
They fall their crests, and, like deceitful jades,
Sink in the trial. Comes his army on?

Lucil. They mean this night in Sardis to be quarter'd.
The greater part, the horse in general,
Are come with Cassius.

Bru. Hark! He is arrived.
March gently on to meet him.

Enter CASSIUS *and his powers.*

Cas. Stand, ho!

Bru. Stand, ho! Speak the word along.

First Sol. Stand!

Sec. Sol. Stand!

Third Sol. Stand!

Cas. Most noble brother, you have done me wrong.

Bru. Judge me, you gods! Wrong I mine enemies?
And, if not so, how should I wrong a brother?

Cas. Brutus, this sober form of yours hides wrongs;
And when you do them—

Bru. Cassius, be content;
Speak your griefs softly; I do know you well.
Before the eyes of both our armies here,
Which should perceive nothing but love from us,

22. *tricks:* needless adornments. 23. *hot at hand:* difficult to manage. 24. *mettle:* temperament. 26. *fall:* let fall. *jades:* ill-conditioned horses. 44. *love:* friendliness.

Let us not wrangle. Bid them move away;
Then in my tent, Cassius, enlarge your griefs,
And I will give you audience.
Cas. Pindarus,
Bid our commanders lead their charges off
A little from this ground.
Bru. Lucilius, do you the like; and let no man
Come to our tent till we have done our conference.
Let Lucius and Titinius guard our door. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *Inside* Brutus's *tent.*

Brutus *and* Cassius *seated at a table.*

Cas. That you have wrong'd me doth appear in this:
You have condemn'd and noted Lucius Pella
For taking bribes here of the Sardians;
Wherein my letters, praying on his side,
Because I knew the man, were slighted off.
Bru. You wrong'd yourself to write in such a case.
Cas. In such a time as this it is not meet
That every nice offense should bear his comment.
Bru. Let me tell you, Cassius, you yourself
Are much condemn'd to have an itching palm,
To sell and mart your offices for gold
To undeservers.
Cas. I, an itching palm!
You know that you are Brutus that speak this,
Or, by the gods, this speech were else your last.
Bru. The name of Cassius honours this corruption,
And chastisement doth therefore hide his head.
Cas. Chastisement?
Bru. Remember March; the Ides of March remember.
Did not great Julius bleed for justice' sake?

46. *enlarge:* express freely. *griefs:* grievances.

[iii] 2. *noted:* stigmatized. 4. *on his side:* in his behalf. 8. *nice:* trivial. *his:* its. 19. Another expression of Brutus's idealism. This entire scene emphasizes the contrast between the noble Brutus and the weaker, grosser Cassius.

What villain touch'd his body, that did stab
And not for justice? What, shall one of us,
That struck the foremost man of all this world,
But for supporting robbers—shall we now
Contaminate our fingers with base bribes,
And sell the mighty space of our large honours
For so much trash as may be grasped thus? [*Shuts his fist.*
I had rather be a dog, and bay the moon,
Than such a Roman.
Cas. Brutus, bait not me;
I'll not endure it. You forget yourself,
To hedge me in. I am a soldier, I,
Older in practice, abler than yourself
To make conditions.
Bru. Go to; you are not, Cassius.
Cas. I am.
Bru. I say you are not.
Cas. Urge me no more, I shall forget myself;
Have mind upon your health, tempt me no farther.
Bru. Away, slight man!
Cas. Is't possible?
Bru. Hear me, for I will speak.
Must I give way and room to your rash choler?
Shall I be frighted when a madman stares?
Cas. O ye gods, ye gods! Must I endure all this?
Bru. All this? Ay, more. Fret till your proud heart break;
Go show your slaves how choleric you are,
And make your bondmen tremble. Must I budge?
Must I observe you? Must I stand and crouch
Under your testy humour? By the gods,
You shall digest the venom of your spleen,
Though it do split you; for, from this day forth,

27. *bay:* bark at. 28. *bait:* harass, probably with a pun on *bay* above. 30. *hedge me in:* limit my authority. 36. *tempt:* provoke. 45. *observe:* reverence. 47. *spleen.* The spleen was considered the seat of the emotions, particularly, as here, of anger.

I'll use you for my mirth, yea, for my laughter,
When you are waspish.
Cas. Is it come to this?
Bru. You say you are a better soldier.
Let it appear so; make your vaunting true,
And it shall please me well. For mine own part,
I shall be glad to learn of noble men.
Cas. You wrong me every way; you wrong me, Brutus;
I said, an elder soldier, not a better.
Did I say "better"?
Bru. If you did, I care not.
Cas. When Cæsar lived, he durst not thus have moved me.
Bru. Peace, peace! You durst not so have tempted him.
Cas. I durst not?
Bru. No.
Cas. What, durst not tempt him?
Bru. For your life you durst not.
Cas. Do not presume too much upon my love;
I may do that I shall be sorry for.
Bru. You have done that you should be sorry for.
There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats,
For I am arm'd so strong in honesty
That they pass by me as the idle wind,
Which I respect not. I did send to you
For certain sums of gold, which you denied me—
For I can raise no money by vile means.
By heaven, I had rather coin my heart,
And drop my blood for drachmas, than to wring
From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash
By any indirection. I did send
To you for gold to pay my legions,
Which you denied me. Was that done like Cassius?
Should I have answer'd Caius Cassius so?
When Marcus Brutus grows so covetous
To lock such rascal counters from his friends,

69. *respect:* heed. 72. *coin my heart:* make coin of my heart. 75. *indirection:* devious course. 80. *rascal counters:* debased coins.

Be ready, gods, with all your thunderbolts;
Dash him to pieces!
Cas. I denied you not.
Bru. You did.
Cas. I did not. He was but a fool that brought
My answer back. Brutus hath rived my heart.
A friend should bear his friend's infirmities,
But Brutus makes mine greater than they are.
Bru. I do not, till you practice them on me.
Cas. You love me not.
Bru. I do not like your faults.
Cas. A friendly eye could never see such faults.
Bru. A flatterer's would not, though they do appear
As huge as high Olympus.
Cas. Come, Antony, and young Octavius, come,
Revenge yourselves alone on Cassius,
For Cassius is aweary of the world;
Hated by one he loves; braved by his brother;
Check'd like a bondman; all his faults observed,
Set in a note-book, learn'd, and conn'd by rote,
To cast into my teeth. O, I could weep
My spirit from mine eyes! There is my dagger, [*Draws.*
And here my naked breast; within, a heart
Dearer than Plutus' mine, richer than gold.
If that thou be'st a Roman, take it forth;
I, that denied thee gold, will give my heart.
Strike, as thou didst at Cæsar; for, I know,
When thou didst hate him worst, thou lovedst him better
Than ever thou lovedst Cassius.
Bru. Sheathe your dagger.
Be angry when you will, it shall have scope;
Do what you will, dishonour shall be humour.
O Cassius, you are yoked with a lamb

85. *rived:* broken. 96. *braved:* defied. 97. *Check'd:* rebuked. 98. *conn'd by rote:* learned by heart. 108. *scope:* free play. 109. *dishonour . . . humour:* i.e., even dishonorable actions shall be considered caprice.

That carries anger as the flint bears fire;
Who, much enforced, shows a hasty spark,
And straight is cold again.
Cas. Hath Cassius lived
To be but mirth and laughter to his Brutus,
When grief and blood ill-temper'd, vexeth him?
Bru. When I spoke that, I was ill-temper'd too.
Cas. Do you confess so much? Give me your hand.
Bru. And my heart too.
Cas. O Brutus!
Bru. What's the matter?
Cas. Have not you love enough to bear with me,
When that rash humour which my mother gave me
Makes me forgetful?
Bru. Yes, Cassius; and, from henceforth,
When you are over-earnest with your Brutus,
He'll think your mother chides, and leave you so.
Poet. [*Within*] Let me go in to see the generals;
There is some grudge between 'em, 'tis not meet
They be alone.
Lucil. [*Within*] You shall not come to them.
Poet. [*Within*] Nothing but death shall stay me.

Enter Poet, *followed by* Lucilius, Titinius, *and* Lucius.

Cas. How now! What's the matter?
Poet. For shame, you generals! What do you mean?
Love, and be friends, as two such men should be;
For I have seen more years, I'm sure, than ye.
Cas. Ha, ha, how vilely doth this cynic rhyme!
Bru. Get you hence, sirrah; saucy fellow, hence!
Cas. Bear with him, Brutus; 'tis his fashion.
Bru. I'll know his humour, when he knows his time.

115. *ill-temper'd:* badly combined. 119. *bear with me:* overlook my faults. 120. *my mother gave me:* I inherited from my mother. 125. *meet:* proper, fitting. 135. *Bear with him:* be patient with him. *fashion:* way. 136. *I'll . . . time:* i.e., I'll humor him, if he chooses the proper time.

What should the wars do with these jigging fools?
Companion, hence!

Cas. Away, away, be gone! [*Exit Poet.*

Bru. Lucilius and Titinius, bid the commanders
Prepare to lodge their companies tonight.

Cas. And come yourselves, and bring Messala with you
Immediately to us. [*Exeunt Lucilius and Titinius.*

Bru. Lucius, a bowl of wine! [*Exit Lucius.*

Cas. I did not think you could have been so angry.

Bru. O Cassius, I am sick of many griefs.

Cas. Of your philosophy you make no use,
If you give place to accidental evils.

Bru. No man bears sorrow better. Portia is dead.

Cas. Ha? Portia?

Bru. She is dead.

Cas. How 'scaped I killing when I cross'd you so?
O insupportable and touching loss!
Upon what sickness?

Bru. Impatient of my absence,
And grief that young Octavius with Mark Antony
Have made themselves so strong—for with her death
That tidings came—with this she fell distract,
And, her attendants absent, swallow'd fire.

Cas. And died so?

Bru. Even so.

Cas. O ye immortal gods!

Re-enter LUCIUS, *with wine and a taper.*

Bru. Speak no more of her. Give me a bowl of wine.
In this I bury all unkindness, Cassius.

Cas. My heart is thirsty for that noble pledge.
Fill, Lucius, till the wine o'erswell the cup;
I cannot drink too much of Brutus' love.

Bru. Come in, Titinius! [*Exit Lucius.*

137. *What . . . fools:* what do these rhymesters know of war? 138. *Companion:* a term of contempt. 145. *philosophy.* Brutus professed to be a Stoic, and his receipt of the news of Portia's death is a little puzzling unless one remembers that fact. 155. *distract:* distraught.

Re-enter Titinius, *with* Messala.

Welcome, good Messala.
Now sit we close about this taper here,
And call in question our necessities.
Cas. Portia, art thou gone?
Bru. No more, I pray you.
Messala, I have here received letters
That young Octavius and Mark Antony
Come down upon us with a mighty power,
Bending their expedition toward Philippi.
Mes. Myself have letters of the selfsame tenour.
Bru. With what addition?
Mes. That by proscription and bills of outlawry,
Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus
Have put to death an hundred senators.
Bru. Therein our letters do not well agree;
Mine speak of seventy senators that died
By their proscriptions, Cicero being one.
Cas. Cicero one?
Mes. Cicero is dead,
And by that order of proscription.
Had you your letters from your wife, my lord?
Bru. No, Messala.
Mes. Nor nothing in your letters writ of her?
Bru. Nothing, Messala.
Mes. That, methinks, is strange.
Bru. Why ask you? Hear you aught of her in yours?
Mes. No, my lord.
Bru. Now, as you are a Roman, tell me true.
Mes. Then like a Roman, bear the truth I tell,
For certain she is dead, and by strange manner.
Bru. Why, farewell, Portia. We must die, Messala;
With meditating that she must die once,
I have the patience to endure it now.

165. *call in question:* discuss. 169. *power:* army. 191. *once:* i.e., some day.

Mes. Even so great men great losses should endure.
Cas. I have as much of this in art as you,
But yet my nature could not bear it so.
Bru. Well, to our work alive. What do you think
Of marching to Philippi presently?
Cas. I do not think it good.
Bru. Your reason?
Cas. This it is:
'Tis better that the enemy seek us;
So shall he waste his means, weary his soldiers,
Doing himself offense; whilst we, lying still,
Are full of rest, defense, and nimbleness.
Bru. Good reasons must, of force, give place to better.
The people 'twixt Philippi and this ground
Do stand but in a forced affection,
For they have grudged us contribution.
The enemy, marching along by them,
By them shall make a fuller number up,
Come on refresh'd, new-added, and encouraged;
From which advantage shall we cut him off,
If at Philippi we do face him there,
These people at our back.
Cas. Hear me, good brother.
Bru. Under your pardon. You must note beside,
That we have tried the utmost of our friends,
Our legions are brim-full, our cause is ripe,
The enemy increaseth every day,
We, at the height, are ready to decline.
There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,

198 ff. Note that Cassius's strategy, overruled by Brutus, is precisely the course that the seasoned soldiers, Antony and Octavius, expect their enemies to follow. 209. *new-added:* with reinforcements. 214. *tried . . . friends:* tried our friends to the limit.

And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.
Cas. Then, with your will, go on;
We'll along ourselves, and meet them at Philippi.
Bru. The deep of night is crept upon our talk,
And nature must obey necessity,
Which we will niggard with a little rest.
There is no more to say?
Cas. No more. Good night,
Early tomorrow will we rise, and hence.
Bru. Lucius! [*Enter Lucius.*] My gown. [*Exit Lucius.*]
Farewell, good Messala.
Good night, Titinius. Noble, noble Cassius,
Good night, and good repose.
Cas. O my dear brother!
This was an ill beginning of the night;
Never come such division 'tween our souls!
Let it not, Brutus.
Bru. Everything is well.
Cas. Good night, my lord.
Bru. Good night, good brother.
Tit. Mes. Good night, Lord Brutus.
Bru. Farewell, every one.
[*Exeunt all but Brutus.*

Re-enter LUCIUS, *with the gown.*

Give me the gown. Where is thy instrument?
Luc. Here in the tent.
Bru. What, thou speak'st drowsily?
Poor knave, I blame thee not; thou art o'erwatch'd.
Call Claudius and some other of my men;
I'll have them sleep on cushions in my tent.
Luc. Varro and Claudius!

228. ***niggard:*** put off, scant. 241. ***thou art o'erwatch'd:*** you have been too long awake. Brutus's consideration for Lucius and the guards and his love of music are interesting touches of characterization.

Enter VARRO *and* CLAUDIUS.

Var. Calls my lord?

Bru. I pray you, sirs, lie in my tent and sleep;
It may be I shall raise you by and by
On business to my brother Cassius.

Var. So please you, we will stand and watch your pleasure.

Bru. I will not have it so; lie down, good sirs;
It may be I shall otherwise bethink me.
Look, Lucius, here's the book I sought for so;
I put it in the pocket of my gown.

[*Varro and Claudius lie down.*

Luc. I was sure your lordship did not give it me.

Bru. Bear with me, good boy; I am much forgetful.
Canst thou hold up thy heavy eyes awhile,
And touch thy instrument a strain or two?

Luc. Ay, my lord, an 't please you.

Bru. It does, my boy;
I trouble thee too much, but thou art willing.

Luc. It is my duty, sir.

Bru. I should not urge thy duty past thy might;
I know young bloods look for a time of rest.

Luc. I have slept, my lord, already.

Bru. It was well done; and thou shalt sleep again;
I will not hold thee long. If I do live,
I will be good to thee.

[*Lucius plays and sings a song.*

This is a sleepy tune. O murderous Slumber!
Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy,
That plays thee music? Gentle knave, good night;
I will not do thee so much wrong to wake thee.
If thou dost nod, thou break'st thy instrument;
I'll take it from thee; and, good boy, good night.
Let me see, let me see; is not the leaf turn'd down
Where I left reading? Here it is, I think.

249. *watch:* await. 255. *Bear with me:* pardon me. 269. *knave:* boy; often used familiarly in addressing servants. 273. *leaf turn'd down:* an anachronism; Roman books were scrolls.

Enter the Ghost of CÆSAR.

How ill this taper burns! Ha! Who comes here?
I think it is the weakness of mine eyes
That shapes this monstrous apparition.
It comes upon me. Art thou any thing?
Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil,
That makest my blood cold and my hair to stare?
Speak to me what thou art.

Ghost. Thy evil spirit, Brutus.

Bru. Why comest thou?

Ghost. To tell thee thou shalt see me at Philippi.

Bru. Well; then I shall see thee again?

Ghost. Ay, at Philippi.

Bru. Why, I will see thee at Philippi, then. [*Exit Ghost.*
Now I have taken heart thou vanishest.
Ill spirit, I would hold more talk with thee.
Boy, Lucius! Varro! Claudius! Sirs, awake!
Claudius!

Luc. The strings, my lord, are false.

Bru. He thinks he still is at his instrument.
Lucius, awake!

Luc. My lord?

Bru. Didst thou dream, Lucius, that thou so criedst out?

Luc. My lord, I do not know that I did cry.

Bru. Yes, that thou didst; didst thou see anything?

Luc. Nothing, my lord.

Bru. Sleep again, Lucius. Sirrah, Claudius!
[*To Varro.*] Fellow, thou—awake!

Var. My lord?

Clau. My lord?

Bru. Why did you so cry out, sirs, in your sleep?

Var. Clau. Did we, my lord?

275. *How . . . burns.* The presence of a ghost was popularly believed to cause lights to burn blue. 280. *stare:* stand on end. 282. *Thy evil spirit:* the evil spirit you spoke of and against which you are contending. Cf. II, i, 167. The punctuation of the line is that of F_1; most modern editors close it with a period.

Bru. Ay, saw you anything?
Var. No, my lord, I saw nothing.
Clau. Nor I, my lord.
Bru. Go, and commend me to my brother Cassius;
Bid him set on his powers betimes before,
And we will follow.
Var. *Clau.* It shall be done, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I. *The plains of Philippi.*

Enter OCTAVIUS, ANTONY, *and their Army.*

Oct. Now, Antony, our hopes are answered.
You said the enemy would not come down,
But keep the hills and upper regions.
It proves not so. Their battles are at hand;
They mean to warn us at Philippi here,
Answering before we do demand of them.
Ant. Tut, I am in their bosoms, and I know
Wherefore they do it. They could be content
To visit other places, and come down
With fearful bravery, thinking by this face
To fasten in our thoughts that they have courage;
But 'tis not so.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Prepare you, generals,
The enemy comes on in gallant show;
Their bloody sign of battle is hung out,
And something to be done immediately.
Ant. Octavius, lead your battle softly on,
Upon the left hand of the even field.

[V. i] 4. *battles:* forces. 5. *warn:* summon. 7. *in their bosoms.* Antony means that he might as well be in their confidence; he knows them so well, he can predict their actions. 10. *fearful bravery:* timid bravado. 14. *bloody sign.* According to Plutarch the signal for battle was a scarlet coat.

Oct. Upon the right hand I; keep thou the left.
Ant. Why do you cross me in this exigent?
Oct. I do not cross you; but I will do so.

A march is sounded, but before ANTONY *and* OCTAVIUS *are under way,* BRUTUS, CASSIUS, LUCILIUS, TITINIUS, MESSALA, *and their Army come up. A parley is sounded.*

Bru. They stand and would have parley.
Cas. Stand fast, Titinius; we must out and talk.
Oct. Mark Antony, shall we give sign of battle?
Ant. No, Cæsar, we will answer on their charge.
Make forth; the generals would have some words.
Oct. Stir not until the signal.
Bru. Words before blows; is it so, countrymen?
Oct. Not that we love words better, as you do.
Bru. Good words are better than bad strokes, Octavius.
Ant. In your bad strokes, Brutus, you give good words;
Witness the hole you made in Cæsar's heart,
Crying, "Long live! Hail, Cæsar!"
Cas. Antony,
The posture of your blows are yet unknown;
But for your words, they rob the Hybla bees,
And leave them honeyless.
Ant. Not stingless too.
Bru. O, yes, and soundless too;
For you have stol'n their buzzing, Antony,
And very wisely threat before you sting.
Ant. Villains, you did not so, when your vile daggers

19. *exigent:* emergency. 20. *I . . . you.* In Plutarch's account, Cassius, although he was the more experienced soldier, allowed Brutus to lead the right wing of the army. Shakespeare preserved the incident, but for dramatic reasons transferred it to the opposite camp, thus deftly revealing the character of Octavius and his domination over Antony. It is a skillful and a dramatic anticipation of the coming conflict between Octavius and Antony to which Shakespeare returned in *Antony and Cleopatra.* 33. *posture:* attitude of swordsman, and hence "direction" and "effectiveness." 34. *Hybla bees.* Hybla in Sicily was famous for its honey.

Hack'd one another in the sides of Cæsar.
You show'd your teeth like apes, and fawn'd like hounds,
And bow'd like bondmen, kissing Cæsar's feet;
Whilst damned Casca, like a cur, behind
Struck Cæsar on the neck. O you flatterers!

Cas. Flatterers? Now, Brutus, thank yourself;
This tongue had not offended so today,
If Cassius might have ruled.

Oct. Come, come, the cause. If arguing make us sweat,
The proof of it will turn to redder drops.
Look, [*He draws his sword.*
I draw a sword against conspirators;
When think you that the sword goes up again?
Never, till Cæsar's three and thirty wounds
Be well avenged; or till another Cæsar
Have added slaughter to the sword of traitors.

Bru. Cæsar, thou canst not die by traitors' hands,
Unless thou bring'st them with thee.

Oct. So I hope;
I was not born to die on Brutus' sword.

Bru. O, if thou wert the noblest of thy strain,
Young man, thou couldst not die more honourable.

Cas. A peevish schoolboy, worthless of such honour,
Join'd with a masker and a reveller!

Ant. Old Cassius still!

Oct. Come, Antony, away!
Defiance, traitors, hurl we in your teeth.
If you dare fight today, come to the field;
If not, when you have stomachs.

[*Exeunt Octavius, Antony, and their Army.*

Cas. Why, now, blow wind, swell billow, and swim bark!
The storm is up, and all is on the hazard.

45. *Brutus, thank yourself.* Cassius's rebuke refers to his urging the assassination of both Antony and Cæsar. Cf. II, i, 162 ff. 48. *cause:* matter for discussion. 49. *proof:* testing. 54. *another Cæsar:* i.e., Octavius. 61. *worthless:* unworthy. 63. *Old Cassius still:* the same old Cassius. 66. *stomachs:* inclinations. 68. *on the hazard:* at stake.

Bru. Ho, Lucilius! Hark, a word with you.
Lucil. [*Standing forth*] My lord?
[*Brutus and Lucilius converse apart.*
Cas. Messala!
Mes. [*Standing forth*] What says my general?
Cas. Messala,
This is my birth-day; as this very day
Was Cassius born. Give me thy hand, Messala;
Be thou my witness that against my will
(As Pompey was) am I compell'd to set
Upon one battle all our liberties.
You know that I held Epicurus strong
And his opinion. Now I change my mind,
And partly credit things that do presage.
Coming from Sardis, on our former ensign
Two mighty eagles fell, and there they perch'd,
Gorging and feeding from our soldiers' hands,
Who to Philippi here consorted us.
This morning are they fled away and gone,
And in their steads do ravens, crows, and kites
Fly o'er our heads and downward look on us,
As we were sickly prey; their shadows seem
A canopy most fatal, under which
Our army lies, ready to give up the ghost.
Mes. Believe not so.
Cas. I but believe it partly,
For I am fresh of spirit and resolved
To meet all perils very constantly.
Bru. Even so, Lucilius.
Cas. Now, most noble Brutus,
The gods today stand friendly that we may,
Lovers in peace, lead on our days to age.
But since the affairs of men rest still incertain,
Let's reason with the worst that may befall.

77. *I . . . strong:* I was a follower of Epicurus in these matters. 79. *credit:* believe. *that do presage:* of which there are omens. 83. *consorted:* accompanied. 88. *fatal:* foreboding evil. 95. *Lovers:* friends.

If we do lose this battle, then is this
The very last time we shall speak together.
What are you then determined to do?
Bru. Even by the rule of that philosophy
By which I did blame Cato for the death
Which he did give himself, I know not how,
But I do find it cowardly and vile,
For fear of what might fall, so to prevent
The time of life, arming myself with patience,
To stay the providence of some high powers
That govern us below.
Cas. Then, if we lose this battle,
You are contented to be led in triumph
Thorough the streets of Rome?
Bru. No, Cassius, no; think not, thou noble Roman,
That ever Brutus will go bound to Rome;
He bears too great a mind. But this same day
Must end that work the Ides of March begun.
And whether we shall meet again, I know not.
Therefore our everlasting farewell take:
For ever, and for ever, farewell, Cassius!
If we do meet again, why, we shall smile;
If not, why then this parting was well made.
Cas. For ever, and for ever, farewell, Brutus!
If we do meet again, we'll smile indeed;
If not, 'tis true this parting was well made.
Bru. Why, then, lead on. O, that a man might know
The end of this day's business ere it come!
But it sufficeth that the day will end,
And then the end is known. Come, ho! Away! [*Exeunt.*

102. *Cato.* Cato the Younger, governor of Utica and Brutus's father-in-law, committed suicide rather than fall into the hands of Cæsar. He was the subject of a tragedy by Addison. 105–6. *prevent . . life:* anticipate the end of life.

SCENE II. *The plains of Philippi, the field of battle.*

Alarum. Enter BRUTUS *and* MESSALA.

Bru. Ride, ride, Messala, ride, and give these bills
Unto the legions on the other side. [*Loud alarum.*
Let them set on at once; for I perceive
But cold demeanour in Octavius' wing,
And sudden push gives them the overthrow.
Ride, ride, Messala; let them all come down. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Another part of the field.*

Alarums. Enter CASSIUS *and* TITINIUS.

Cas. O, look, Titinius, look, the villains fly!
Myself have to mine own turn'd enemy.
This ensign here of mine was turning back;
I slew the coward, and did take it from him.
Tit. O Cassius, Brutus gave the word too early;
Who, having some advantage on Octavius,
Took it too eagerly. His soldiers fell to spoil,
Whilst we by Antony are all enclosed.

Enter PINDARUS.

Pin. Fly further off, my lord, fly further off;
Mark Antony is in your tents, my lord.
Fly, therefore, noble Cassius, fly far off.
Cas. This hill is far enough. Look, look, Titinius;
Are those my tents where I perceive the fire?
Tit. They are, my lord.
Cas. Titinius, if thou lovest me,
Mount thou my horse, and hide thy spurs in him,
Till he have brought thee up to yonder troops
And here again, that I may rest assured
Whether yond troops are friend or enemy.
Tit. I will be here again, even with a thought. [*Exit.*

[ii] 1. ***bills:*** dispatches.
[iii] 4. ***it:*** i.e., the standard he bore. 15. ***hide:*** dig.

Cas. Go, Pindarus, get higher on that hill;
My sight was ever thick; regard Titinius,
And tell me what thou not'st about the field.
[*Pindarus ascends the hill.*
This day I breathed first; time is come round,
And where I did begin, there shall I end;
My life is run his compass. Sirrah, what news?
Pin. [*Above*] O my lord!
Cas. What news?
Pin. [*Above*] Titinius is enclosed round about
With horsemen that make to him on the spur;
Yet he spurs on. Now they are almost on him.
Now, Titinius! Now some light. O, he lights too.
He's ta'en. [*Shout.*] And, hark! They shout for joy.
Cas. Come down, behold no more.
O, coward that I am, to live so long,
To see my best friend ta'en before my face!

PINDARUS *descends.*

Come hither, sirrah.
In Parthia did I take thee prisoner;
And then I swore thee, saving of thy life,
That whatsoever I did bid thee do,
Thou shouldst attempt it. Come now, keep thine oath;
Now be a freeman, and with this good sword,
That ran through Cæsar's bowels, search this bosom.
Stand not to answer; here, take thou the hilts,
And, when my face is cover'd, as 'tis now,
Guide thou the sword. [*Pindarus stabs him.*] Cæsar, thou art revenged,
Even with the sword that kill'd thee. [*Dies.*
Pin. So, I am free, yet would not so have been,
Durst I have done my will. O Cassius,
Far from this country Pindarus shall run,
Where never Roman shall take note of him. [*Exit.*

20. *hill:* the upper stage of the Elizabethan theatre. 21. *thick:* bad. 31. *light:* dismount.

Re-enter TITINIUS *with* MESSALA.

Mes. It is but change, Titinius; for Octavius
Is overthrown by noble Brutus' power,
As Cassius' legions are by Antony.
Tit. These tidings will well comfort Cassius.
Mes. Where did you leave him?
Tit. All disconsolate,
With Pindarus his bondman, on this hill.
Mes. Is not that he that lies upon the ground?
Tit. He lies not like the living. O my heart!
Mes. Is not that he?
Tit. No, this was he, Messala,
But Cassius is no more. O setting sun,
As in thy red rays thou dost sink to night,
So in his red blood Cassius' day is set.
The sun of Rome is set! Our day is gone;
Clouds, dews, and dangers come; our deeds are done!
Mistrust of my success hath done this deed.
Mes. Mistrust of good success hath done this deed.
O hateful Error, Melancholy's child,
Why dost thou show to the apt thoughts of men
The things that are not? O Error, soon conceived,
Thou never comest unto a happy birth,
But kill'st the mother that engender'd thee!
Tit. What, Pindarus! Where art thou, Pindarus?
Mes. Seek him, Titinius, whilst I go to meet
The noble Brutus, thrusting this report
Into his ears; I may say "thrusting" it;
For piercing steel and darts envenomed
Shall be as welcome to the ears of Brutus
As tidings of this sight.
Tit. Hie you, Messala,
And I will seek for Pindarus the while. [*Exit Messala.*
Why didst thou send me forth, brave Cassius?
Did I not meet thy friends? And did not they

51. *change:* interchange. 65. *success:* fortune (whether good or bad). 68. *apt:* easily impressed.

Put on my brows this wreath of victory,
And bid me give it thee? Didst thou not hear their shouts?
Alas, thou hast misconstrued everything!
But, hold thee, take this garland on thy brow;
Thy Brutus bid me give it thee, and I
Will do his bidding. Brutus, come apace,
And see how I regarded Caius Cassius.
By your leave, gods—this is a Roman's part.
Come, Cassius' sword, and find Titinius' heart. [*Kills himself.*

Alarum. Re-enter MESSALA, *with* BRUTUS, YOUNG CATO, STRATO, VOLUMNIUS, LUCILIUS, *and others.*

Bru. Where, where, Messala, doth his body lie?
Mes. Lo, yonder, and Titinius mourning it.
Bru. Titinius' face is upward.
Cato. He is slain.
Bru. O Julius Cæsar, thou art mighty yet!
Thy spirit walks abroad and turns our swords
In our own proper entrails. [*Low alarums.*
Cato. Brave Titinius!
Look, whether he have not crown'd dead Cassius!
Bru. Are yet two Romans living such as these?
The last of all the Romans, fare thee well!
It is impossible that ever Rome
Should breed thy fellow. Friends, I owe moe tears
To this dead man than you shall see me pay.
I shall find time, Cassius, I shall find time.
Come, therefore, and to Thassos send his body;
His funerals shall not be in our camp,
Lest it discomfort us. Lucilius, come;
And come, young Cato; let us to the field.
Labeo and Flavius, set our battles on.
'Tis three o'clock; and, Romans, yet ere night
We shall try fortune in a second fight. [*Exeunt.*

94. *O . . . yet:* the key to the play. The spirit of Cæsar, or what Cæsar stands for, dominates every scene and is at last the avenger of his murder. 101. *fellow:* mate, match. *moe:* more. 109. *ere night.* The second battle of Philippi actually took place twenty days later.

SCENE IV. *Another part of the field.*

Alarum. Enter, from the fighting, BRUTUS, YOUNG CATO, LUCILIUS, *and others.*

Bru. Yet, countrymen, O, yet hold up your heads! [*Exit.*

Cato. What bastard doth not? Who will go with me?
I will proclaim my name about the field.
I am the son of Marcus Cato, ho!
A foe to tyrants, and my country's friend.
I am the son of Marcus Cato, ho! [*Some of the enemy rush in.*

Lucil. And I am Brutus, Marcus Brutus, I;
Brutus, my country's friend; know me for Brutus!
[*In the fight, Young Cato is slain.*
O young and noble Cato, art thou down?
Why, now thou diest as bravely as Titinius;
And mayst be honour'd, being Cato's son.

First Sol. Yield, or thou diest.

Lucil. Only I yield to die.
There is so much that thou wilt kill me straight;
[*Offering money.*
Kill Brutus, and be honour'd in his death.

First Sol. We must not. A noble prisoner!

Sec. Sol. Room, ho! Tell Antony, Brutus is ta'en.

First Sol. I'll tell the news. Here comes the general.

Enter ANTONY.

Brutus is ta'en, Brutus is ta'en, my lord.

Ant. Where is he?

Lucil. Safe, Antony; Brutus is safe enough.
I dare assure thee that no enemy

[iv] 7 ff. In F_1 these lines are unassigned by a speech prefix to any character, but are separated from Cato's lines by a stage direction, *Enter Soldiers and fight.* Most editors give lines 7–8 to Brutus, there being no indication as to when he leaves the stage. F_1 assigns lines 9 ff. to Lucilius; but, since the context makes clear that to protect his friend Lucilius pretends to be Brutus, it seems logical to assume that he speaks lines 7–8 also. If this is so, Brutus must leave the stage after line 1.

Shall ever take alive the noble Brutus—
The gods defend him from so great a shame!
When you do find him, or alive or dead,
He will be found like Brutus, like himself.
Ant. This is not Brutus, friend; but, I assure you,
A prize no less in worth. Keep this man safe;
Give him all kindness. I had rather have
Such men my friends than enemies. Go on,
And see whe'er Brutus be alive or dead;
And bring us word unto Octavius' tent
How everything is chanced. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Another part of the field.*

Enter BRUTUS, DARDANIUS, CLITUS, STRATO, *and* VOLUMNIUS.

Bru. Come, poor remains of friends, rest on this rock.
Cli. Statilius show'd the torch-light, but, my lord,
He came not back; he is or ta'en or slain.
Bru. Sit thee down, Clitus; slaying is the word;
It is a deed in fashion. Hark thee, Clitus. [*Whispers.*
Cli. What, I, my lord? No, not for all the world.
Bru. Peace then, no words.
Cli. I'll rather kill myself.
Bru. Hark thee, Dardanius. [*Whispers.*
Dar. Shall I do such a deed?
Cli. O Dardanius!
Dar. O Clitus!
Cli. What ill request did Brutus make to thee?
Dar. To kill him, Clitus. Look, he meditates.
Cli. Now is that noble vessel full of grief,
That it runs over even at his eyes.
Bru. Come hither, good Volumnius; list a word.
Vol. What says my lord?
Bru. Why, this, Volumnius:
The ghost of Cæsar hath appear'd to me

24. *or:* whether. 32. *chanced:* happened.
[v] 3. *or:* either.

Two several times by night; at Sardis once,
And, this last night, here in Philippi fields.
I know my hour is come.
Vol. Not so, my lord.
Bru. Nay, I am sure it is, Volumnius.
Thou seest the world, Volumnius, how it goes;
Our enemies have beat us to the pit. [*Low alarums.*
It is more worthy to leap in ourselves,
Than tarry till they push us. Good Volumnius,
Thou know'st that we two went to school together;
Even for that our love of old, I prithee
Hold thou my sword-hilts, whilst I run on it.
Vol. That's not an office for a friend, my lord.
[*Alarum still.*
Cli. Fly, fly, my lord; there is no tarrying here.
Bru. Farewell to you; and you; and you, Volumnius.
Strato, thou hast been all this while asleep;
Farewell to thee too, Strato. Countrymen,
My heart doth joy that yet in all my life
I found no man but he was true to me.
I shall have glory by this losing day
More than Octavius and Mark Antony
By this vile conquest shall attain unto.
So fare you well at once, for Brutus' tongue
Hath almost ended his life's history.
Night hangs upon mine eyes; my bones would rest
That have but labour'd to attain this hour.
[*Alarum. Cry within,* "Fly, fly, fly!"
Cli. Fly, my lord, fly.
Bru. Hence! I will follow.
[*Exeunt Clitus, Dardanius, and Volumnius.*
I prithee, Strato, stay thou by thy lord;
Thou art a fellow of a good respect;
Thy life hath had some smatch of honour in it.

18. *several:* separate, distinct. 29. *office:* service, duty. 34–5. Note the unconscious irony of this comment upon his life. 45. *respect:* reputation. 46. *smatch:* smack, taste.

Hold then my sword, and turn away thy face,
While I do run upon it. Wilt thou, Strato?
Stra. Give me your hand first. Fare you well, my lord.
Bru. Farewell, good Strato. [*Runs on his sword.*] Cæsar, now be still;
I kill'd not thee with half so good a will. [*Dies.*

Alarum. Retreat. Enter OCTAVIUS, ANTONY, MESSALA, LUCILIUS, *and the Army.*

Oct. What man is that?
Mes. My master's man. Strato, where is thy master?
Stra. Free from the bondage you are in, Messala;
The conquerors can but make a fire of him;
For Brutus only overcame himself,
And no man else hath honour by his death.
Lucil. So Brutus should be found. I thank thee, Brutus,
That thou hast proved Lucilius' saying true.
Oct. All that served Brutus, I will entertain them.
Fellow, wilt thou bestow thy time with me?
Stra. Ay, if Messala will prefer me to you.
Oct. Do so, good Messala.
Mes. How died my master, Strato?
Stra. I held the sword, and he did run on it.
Mes. Octavius, then take him to follow thee,
That did the latest service to my master.
Ant. This was the noblest Roman of them all.
All the conspirators, save only he,
Did that they did in envy of great Cæsar;
He only, in a general honest thought
And common good to all, made one of them.
His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, "This was a man!"
Oct. According to his virtue let us use him,

55. *make ... him:* i.e., burn his body. 60. *entertain:* employ. 62. *prefer:* recommend. 70. *envy of:* malice toward. 72. *made one of:* joined.

With all respect, and rites of burial.
Within my tent his bones tonight shall lie,
Most like a soldier, order'd honourably.
So call the field to rest; and let's away,
To part the glories of this happy day.

[*Exeunt, bearing out the bodies.*

80. *call . . . rest:* sound a retreat.

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

Introduction

Dramatic Type

Hamlet is the most widely known of Shakespeare's plays. With the exception of the Bible, no other book in English is so frequently alluded to, is so often quoted, or is the subject of so much discussion. It is, furthermore, the most difficult of Shakespeare's plays. Not only is the language—especially Hamlet's—packed with meaning and suggestion, but the play is full of inconsistencies and apparent contradictions, and is dominated by the most complex and puzzling of Shakespeare's characters. As a drama, *Hamlet* is a refined example of a type of tragedy which developed in Elizabethan times largely under the influence of the Latin philosopher-dramatist Seneca the Younger (4 B.C.–65 A.D.). The ten tragedies attributed to him were literary exercises modelled upon Greek tragedy and probably not intended for stage presentation. Crime and its retribution is the burden of each of Seneca's stories, and the themes he selected were the most sensational ones of incest, adultery, and unnatural murder in the whole of mythology. Each exhibits a hero in conflict with one or more opponents; principal characters usually appear with a confidant; and prominence is given to supernatural visitants, furies, deities, and, especially, ghosts. In style the Senecan drama is characterized by artifice, rhetoric, and sententiousness. The action is slow; long declamatory speeches and elaborate analyses of moods and passions abound; and the language is balanced and sonorous. Directly, or through French or Italian, the Senecan influence was a formative one on English tragedy, and one variety of Senecan drama, the revenge play, enjoyed several revivals of popularity. Most of the characteristic Senecan elements—unnatural murder, a ghost

inciting to revenge, adultery, incest, suicide, and madness, real and feigned—are to be found in *Hamlet.* But the melodramatic plot is here only the framework for something more subtle, more poetical, and more essentially tragic. *Hamlet* is the most fascinating of Shakespeare's plays—a Senecan tragedy of blood and revenge, depending for its appeal partly upon the usual Senecan violence and horror, and partly upon flashes of Shakespeare's loveliest poetry, meditations on life and human destiny, subtle delineations of character, and the exceptionally appealing personality of Hamlet himself.

Sources

The story of Hamlet, which goes back to the prehistoric age of Scandinavia, became part of the legendary history of Denmark and in the twelfth century found its way into written literature in the *Historiæ Danicæ* of a Danish scholar, Saxo Grammaticus. According to Saxo, Feng (Claudius) openly attacked and murdered his brother Horwendil (the elder Hamlet), married his widow, Gerutha (Gertrude), and succeeded him as king. Amleth (Hamlet), the son of Horwendil, feigned idiocy in order to save his own life and to avenge the murder of his father, both of which ends he finally achieved. Saxo includes not only the main outlines of Shakespeare's story—fratricide, incest, usurpation, feigned madness, and the son's obligation to avenge the murder—but most of the minor elements as well: the prototypes of Polonius and Ophelia, of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, the son's long speech to his mother in her bedroom, the journey to England, the forged letter. Four centuries later this story of barbaric Scandinavia, written in medieval Latin by Saxo, was with a few slight changes retold in French by Belleforest in his *Histoires Tragiques* (Paris, 1582).

Sometime before 1589 this French version of the story was dramatized for the English stage, probably by Thomas Kyd. This play, now lost, and usually referred to as the *Ur-Hamlet*

(the source-*Hamlet* or primitive-*Hamlet*), was almost certainly Shakespeare's immediate source. A contemporary allusion reveals that in the lost play the ghost of the murdered king calls upon his son for revenge; beyond that one detail, nothing is certainly known. Some scholars believe that a German prose play, *Der bestrafte Brudermord* (*Fratricide Punished*), dating in its present form from about 1710, is a version of the pre-Shakespearean *Hamlet*. An English translation of this play is printed in the Furness *Variorum*.

If Kyd wrote the lost play, it was probably he, and not Shakespeare, who introduced into the Hamlet story the ghost, the real insanity (of Ophelia), the play within the play, and the extended use of impassioned soliloquy—all special features of Senecan melodrama which he had included in his famous *Spanish Tragedy*. In addition, either the unknown author of the lost *Ur-Hamlet* or Shakespeare made further changes in the story as told by Saxo and Belleforest. He substituted, for the open murder of the king, a secret murder in the manner of the Italian Renaissance, and introduced the ghost's revelation of the murder. He removed the motive for feigning madness—self-preservation—and yet retained the feigned madness, presumably because of its fascination for the Elizabethans. To bring the play into conformity with the conventions of Senecan tragedy, he required the death of Hamlet, who in Saxo and Belleforest emerged unscathed; and, to bring about this conclusion, he introduced Laertes, the fencing-match, the poisoned rapier, and the poisoned bowl. Finally, to throw the main character into relief, he constructed his drama around three parallel actions and presented men of different temperaments facing the same problem of avenging the death of a father. Hamlet, who thinks without acting, and Laertes, who acts without thinking, die by the same poisoned foil, and leave the kingdom to the calm and energetic Fortinbras.

Whether these changes were Shakespeare's or his unknown

predecessor's, they make of the Scandinavian saga an English tragedy of blood with Senecan and Renaissance additions—a composite play in which the various elements are imperfectly blended, but a play which, despite the inconsistencies and improbabilities of the plot, resembles Saxo's story in its main outline. Both open with the call for revenge and close with its accomplishment; both are built around the duel of wits between uncle and nephew.

Shakespeare's interest in character led him to make Hamlet's delay the result less of physical difficulties than of certain moral and intellectual qualities within the hero himself. The grim, relentless avenger of the old Scandinavian tale becomes in Shakespeare's play the most complex and appealing character in literature. The personality of Hamlet is Shakespeare's great contribution to the Hamlet story of his predecessors.

The Character of Hamlet

Prince Hamlet of Shakespeare's play is neither the rough Viking hero of Saxo nor merely the thought-sick, ineffectual dreamer and poet described by Coleridge and other romantic critics of the nineteenth century. He is the perfect prince of the Renaissance. He has, in Ophelia's words, "the courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword." He is perfect in courtesy, except when he is feigning madness or is actually on the verge of hysteria; he is an accomplished swordsman; he has the scholar's love of books and of generalizing; he is loved by the people and commended even by Fortinbras. He is the "sweet prince" of Horatio's farewell, the ideal prince of the Renaissance as described in Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier.*

But despite his virtues, he is unable to perform the task that fate assigns him. Unlike the hero of the saga, he is reluctant to accept the duty of avenging his father's death, but for this reluctance his Renaissance education and environment are not alone responsible. Unselfish and warm-hearted, he is an idealist,

of the type of Brutus, whom in *Julius Cæsar* Shakespeare had recently endowed with the idealist's confidence in the goodness of human nature. When the play opens, Hamlet is not merely a son grieving over the death of an adored father; he is an idealist who has been suddenly disillusioned by the hasty and shameful marriage of his mother. Those whom he loves and admires easily accept and flatter the new king and the guilty queen; his eyes are opened to the ugliness and sordidness of the world about him. Grieving for his father, shocked by his mother's heartlessness and sin, longing for escape and death, he is told of his father's murder, of his mother's adultery before the murder, and of his own duty of revenge. He is overcome by horror and sinks into a profound melancholy, which causes at times hysterical excitement and at times brooding, irresolution, and inaction. Although throughout the play he takes us into his confidence, we cannot anticipate his actions; he constantly surprises us. We never wholly understand him. Indeed, Shakespeare's concern, as J. D. Wilson points out in *What Happens in "Hamlet"* (1935), was to make, not a perfectly consistent character, but "one who would evoke the affection, the wonder, and the tears of his audience, and would yet be accepted as entirely human."

The peculiar fascination of Hamlet's personality may well result—as many critics believe—from the fact that Shakespeare seems to put into his prince a great deal of his own personality. Not only does Hamlet seem sometimes, as in the advice to the players, to be the mouthpiece through which Shakespeare speaks, but also in many respects Hamlet resembles what we know of the man Shakespeare as he is revealed in his plays and poems as a whole and in the few extant comments of his contemporaries. He has Shakespeare's own courtesy and gentleness; he has the open and free nature that Ben Jonson attributes to Shakespeare, the quick responsiveness to all that is beautiful and noble in man; and he has the melancholy of the disillusioned idealist, the

skepticism, the distrust of life, which Shakespeare displays so conspicuously in the great tragedies that explore and reveal the more terrifying depths of the soul. It is both the courteous, gentle, great-natured Shakespeare, and the skeptical, questioning, disillusioned Shakespeare, the ironic spectator of life, that we believe we see in Prince Hamlet, and it is this probable autobiographical element that, above all else, gives him his peculiar appeal.

Text and Date

Three different texts of *Hamlet* exist. Of the first (Q_1), which was printed in 1603, only two imperfect copies survive. The origin of this version has been much discussed, but most critics now agree that it is based upon shorthand reports made by someone in the audience, or upon a report submitted by an actor of faulty memory. Whatever its origin, it differs greatly from the two later texts: it is little more than half as long, several incidents and the names of several characters are different from those in the later texts, and many passages are confused. Early in 1605 a second version (Q_2) appeared, "enlarged," as the title-page states, "to almost as much again as it was, according to the true and perfect copy." Of the six extant copies, three are dated 1604 and three 1605. J. D. Wilson (*The Manuscript of Shakespeare's "Hamlet,"* 1934) believes that this text was printed from Shakespeare's autograph. It contains, however, many misprints and omissions. The First Folio of 1623 prints still another text, which is based, in Dr. Wilson's opinion, upon a transcript of a prompt-copy, which itself was taken from Shakespeare's manuscript. Q_2 contains more than two hundred lines not in F_1, but it lacks about eighty-five lines found in F_1. The present text, like most modern texts, is based upon F_1, with many corrections from Q_2, and a few independent emendations.

Evidence as to the date of *Hamlet* is scanty. Francis Meres does not include it in his list of Shakespeare's plays in *Palladis*

Tamia in 1598. The earliest known reference to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is in a note by Gabriel Harvey, written almost certainly before February, 1601, and it is entered in the Stationers' Register, July 26, 1602. But whether this reference by Harvey and this entry in the Stationers' Register apply to the play as it was printed in Q_2 (1605) is by no means certain. Some scholars, J. D. Wilson among them, believe that Shakespeare wrote a first draft of the play probably between 1596 and 1600, and that in 1601 he wrote the play in its present form. Others believe that he revised his first draft after the appearance of Q_1 in 1603. Still others, among them Sir Edmund Chambers, believe that Shakespeare wrote the play only once and probably in 1600, and that Q_1, Q_2, F_1, and *Der bestrafte Brudermord* are all based upon derivations of that single text. It is certain that style, general tone, and topical allusions alike point to 1600 or 1601 as the probable date of composition.

Relation to Other Shakespearean Plays

Hamlet stands as a landmark among Shakespeare's plays. Written midway in his career, when he was perhaps the most famous and popular dramatist of the age, it differs from his earlier plays in its style as well as in its substance and general tone. The style has lost the excessive ingenuity and decoration and exuberance of his earliest manner. Gone, too, is most of the lyricism so conspicuous in *Richard II*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, though the "honey-tongued" sweetness of his early verse remains in such passages as the following:

> But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
> Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill.

> If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
> Absent thee from felicity awhile
> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
> To tell my story.

> Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince;
> And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

The clarity and effortless ease of *Henry V* and *Julius Cæsar* remain, but in many places in *Hamlet*, especially in Hamlet's soliloquies, rapidity and vehemence of expression suggest the intense compression of the style of the later tragedies, the concentrated, rapid, varied, grander style of *King Lear* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. It is to be remembered, however, that the presence of these several manners in *Hamlet* does not prove that Shakespeare did not write the play once and for all in 1600 or 1601; Hamlet's peculiar speech, his nervous vehemence, are probably a conscious and studied element in Shakespeare's characterization of his prince.

In substance and in general tone, as well as in style, *Hamlet* differs from the earlier plays. *Hamlet*, with *Julius Cæsar* as a prelude, marks the beginning of a period (1601–1609) during which Shakespeare turned his attention almost exclusively to the writing of tragedy—*Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Timon of Athens*, *Coriolanus*. Even the comedies of these years—*Troilus and Cressida*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure*, all written during the first half of this period—are grave, somber, almost bitter in tone; the former gaiety and high spirits are gone.

This change in the mood and the choice of subject of Shakespeare's plays has been traced to a number of causes: the growing taste for satire and tragedy on the part of the playgoing public, some personal tragedy or an illness of which we know nothing, Shakespeare's growing knowledge of men and his deepening sense of the mystery of human existence, or his own preference for tragedy as the greatest form of drama. Whatever the cause, for seven or eight years after the writing of *Hamlet* Shakespeare's plays—*Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Timon of Athens*—deal with the pitiable weakness as well as with the

nobility of man, with evil in its more appalling forms, sometimes even with evil victorious in a horrible world.

Finally, however, in *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*, another mood is apparent. Perhaps Shakespeare was writing to please a changing taste; perhaps advancing years or increasing leisure or returning health or pleasant retirement with his family at Stratford—or all these—brought a change, a change which, as J. D. Wilson suggests, may well have been not unlike Wordsworth's change two centuries later. Certain it is that after the dark period of the tragedies his last plays reveal a mood of serenity and peace,

> that blessed mood,
> In which the burthen of the mystery,
> In which the heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world,
> Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood,
> In which the affections gently lead us on.

This is certainly the mood of *The Tempest*. Whatever Shakespeare's personal experiences may have been during his so-called "tragic period," *Hamlet* marks the beginning of that period. The melancholy prince stands, like his creator, questioning and bewildered, before those problems for which not even Shakespeare could find a solution.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

HAMLET, Prince of Denmark, son of the former king, and nephew of the present king.
CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.
GERTRUDE, Queen of Denmark, mother of Hamlet.
HORATIO, friend and confidant of Hamlet.
ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN } disloyal friends of Hamlet.
POLONIUS, the Lord Chamberlain.
LAERTES, son of Polonius.
OPHELIA, daughter of Polonius.
OSRIC, a courtier.
FORTINBRAS, Prince of Norway.
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS } ambassadors to Norway.
MARCELLUS, BERNARDO } Danish officers.
FRANCISCO, a Danish soldier.
REYNALDO, servant of Polonius.
THE GHOST of Hamlet's father.
TWO GRAVE-DIGGERS.
A PRIEST.
A NORWEGIAN CAPTAIN.
AMBASSADORS from England.
STROLLING PLAYERS.
Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, Attendants.

Scene of the Action: Denmark, mainly at the royal castle at Elsinore.

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

ACT I

SCENE I. *The Castle at Elsinore. A platform on the battlements.*

FRANCISCO *at his post. Enter to him* BERNARDO.

Ber. Who's there?
Fran. Nay, answer me! Stand, and unfold yourself.
Ber. Long live the king!
Fran. Bernardo?
Ber. He.
Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.
Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve. Get thee to bed, Francisco.
Fran. For this relief much thanks. 'Tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.
Ber. Have you had quiet guard?
Fran. Not a mouse stirring.
Ber. Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.
Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who's there?

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Hor. Friends to this ground.
Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.
Fran. Give you good night.
Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier.
Who hath relieved you?
Fran. Bernardo has my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit.*
Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

[I. i] 3. ***Long live the king:*** the password. 13. ***rivals:*** partners. 16. ***Give you:*** God give you.

Ber. Say,
What, is Horatio there?
Hor. A piece of him.
Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus.
Hor. What, has this thing appear'd again tonight?
Ber. I have seen nothing.
Mar. Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us;
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night;
That if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.
Hor. Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.
Ber. Sit down awhile,
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we have two nights seen.
Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.
Ber. Last night of all,
When yond same star that's westward from the pole
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one—

Enter Ghost.

Mar. Peace, break thee off! Look, where it comes again!
Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.
Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.
Ber. Looks it not like the king? Mark it, Horatio.
Hor. Most like! It harrows me with fear and wonder.
Ber. It would be spoke to.

21. *What . . . tonight?* Q_2 assigns this line to Horatio, Q_1 and F_1 to Marcellus. 23. *fantasy:* imagination. 29. *approve:* prove to be true. 37. *his:* its. 42. *scholar.* Spirits could be exorcised only in Latin. 45. *would:* wants to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio.
Hor. What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? By heaven I charge thee, speak!
Mar. It is offended.
Ber. See, it stalks away!
Hor. Stay! Speak, speak! I charge thee, speak! [*Exit Ghost.*
Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.
Ber. How now, Horatio! You tremble and look pale.
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on 't?
Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.
Mar. Is it not like the king?
Hor. As thou art to thyself.
Such was the very armour he had on
When he the ambitious Norway combated.
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'Tis strange.
Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.
Hor. In what particular thought to work I know not;
But in the gross and scope of my opinion
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.
Mar. Good now, sit down and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon

49. *sometimes:* formerly. 57. *sensible:* of the senses. *avouch:* assurance. 61. *Norway:* king of Norway. 62. *parle:* parley. 63. *sledded:* on sleds or sledges. 65. *jump:* just. *dead:* dark and dreary (?). 68. *gross and scope:* general range. 70. *Good now:* an expression of entreaty. 72. *toils:* causes to toil. *subject:* people. 73. *cast:* casting.

And foreign mart for implements of war;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week.
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day,
Who is 't that can inform me?
Hor. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet—
For so this side of our known world esteem'd him—
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror;
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant
And carriage of the article design'd,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in 't; which is no other—
As it doth well appear unto our state—

74. *mart:* trade. 75. *impress:* enforced service. *sore:* urgent. 77. *toward:* forthcoming. 83. *prick'd on:* spurred on. *emulate:* emulous. 87. *law and heraldry:* civil law and the law of arms. 89. *seized of:* possessed of. 90. *moiety competent:* equal amount. 91. *gaged:* pledged. 94. *And . . . design'd:* and meaning of the agreement drawn up. 96. *unimproved:* not put to use. 97. *skirts:* outskirts. 98. *Shark'd . . . resolutes:* swept up indiscriminately a crowd of landless desperadoes. 100. *stomach:* adventure (lit., courage), with quibble on meaning suggested by *food and diet.*

But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsatory, those foresaid lands
So by his father lost; and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.
Ber. I think it be no other but e'en so.
Well may it sort that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch, so like the king
That was and is the question of these wars.
Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets;
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.
And even the like precurse of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.
But soft, behold! Lo, where it comes again!

Re-enter Ghost.

I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,

103. *compulsatory:* involving compulsion. 106. *head:* origin. 107. *romage:* commotion. 108–125. Omitted in F_1. 109. *sort:* suit, accord. 113. *palmy:* triumphant. 116. Many editors suppose a line omitted after 116. J. D. Wilson inserts lines 121–5 after line 116. 118. *Disasters:* unfavorable aspects. *moist star:* the moon, governing the tides of *Neptune's empire.* 120. *doomsday:* i.e., complete darkness. See Matthew 24:29; Luke 21:25–27. 121. *precurse:* precursor. 122. *still:* always. 125. *climatures:* regions. 127. *cross it:* (a) cross its path, (b) make the sign of the cross before it.

Speak to me.
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
Speak to me. [*Cock crows.*
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,
O speak!
Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
Speak of it; stay, and speak! Stop it, Marcellus.
Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?
Hor. Do, if it will not stand.
Ber. 'Tis here!
Hor. 'Tis here!
Mar. 'Tis gone! [*Exit Ghost.*
We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.
Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.
Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine; and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.
Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,

131. *grace:* credit. 134. *happily:* perhaps. 140. *partisan:* spear with a broad head. 154. *extravagant and erring:* vagrant and wandering. 155. *confine:* place of confinement. 156. *probation:* proof. 158. *'gainst:* before.

The bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Hor. So have I heard and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill.
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen tonight
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let's do 't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A room of state in the castle.*

Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, *and* Attendants.

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress to this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy—
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,

160. *bird of dawning:* cock. 162. *strike:* blast, injure by malign influence. 163. *takes:* bewitches. 164. *gracious:* holy. 173. *loves:* friendship.

[ii] 4. *brow of woe:* aspect of woe. 9. *jointress:* widow who holds a jointure or life-interest. 10. *defeated:* ruined. 11. *auspicious:* cheerful. *dropping:* tearful.

With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole—
Taken to wife; nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know: young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for him.
Now for ourself and for this time of meeting,
Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras—
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose—to suppress
His further gait herein; in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions are all made
Out of his subject; and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope
Of these delated articles allow.
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. } In that and all things will we show our duty.
Vol. }

King. We doubt it nothing. Heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

17. *that:* that which. 18. *weak supposal:* low opinion. 20. *disjoint:* distracted. *frame:* order. 21. *Colleagued . . . advantage:* allied with the hope of gain. 23. *Importing:* pertaining to. 31. *gait:* progress. 32. *proportions:* forces or supplies. 33. *subject:* subjects. 37. *business:* negotiate. 38. *delated:* detailed. 41. *nothing:* not at all.

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit; what is 't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And lose your voice. What wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laer. Dread my lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France,
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation,
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
By laboursome petition, and at last
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent.
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes. Time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son—

Ham. [*Aside*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

44. *the Dane:* the king of Denmark. 45. *lose your voice:* i.e., speak in vain. 47. *native:* naturally related. 48. *instrumental:* serviceable. 50. *Dread my lord:* my dread lord. 58–60. *wrung . . . consent.* Omitted in F_1. 60. *Upon . . . consent.* "The metaphor is legal Laertes' wish is like a will, illegal until the seal is affixed" (Chambers). 62. *Take . . . hour:* i.e., enjoy thy youth. 63. *graces:* virtues. 65. *A little . . . kind:* i.e., I am both nephew and stepson; yet we are unlike, and our relationship is unnatural and lacking in affection. "Hamlet's first utterance is a riddle, like his character" (J. D. Wilson). 67. *too . . . sun:* (a) too much surrounded by the festivities of my mother's hasty wedding and your coronation, (b) too much your son, a mere prince, though I should be king.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not for ever with thy vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.
Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.
Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?
Ham. Seems, madam? Nay, it is; I know not "seems."
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly. These indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play;
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.
King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father.
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow. But to persevere
In obstinate condolement is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief;
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd.

69. *Denmark:* the king of Denmark. 70. *vailed:* lowered. 72. *common:* the common lot. 75. *particular:* personal. 78. *customary suits:* conventional mourning dress. 79. *windy suspiration:* heavy sighing. 80. *fruitful:* abundant. 81. *haviour:* behavior. 82. *moods:* modes, forms, attitudes. 92. *obsequious sorrow:* (a) dutiful sorrow, (b) sorrow shown in obsequies or funeral rites. 93. *condolement:* mourning. 95. *incorrect:* uncorrected, unchastened.

For what we know must be and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we in our peevish opposition
Take it to heart? Fie! 'Tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd; whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died today,
"This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father; for, let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire;
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet.
I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply.
Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come;
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks today,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

99. *vulgar:* common, obvious. 105. *corse:* corpse. 107. *unprevailing*: unavailing. 109. *most immediate:* next in succession. 110. *nobility:* high degree. 112. *impart:* offer myself. 113. *Wittenberg:* German university founded in 1502. 114. *retrograde:* contrary. 115. *bend you:* incline yourself. 125. *Denmark:* the king. 127. *rouse:* draught of liquor. *bruit:* report.

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! Oh, fie, fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months dead! Nay, not so much, not two!
So excellent a king, that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? Why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on; and yet, within a month——
Let me not think on't—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears—why she, even she—
O God! A beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer—married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules; within a month,
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to good.
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

129. *too too:* an intensive. 132. *canon:* decree. 134. *uses:* customs, usual occupations. 137. *merely:* completely. 138. *two months:* cf. III, ii, 135. 140. *Hyperion:* the sun-god. 141. *beteem:* allow. 149. *Niobe:* a daughter of Tantalus, who wept unceasingly for her children even after Zeus turned her into stone. 150. *wants . . . reason:* lacks reasoning power. 155. *flushing:* redness. *galled:* sore with weeping. 156. *post:* hasten. 157. *dexterity:* ease.

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, *and* BERNARDO.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!
Ham. I am glad to see you well. 160
Horatio—or I do forget myself.
Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.
Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you.
And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?
Marcellus?
Mar. My good lord—
Ham. I am very glad to see you. Good even, sir.
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?
Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.
Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so, 170
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself. I know you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?
We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.
Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.
Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.
Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.
Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! The funeral baked meats 180
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!
My father—methinks I see my father—
Hor. Oh, where, my lord?
Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.
Hor. I saw him—once; he was a goodly king.
Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all;
I shall not look upon his like again.

163. *change:* exchange. 164. *what . . . from:* what are you doing away from? 169. *disposition:* mood. 172. *truster:* believer. 179. *hard:* close. 180. *baked meats:* baked foods, pastry. 182. *dearest:* direst. 183. *Or ever:* before.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.
Ham. Saw? Who?
Hor. My lord, the king your father.
Ham. The king my father!
Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.
Ham. For God's love, let me hear.
Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead waste and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Arm'd at all points exactly, cap-a-pe,
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them. Thrice he walk'd
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length, whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
And I with them the third night kept the watch;
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes. I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.
Ham. But where was this?
Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.
Ham. Did you not speak to it?
Hor. My lord, I did;
But answer made it none. Yet once methought
It lifted up it head and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;

192. *Season your admiration:* moderate your astonishment. 193. *attent:* attentive. 200. *exactly:* completely. *cap-a-pe:* from head to foot. 203. *oppress'd:* distressed. 204. *truncheon's:* staff's. *distill'd:* transformed. 205. *act:* action. 207. *dreadful:* terrified. 215. *methought:* it seemed to me. 216. *it:* its.

But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.
Ham. 'Tis very strange.
Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true,
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.
Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs. But this troubles me.
Hold you the watch tonight?
Mar. *Ber.* We do, my lord.
Ham. Arm'd, say you?
Mar. *Ber.* Arm'd, my lord.
Ham. From top to toe?
Mar. *Ber.* My lord, from head to foot.
Ham. Then saw you not his face?
Hor. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.
Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?
Hor. A countenance more
In sorrow than in anger.
Ham. Pale or red?
Hor. Nay, very pale.
Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?
Hor. Most constantly.
Ham. I would I had been there.
Hor. It would have much amazed you.
Ham. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?
Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.
Mar. *Ber.* Longer, longer.
Hor. Not when I saw 't.
Ham. His beard was grizzled? No?
Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.

230. *beaver:* face-guard of helmet. 237. *tell:* count.

Ham. I will watch tonight;
Perchance 'twill walk again.
Hor. I warrant it will.
Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap tonight,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue.
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well.
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.
All. Our duty to your honour.
Ham. Your loves, as mine to you; farewell.
[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*
My father's spirit in arms! All is not well;
I doubt some foul play. Would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes. [*Exit.*

Scene III. *A room in* Polonius' *house.*

Enter Laertes *and* Ophelia.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd. Farewell;
And, sister, as the winds give benefit
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.
Oph. Do you doubt that?
Laer. For Hamlet and the trifling of his favours,
Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
A violet in the youth of primy nature,

248. *tenable:* held. 251. *requite:* repay. 256. *doubt:* suspect
[iii] 2. *as:* whensoever. *give benefit:* are favorable. 3. *convoy is assistant:* means of conveyance are available. 6. *fashion:* mere form, pretence. *toy in blood:* idle fancy of youth. 7. *primy:* spring-like.

Forward, not permanent; sweet, not lasting;
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more,
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will; but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own,
For he himself is subject to his birth.
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself, for on his choice depends
The safety and health of the whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed, which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmaster'd importunity.'
Fear it, Ophelia; fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,

8. *Forward:* precocious. 9. *suppliance:* diversion. 11. *crescent:* growing. 12. *thews:* bodily strength. *temple:* body. 14. *withal:* also. 15. *soil:* blemish. *cautel:* deceit. 16. *virtue of his will:* his good intentions. 17 *weigh'd:* considered. 19. *unvalued:* of low rank. 21. *safety.* Q_2 reads *safty*, F_1 *sanctity*. 23. *voice and yielding:* approval and consent. 26. *place:* rank as prince. 27. *deed:* effect. 30. *credent:* credulous. 32. *unmaster'd:* unrestrained.

If she unmask her beauty to the moon.
Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes.
The canker galls the infants of the spring
Too oft before their buttons be disclosed,
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then; best safety lies in fear;
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.
Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede.
Laer. O, fear me not.
I stay too long. But here my father comes.

Enter Polonius.

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave. [*Kneels.*
Pol. Yet here, Laertes! Aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!
[*Lays his hand on Laertes' head.*
And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;

39. *The canker . . . spring:* the canker-worm injures the young plants of spring. 40. *buttons:* buds. *disclosed:* unfolded. 42. *blastments:* blights. 44. *rebels:* lusts (J. D. Wilson). 47. *ungracious:* graceless. 49. *puff'd:* bloated. 51. *recks:* heeds. *rede:* advice. 54. *Occasion:* opportunity. 59. *character:* inscribe. 60. *unproportion'd:* inordinate. 61. *familiar:* friendly. *vulgar:* common, cheap.

But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
Bear 't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,—
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are of a most select and generous chief in that.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell; my blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you; go; your servants tend.

Laer. [*Rises*] Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Pol. What is 't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought.
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you, and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.
If it be so—as so 'tis put on me,

64. *dull thy palm:* i.e., make thy friendliness too general. 65. *unfledged:* immature. 69. *censure:* opinion. 71. *express'd in fancy:* fantastic. 74. *Are . . . that.* The text is obviously corrupt. Of the many emendations suggested, Grant White's is perhaps most satisfactory: *Are most select and generous in that.* 77. *husbandry:* thrift. 81. *season:* mature. 83. *tend:* wait. 94. *put on:* reported to.

And that in way of caution—I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly
As it behoves my daughter and your honour.
What is between you? Give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection! Pooh! You speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you. Think yourself a baby,
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly,
Or—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus—you'll tender me a fool.

Oph. My lord, he hath importuned me with love
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it. Go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows. These blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. From this time, daughter,
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young,

99. *tenders:* offers. 102. *Unsifted:* untested. *circumstance:* state of affairs. 106. *tenders:* promises to pay. 107. *Tender:* hold. 108. *crack the wind:* i.e., run it until it is broken-winded. 109. *tender me a fool:* show me a fool (for a daughter), or present me with a baby. 112. *fashion:* pretense. *Go to:* a common phrase of reproach. 113. *countenance:* support. 115. *springes:* snares. *woodcocks:* stupid birds. 117. *blazes:* flashes (J. D. Wilson). 122. *entreatments:* interviews (like *parley*, a term of diplomacy) 124. *so much in him:* this much about him.

And with a larger tether may he walk
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows, for they are brokers,
Not of that dye which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,
The better to beguile. This is for all:
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment leisure
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you. Come your ways.
Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The platform on the battlements.*

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, *and* MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.
Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.
Ham. What hour now?
Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.
Mar. No, it is struck.
Hor. Indeed? I heard it not. Then it draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.
[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*
What does this mean, my lord?
Ham. The king doth wake tonight and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

126. *In few:* briefly. 127. *brokers:* (a) agents, (b) panders 128. *investments:* (a) clothes, (b) monetary investments. 129. *implorators:* solicitors. 130. *bonds:* agreements. Theobald's emendation, *bawds*, is adopted by many editors. 131. *for all:* once for all. 133. *slander any moment leisure:* disgrace any momentary leisure.

[iv] 1. *shrewdly:* keenly. 2. *eager:* sharp. 8. *wake:* revel late. *rouse:* carouse. 9. *wassail:* revelry. *up-spring reels:* either "wild dances" or, as J. D. Wilson suggests, "new-fangled revels." 10. *Rhenish:* Rhine wine. 12. *pledge:* cf. I, ii, 124 ff.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry, is 't,
But to my mind, though I am native here
And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel east and west
Makes us traduced and tax'd of other nations:
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and indeed it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth—wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin—
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,
Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausive manners, that these men,
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star—
Their virtues else—be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo—
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault. The dram of eale

15. *to . . . born:* born to the custom. 16. *More . . . observance:* which it is more honorable to break than to observe. 17–38. *This . . . scandal.* Omitted in F_1. 18. *traduced . . . of:* defamed and censured by. 19. *clepe:* call. *with swinish phrase:* with the name of swine. 20. *addition:* name. 21. *at height:* in the best way. 22. *attribute:* reputation. 23–38. Hamlet's reflections apply to each of Shakespeare's tragic heroes. 24. *mole of nature:* natural blemish. 26. *his:* its. 27. *complexion:* tendency. 28. *pales:* enclosures. 29. *o'er-leavens:* corrupts. 30. *plausive:* pleasing. 32. *nature's . . . star:* nature's mark, or the accident of fortune. 34. *undergo:* support. 35. *general censure:* popular judgment. 36–8. *The dram . . . scandal.* Although the text is corrupt, the general sense is clear: the small particle of evil (*eale*) doth often (*of a*) extinguish (*dout*, "do out") the whole noble substance to its own dis-

Doth all the noble substance of a doubt
To his own scandal.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Enter Ghost.

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane; O, answer me!
Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again. What may this mean
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous, and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? Wherefore? What should we do?

[*Ghost beckons Hamlet.*

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

---

credit, i.e., a small fault in a man often leads people to forget the nobility of his character. But perhaps the sentence is incomplete—interrupted by Horatio's exclamation.

39. *ministers of grace:* messengers of God. 40. *spirit of health:* good spirit. *goblin damn'd:* evil spirit. 43. *questionable:* inviting question or, possibly, raising questions in Hamlet's mind. 47. *canonized:* buried according to the canon or ordinance of the church. *hearsed:* coffined. 48. *cerements:* graveclothes. 49. *inurn'd:* interred. 50. *his:* its. 53. *glimpses of the moon:* i.e., the earth by night. 54. *fools of nature:* nature's dupes. 55. *shake our disposition:* i.e., disturb us. 59. *impartment:* communication.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It wafts you to a more removed ground.
But do not go with it.
Hor. No, by no means.
Ham. It will not speak; then I will follow it.
Hor. Do not, my lord.
Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again. I'll follow it.
Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness? Think of it.
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.
Ham. It wafts me still.
Go on; I'll follow thee.
Mar. You shall not go, my lord.
Ham. Hold off your hands.
Hor. Be ruled; you shall not go.
Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.
Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen.
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me!
I say, away! Go on; I'll follow thee. [*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.*

61. *wafts:* beckons. 65. *at a pin's fee:* at even a trifling value. 69. *flood:* sea. 71. *beetles o'er:* hangs over. 73. *deprive . . . reason:* take away reason's sovereignty. 75–8. *The very . . . beneath.* Omitted in F_1. 75. *toys of desperation:* freakish thoughts of suicide. 83. *Nemean lion:* one of the mythical monsters slain by Hercules. *nerve:* muscle, sinew. 85. *lets:* hinders.

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.
Mar. Let's follow. 'Tis not fit thus to obey him.
Hor. Have after. To what issue will this come?
Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
Hor. Heaven will direct it.
Mar. Nay, let's follow him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Another part of the platform.*

Enter Ghost *and* HAMLET.

Ham. Where wilt thou lead me? Speak; I'll go no further.
Ghost. Mark me.
Ham. I will.
Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.
Ham. Alas, poor ghost!
Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.
Ham. Speak; I am bound to hear.
Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.
Ham. What?
Ghost. I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part
And each particular hair to stand an end,

87. *desperate:* reckless. 89. *issue:* outcome. 91. *it:* i.e., the issue.

[v] 12. *days of nature:* natural life. 17. *spheres:* orbits. 18. *knotted and combined:* gathered into a knot and tied. 19. *an end:* on end.

Like quills upon the fretful porpentine.
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love—
Ham. O God!
Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.
Ham. Murder?
Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is,
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.
Ham. Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.
Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear.
'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abused; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.
Ham. O my prophetic soul!
My uncle!
Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts—
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow

20. *porpentine:* porcupine. 21. *eternal blazon:* revelation of the hereafter. 25. *unnatural:* i.e., because fratricidal. 31. *apt:* ready to learn. 33. *Lethe:* the river of forgetfulness in Hades. *wharf:* bank. 37. *forged process:* false story. 38. *abused:* deceived. 40. Cf. I, ii, 256. 42. *adulterate:* adulterous. 43. *wit:* intelligence.

I made to her in marriage, and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But Virtue, as it never will be moved,
Though Lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So Lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.
But, soft! Methinks I scent the morning air.
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine,
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd;
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unaneled,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.
O, horrible! O, horrible! Most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;

61. *secure:* unsuspicious. 62. *hebenon:* yew. 64. *leperous:* causing leprosy. 68. *posset:* curdle. 69. *eager:* sour. 71. *instant tetter:* instantaneous eruption. 72. *lazar-like:* like a leper. 75. *dispatch'd:* deprived. 77. *Unhousel'd . . . unaneled:* without Holy Communion, unprepared (by confession), without extreme unction. 78. *reckoning:* confession and absolution. 81. *nature:* natural affection.

Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught. Leave her to heaven
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire.
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me. [*Exit.*

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there,
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter. Yes, by heaven!
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables—meet it is I set it down
That one may smile and smile and be a villain;
At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark. [*Writing.*
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is "Adieu, adieu! Remember me."
I have sworn 't.

Hor. [*Within*] My lord, my lord—
Mar. [*Within*] Lord Hamlet—

83. *luxury:* lechery. 89. *matin:* morning. 93. *couple:* add 94. *instant:* instantly. 97. *distracted globe:* confused head. 98. *table:* writing-tablet. 99. *fond:* foolish. 100. *saws:* maxims. *pressures:* impressions.

Hor. [*Within*] Heaven secure him!
Ham. So be it!
Hor. [*Within*] Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!
Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! Come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is 't, my noble lord?
Hor. What news, my lord?
Ham. O, wonderful!
Hor. Good my lord, tell it.
Ham. No; you'll reveal it.
Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.
Mar. Nor I, my lord.
Ham. How say you, then; would heart of man once think it? But you'll be secret?
Hor. } Ay, by heaven, my lord.
Mar. }
Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark—
But he's an arrant knave.
Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.
Ham. Why, right; you are i' the right.
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part;
You, as your business and desire shall point you,
For every man has business and desire,
Such as it is; and for mine own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.
Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.
Ham. I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, 'faith, heartily.
Hor. There's no offense, my lord.
Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offense too. Touching this vision here,

115. *Hillo, ho, ho:* a falconer's call to his hawk. 124. *arrant:* thoroughgoing. 127. *circumstance:* details. 137. *much offense:* i.e., in Claudius's deeds.

It is an honest ghost; that let me tell you.
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster 't as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.
Hor. What is 't, my lord? We will.
Ham. Never make known what you have seen tonight.
Hor. / *Mar.* My lord, we will not.
Ham. Nay, but swear 't.
Hor. In faith,
My lord, not I.
Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.
Ham. Upon my sword.
Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.
Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.
Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.
Ham. Ah, ha, boy! Say'st thou so? Art thou there, truepenny?
Come on—you hear this fellow in the cellarage—
Consent to swear.
Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.
Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.
Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.
Ham. *Hic et ubique?* Then we'll shift our ground.
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword.
Never to speak of this that you have heard,
Swear by my sword.
Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.
Ham. Well said, old mole! Canst work i' the earth so fast?
A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good friends.

138. ***an honest ghost:*** i.e., not a devil in his father's shape. Cf. II, ii, 627 ff. 147. ***sword:*** i.e., the cross of the hilt. 150. ***truepenny:*** honest fellow. 156. ***Hic et ubique:*** here and everywhere. 163. ***pioner:*** miner.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!
Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy.
But come;
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on,
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As "Well, well, we know," or "We could, an if we would,"
Or "If we list to speak," or "There be, an if they might,"
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me—this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,
Swear.
Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.
Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! [*They swear.*] So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you.
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, to express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint; O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!
Nay, come, let's go together. [*Exeunt.*

167. *our philosophy:* i.e., philosophy in general. Q_2 reads *your.* 171. *meet:* proper. 172. *antic:* fantastic. 174. *encumber'd:* folded (?). 175. *doubtful:* ambiguous. 177. *an if:* if. 178. *giving out:* statement. 186. *friending:* friendliness. 189. *spite:* annoyance. 191. *Nay . . . together.* Horatio and Marcellus wait for Prince Hamlet to precede them, but he insists that they disregard his rank.

ACT II

SCENE I. *A room in* POLONIUS' *house.*

Enter POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.

Pol. Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.
Rey. I will, my lord.
Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.
Rey. My lord, I did intend it.
Pol. Marry, well said; very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris,
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; and finding
By this encompassment and drift of question
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it.
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him,
As thus, "I know his father and his friends,
And in part him." Do you mark this, Reynaldo?
Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.
Pol. "And in part him; but," you may say, "not well.
But, if 't be he I mean, he's very wild,
Addicted so and so"; and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.
Rey. As gaming, my lord?
Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing; you may go so far.

[II. i] 7. *me:* for me (the ethical dative). *Danskers:* Danes. 8. *keep:* live. 10. *encompassment . . . question:* roundabout talk. 12. *demands:* questions. 19. *put on:* impute to. 20. *forgeries:* forged tales. 22. *wanton:* unrestrained. 26. *Drabbing:* associating with drabs (harlots).

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.
Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency.
That's not my meaning. But breathe his faults so quaintly
That they may seem the taints of liberty,
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.
Rey. But, my good lord—
Pol. Wherefore should you do this?
Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.
Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift,
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured
He closes with you in this consequence:
"Good sir," or so, or "friend," or "gentleman,"
According to the phrase or the addition
Of man and country.
Rey. Very good, my lord.
Pol. And then, sir, does he this—he does—what was I about to say? By the mass, I was about to say something. Where did I leave?
Rey. At "closes in the consequence," at "friend or so," and "gentleman."

30. *open to incontinency:* open to the charge of habitual loose living. 31. *quaintly:* cleverly. 34. *unreclaimed:* untamed. 35. *Of general assault:* by which all are assailed. 38. *fetch of warrant:* justifiable trick. 39. *sullies:* blemishes. 43. *ever:* at any time. *prenominate:* aforesaid. 44. *breathe:* speak. 45. *He . . . consequence:* he agrees with you somewhat as follows. 47. *addition:* title. 51. *leave:* stop.

Pol. At "closes in the consequence," ay, marry.
He closes with you thus: "I know the gentleman;
I saw him yesterday, or t' other day,
Or then, or then, with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was he gaming; there o'ertook in 's rouse;
There falling out at tennis": or, perchance,
"I saw him enter such a house of sale,"
Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.
See you now
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth;
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlasses and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out,
So by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?
Rey. My lord, I have.
Pol. God be wi' you; fare you well.
Rey. Good my lord!
Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.
Rey. I shall, my lord.
Pol. And let him ply his music.
Rey. Well, my lord.
Pol. Farewell! [*Exit Reynaldo.*

Enter Ophelia.

How now, Ophelia? What's the matter?
Oph. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!
Pol. With what, i' the name of God?
Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,

58. *o'ertook in 's rouse:* drunk. 61. *Videlicet:* namely. 64. *reach:* ability. 65. *windlasses:* roundabout ways (a hunting term). *assays of bias:* indirect attempts. 66. *indirections:* devious ways. *directions:* direct ways. 67. *lecture:* instruction. 68. *have me:* understand me. 71. *in yourself:* for yourself. 73. *ply his music:* do as he pleases. 78. *doublet:* close-fitting coat. *unbraced:* unfastened.

Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors—he comes before me.
Pol. Mad for thy love?
Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But truly I do fear it.
Pol. What said he?
Oph. He took me by the wrist and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so.
At last, a little shaking of mine arm
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being. That done, he lets me go;
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes,
For out o' doors he went without their helps,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.
Pol. Come, go with me. I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.
What, have you given him any hard words of late?
Oph. No, my good lord, but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters and denied
His access to me.

80. *down-gyved:* hanging down like gyves or fetters. 82. *purport:* expression. 90. *perusal:* scrutiny. 91. *As:* as if. 95. *bulk:* body. 102. *ecstasy:* madness. 103. *property:* characteristic. *fordoes:* destroys.

Pol. That hath made him mad. 110
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
I had not quoted him. I fear'd he did but trifle,
And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
By heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king.
This must be known, which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide than hate to utter love. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A room in the castle.*

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, *and* Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so call it,
Since nor the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both 10
That, being of so young days brought up with him,
And since so neighbour'd to his youth and haviour,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time; so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,

112. *quoted:* observed. 113. *beshrew my jealousy:* curse my suspicion. 114. *proper:* peculiar. 115. *cast beyond:* miscalculate. 118–19. *which . . . love:* i.e., hiding my knowledge of Hamlet's love might cause grief greater than the hatred that will follow my telling of his love.

[ii] 2. *Moreover that:* besides the fact that. 11. *of:* from. 12. *neighbour'd:* near. 13. *vouchsafe your rest:* consent to remain.

Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;
And sure I am two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your Majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz,
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some Attendants.*

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? I assure my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,

17. *Whether . . . thus.* Omitted in F_1. 18. *open'd:* revealed. 22. *gentry:* courtesy. 24. *supply:* aid. 30. *in . . . bent:* to the limit of our ability. 38. *practices:* acts. 42. *still:* always.

Both to my God and to my gracious king.
And I do think, or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath used to do, that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.
King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.
Pol. Give first admittance to the ambassadors.
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.
King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.
[*Exit Polonius.*
He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.
Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main—
His father's death and our o'erhasty marriage.
King. Well, we shall sift him.

Re-enter Polonius, *with* Voltimand *and* Cornelius.

Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?
Volt. Most fair return of greetings and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies, which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack,
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your Highness. Whereat grieved,
That so his sickness, age, and impotence
Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys,
Receives rebuke from Norway, and in fine
Makes vow before his uncle never more
To give the assay of arms against your Majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,

47. *policy:* statecraft. 52. *fruit:* dessert. 56. *doubt:* suspect. *main:* chief reason. 61. *first:* first audience or first protest. 67. *borne in hand:* deceived. *sends out arrests:* i.e., orders him to stop. 69. *in fine:* in conclusion. 71. *assay:* trial. 73. *fee:* payment.

And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack;
With an entreaty, herein further shown, [*Giving a paper.*
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety and allowance
As therein are set down.
King. It likes us well;
And at our more consider'd time we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.
Meantime we thank you for your well-took labour.
Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together.
Most welcome home! [*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*
Pol. This business is well ended.
My liege and madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad.
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is 't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.
Queen. More matter, with less art.
Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis 'tis true. A foolish figure—
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause.

79. *regards . . . allowance:* conditions pledging safety to the country and permission for the troops to pass through. 80. *likes:* pleases. 81. *consider'd:* fit for deliberation. 86. *expostulate:* discuss. 90. *wit:* judgment, sound sense. 91. *flourishes:* embellishments. 98. *figure:* figure of speech.

Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend.
I have a daughter—have while she is mine—
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this. Now gather, and surmise. [*Reads.*
"To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia"—
That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; "beautified" is a vile phrase.
But you shall hear. Thus: [*Reads.*
"In her excellent white bosom, these."
Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?
Pol. Good madam, stay awhile. I will be faithful. [*Reads.*
"Doubt thou the stars are fire;
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love.
"O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers. I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.
"Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, Hamlet."
This, in obedience, hath my daughter show'd me,
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means and place,
All given to mine ear.
King. But how hath she
Received his love?
Pol. What do you think of me?
King. As of a man faithful and honourable.
Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing—
As I perceived it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me—what might you,

105. *Perpend:* consider. 113. *these:* these lines. 120. *ill . . . numbers:* unskilled at writing verse. 121. *reckon:* count. 124. *machine is to him:* body is his. 126. *more above:* moreover. 127. *fell out:* occurred. *means:* opportunities.

Or my dear Majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk or table-book,
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight,
What might you think? No, I went round to work,
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
"Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;
This must not be"; and then I precepts gave her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed—a short tale to make—
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness, and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time—I'd fain know that—
That I have positively said, "'Tis so,"
When it proved otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. [*Pointing to his head and shoulder*] Take this from this, if this be otherwise.
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know sometimes he walks four hours together
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does indeed.

136. *If . . . table-book:* i.e., if I had concealed the information. 137. *winking:* closing. 139. *round:* straightforwardly. 140. *bespeak:* address. 141. *out of thy star:* above thee in fortune. 148. *watch:* wakefulness. 149. *lightness:* lightheadedness. *declension:* decline. 159. *centre:* i.e., of the earth. *try:* test.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him.
Be you and I behind an arras then;
Mark the encounter. If he love her not
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away.
I'll board him presently. [*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*

Enter Hamlet, *reading.*

O, give me leave;
How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, God-a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord!

Ham. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing carrion—Have you a daughter?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun. Conception is a blessing, but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to 't.

Pol. [*Aside*] How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter. Yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone. And truly in my youth I

163. *arras:* hanging tapestry. 170. *board:* accost. *presently:* immediately. 174. *fishmonger:* i.e., pander. 182. *god:* Warburton's emendation of *good*, the Q_2 and F_1 reading. 185–7. *Let . . . conceive.* "It is possible that Hamlet here means to warn Polonius against the King" (Chambers). 188. *by that:* about that.

suffered much extremity for love—very near this. I'll speak to him again. What do you read, my lord? 193

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean the matter that you read, my lord. 197

Ham. Slanders, sir; for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams; all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down, for yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

Pol. [*Aside*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't.—Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave. 210

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' the air. [*Aside.*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are!—a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal—except my life, except my life, except my life. 221

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. [*Aside*] These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet? There he is.

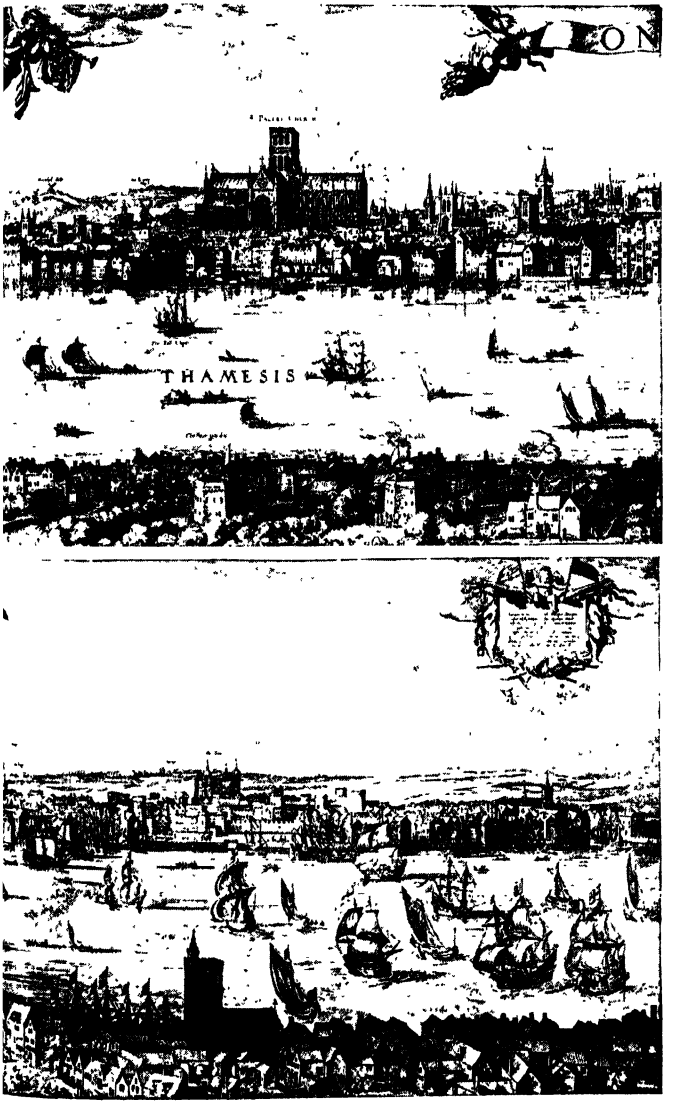
Ros. [*To Polonius*] God save you, sir! [*Exit Polonius.*

Guil. My honoured lord!

200. *purging:* discharging. 206. *if . . . backward:* if you could go from age to youth. 208. *Will . . . air.* Fresh air was thought injurious to invalids. 212. *pregnant:* full of meaning. 213. *happiness:* appropriateness. 214. *prosperously:* successfully. 215. *suddenly:* immediately. 220. *withal:* with.



C. J. Visscher's *View of London and Westminster* (1616).



(Read from left to right across both pages.)

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not over-happy;
On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of Fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet. What's the news?

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near. But your news is not true. Let me question more in particular. What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one, in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so. To me it is a prison.

Ros. Why then, your ambition makes it one. 'Tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

231. *indifferent:* ordinary. 244–76. *Let me . . . attended.* Omitted in Q_2. 252. *confines:* places of confinement.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? For, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros. } We'll wait upon you.
Guil. }

Ham. No such matter. I will not sort you with the rest of my servants, for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord—no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you; and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a half-penny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me. Come, come. Nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Why, anything, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no?

268. *quality:* nature. 269–71. *Then . . . shadows:* if glory is a shadow, kings and heroes are shadows too, and their antitype, the beggars, are the substance. 270. *outstretched:* strutting. 272. *fay:* faith. 273. *wait upon:* accompany. 274. *sort:* class 276. *dreadfully attended:* i.e., by his servants and by *bad dreams* (262). 277. *in . . . friendship:* i.e., as old friends. 278. *what make you:* what are you doing? 282. *a halfpenny:* at a halfpenny. 284. *free:* voluntary. 289. *modesties:* sense of shame. 290. *colour:* disguise. 294. *conjure:* adjure. *fellowship:* friendship. 295. *consonancy:* agreement (in age). 297. *proposer:* arguer. 298. *even:* straightforward.

Ros. [*Aside to Guildenstern*] What say you?

Ham. [*Aside*] Nay, then, I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercise; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust! Man delights not me—no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, "Man delights not me"?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you. We coted them on the way, and hither are they coming to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome; his Majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man

301. *of you:* on you. 305. *prevent your discovery:* precede your revelation. 312. *brave:* splendid. 313. *fretted:* adorned. 317. *faculty:* ability. *express:* exact. 319. *apprehension:* understanding. Q_2 punctuates as follows: "How infinite in faculties, in form and moving, how express and admirable in action, how like an angel in apprehension, how like a god." 329. *lenten:* meager. 330. *coted:* passed. 334. *foil and target:* sword and shield. 335–6. *humorous . . . peace:* the actor who portrays a "humour" will not be interrupted.

shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for 't. What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it they travel? Their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Ros. No, indeed, are they not.

Ham. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace; but there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for 't. These

336. *clown:* low comedian 337. *whose . . . sere:* i.e., who are easily moved to laughter *Tickle* means "insecure" and *the sere* is the "part of a gun-lock which keeps the hammer at full or half cock" (Onions). 339. *or:* even if *halt:* limp 342. The allusions to *the tragedians of the city*, to *inhibition* (346), and to *the late innovation* (347) have caused much discussion The *tragedians* may be the Admiral's men or the Chamberlain's men (Shakespeare's company). *Their inhibition* seems to mean, not an official "prohibition" of playing, but the "hindrance" to residence in the city caused by *the late innovation*, i.e., by the fact that "private" companies of boy-actors, attached to the singing schools, such as St. Paul's and the Chapel Royal, had recently (1598–1602) come into direct and successful competition with the "common" (public) theatres, such as the Globe, where Shakespeare's plays were acted. 344. *residence:* i.e., in the city. 348. *estimation:* reputation. 352–79. *How . . . load too.* This passage is omitted in Q_2, probably because in 1604 Queen Anne had taken a company of boy-actors under her special protection. 354. *aery:* nest. 355. *eyases:* young hawks. 355. *cry . . . question:* i.e., their shrill voices are heard above all others in the controversy. In this so-called "War of the Theatres" the boy-actors were notably successful in comedies filled with personal satire directed at the "common" players, their patrons, and the dramatists who wrote for them. 356. *tyrannically:* outrageously.

are now the fashion, and so berattled the common stages—so they call them—that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What, are they children? Who maintains 'em? How are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? Will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players—as it is most like, if their means are no better—their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy. There was for a while no money bid for argument unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is 't possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.

Ham. It is not very strange; for mine uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats apiece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come. The appurtenance of welcome is fashion and cere-

357. *berattled:* filled with din (perhaps, berated). 358–9. *many . . . goose-quills:* many men of fashion are afraid of being satirized by the dramatists who write for the children. 362. *escoted:* supported. 363. *pursue . . . sing:* remain actors only till their voices change. 367–8. *exclaim . . . succession:* i.e., attack the "common stages," where they must later earn their living. 370. *tarre:* incite. 372. *argument:* subject-matter. 373. *cuffs:* blows. *question:* controversy. 377. *carry it away:* win. 378–9. *Hercules and his load:* probably an allusion to the sign of the Globe theatre, Hercules bearing the globe for Atlas. 380. *It . . . strange.* The fickleness of the public recalls Hamlet from Shakespeare's London to Elsinore. 381. *mows:* grimaces. 384. *in little:* in miniature. 388. *appurtenance:* accompaniment. 389. *fashion:* form.

mony. Let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome; but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west; when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Re-enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. [*Aside to them*] Hark you, Guildenstern; and you too; at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

Ros. Happily he's the second time come to them, for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. [*Aloud.*] You say right, sir; o' Monday morning; 'twas so indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome—

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon mine honour—

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass—

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene in-

390. *comply:* "observe the formalities of courtesy" (Onions). *garb:* manner. *extent:* show of kindness or condescension. 396. *I am . . . north-north-west:* I am mad only when the wind is in one point of the compass. 397. *I . . . handsaw.* Probably proverbial. *Hawk* may mean "hack," a kind of hoe; *handsaw* may be a corruption of "hernshaw," heron. 410. *Roscius:* a famous Roman actor. 412. *Buz, buz:* interjection labeling the story as old. 418–19. *scene . . . unlimited:* i.e., either a play observing the unities of time, place, and action, or one that disregards them. The same distinction is perhaps intended in *the law of writ and the liberty* (421); or *law of writ* may mean the obligation to follow a script, and *the liberty* may mean freedom to improvise.

dividable, or poem unlimited; Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why,

"One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well."

Pol. [*Aside*] Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord?

Ham. Why,

"As by lot, God wot,"

and then, you know,

"It came to pass, as most like it was"—

the first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look where my abridgement comes.

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends. O, my old friend! Thy face is valanced since I saw thee last; comest thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress! By 'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent

419–20. *Seneca, Plautus:* Roman dramatists. 422. *Jephthah.* Like Jephthah (Judges 11), Polonius is willing to sacrifice his daughter. A play called *Jephthah* was acted by the Admiral's men in 1601. Hamlet quotes here from a ballad, preserved in Percy's *Reliques*. 438. *row:* stanza. 439. *my . . . comes:* i.e., the coming of the players cuts short my talk, or, my entertainment comes. 442. *valanced:* fringed (with a beard). 443. *beard:* defy. 444. *my young . . . mistress:* addressed to the boy who played women's parts. 447. *chopine:* thick-soled shoe. 448. *uncurrent:* unacceptable. A coin "cracked within the ring" surrounding the head of the sovereign was not legal tender.

gold, be not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to 't like French falconers—fly at anything we see; we'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech. 452

First Play. What speech, my lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once. For the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general. But it was —as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation, but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved; 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido, and thereabout of it especially where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line: let me see, let me see— 471

"The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast"—

it is not so. It begins with Pyrrhus—

"The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal. Head to foot
Now is he total gules, horridly trick'd

451. *straight:* at once. 457. *caviare . . . general:* not liked by the public. 459. *cried . . . mine:* surpassed mine. 460. *digested:* arranged. 461. *modesty:* moderation. *cunning:* skill. 462–3. *no . . . savoury:* nothing sharp or ribald to spice the lines. 465–7. *as wholesome . . . fine.* Omitted in F_1. 466–7. *more . . . fine:* more dignified than ornate. 468. *Æneas' tale to Dido.* Both the purpose of the recitation episode and Shakespeare's opinion of the Pyrrhus speech are doubtful. The speech is obviously intended to challenge comparison with Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, II, i, 214 ff. 472. *Pyrrhus:* a Greek hero in the Trojan War. *Hyrcanian beast:* the tiger. See *Æneid*, IV, 366. 476. *ominous horse:* the wooden horse built by the Greeks. 479. *gules:* red (a heraldic term). *trick'd:* here, "smeared" (a heraldic term).

With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Baked and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their lord's murder. Roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks."

So, proceed you.

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

First Play. "Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks. His antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command. Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear; for, lo! his sword,
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick.
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,
And like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless and the orb below
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall

481. *impasted:* clotted. 484. *o'er-sized:* covered as with size or glue. 491. *antique:* (a) ancient or (b) "antic," ridiculous. 493. *Repugnant to:* resisting. 502. *painted tyrant:* tyrant in a picture. 503. *a neutral:* one indifferent. 505. *against:* before. 506. *rack:* mass of cloud. 509. *region:* air. 511. *Cyclops' hammers.* The Cyclopes were one-eyed giants who assisted Vulcan in forging weapons for the gods.

On Mars's armour forged for proof eterne
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power!
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!"

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard. Prithee, say on; he's for a jig or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps. Say on; come to Hecuba.

First Play. "But who, O who had seen the mobled queen—"

Ham. "The mobled queen"?

Pol. That's good; "mobled queen" is good.

First Play. "Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames
With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced.
But if the gods themselves did see her then
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
Unless things mortal move them not at all,
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods."

512. *proof eterne:* eternal impenetrability. 516. *synod:* assembly. 517. *fellies:* parts of the rim of a wheel. 518. *nave:* hub. 522. *jig:* lively dance and song at the close of a play. *bawdry:* indecency. 523. *Hecuba:* wife of Priam, king of Troy. 525. *mobled:* muffled. This homely, dialectal word seems to Hamlet unsuitable in this context, but to Polonius' less sensitive ear "mobled queen" is good. 529. *bisson rheum:* blinding tears. *clout:* cloth. 531. *o'er-teemed:* exhausted by childbearing. 534. *state:* power. 540. *milch:* moist (with tears).

Pol. Look whether he has not turned his colour and has tears in 's eyes. Pray you, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest soon. [*To Polonius.*] Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear? Let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time; after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. God's bodykins, man, better. Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity; the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends. We'll hear a play tomorrow. [*Exit Polonius with all the Players but the First.*] Dost thou hear me, old friend? Can you play *The Murder of Gonzago?*

First Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll ha 't tomorrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in 't, could you not?

First Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well. Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit First Player.*] My good friends, I'll leave you till night. You are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

Ham. Ay, so, God be wi' ye. [*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*] Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit

542. *turned his colour:* grown pale. 547. *bestowed:* lodged. 548. *abstract:* epitome. 554. *God's bodykins:* by God's body. 563. *The Murder of Gonzago.* The play is unknown. Apparently Shakespeare wrote the entire "play within the play" presented in Act III, scene ii. 566. *for a need:* in case of necessity. 576. *peasant:* base. 578. *passion:* emotion. 579. *conceit:* imagination.

That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears.
Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing—no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? Breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? Gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
Ha!
'Swounds, I should take it, for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!

580. *wann'd:* grew pale. 582. *function:* action. 583. *forms:* gestures, expressions. 589. *general ear:* ear of the crowd. 590. *free:* guiltless. 594. *muddy-mettled:* dull-spirited. *peak:* mope. 595. *John-a-dreams:* a dreamer. *unpregnant of:* unstirred by. 598. *defeat:* destruction. 605. *pigeon-liver'd . . . gall.* It was believed that pigeons were gentle because they had no gall. 606. *make oppression bitter:* make me feel the bitterness of oppression. 607. *region kites:* kites of the air. 609. *kindless:* unnatural.

O, vengeance!
Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!
Fie upon 't! Foh! About, my brain! I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick. If he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the Devil; and the Devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this. The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. [*Exit.*

615. *drab:* harlot. 616. *scullion:* kitchen servant. 617. *About:* bestir yourself. 620. *presently:* immediately. 626. *tent:* probe. *blench:* flinch. 631. *spirits:* moods. 632. *Abuses:* deceives. 633. *relative:* relevant. *this:* i.e., the ghost's story.

ACT III

SCENE I. *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. And can you, by no drift of conference,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted,
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question, but of our demands
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way; of these we told him,
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true.
And he beseech'd me to entreat your Majesties
To hear and see the matter.

[III. i] 1. *drift of conference:* i.e., leading him on in conversation. F_1 reads *circumstance.* 2. *confusion:* mental agitation. 3. *Grating:* harassing. 7. *forward:* willing. 12. *with . . . disposition:* unwillingness. 13. *Niggard of question:* sparing of conversation. 14. *assay:* challenge, rouse interest. 17. *o'er-raught:* overtook.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclined.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.
Ros. We shall, my lord.
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia.
Her father and myself, lawful espials,
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge,
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If 't be the affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for.
Queen. I shall obey you.
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness. So shall I hope your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.
Oph. Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit Queen.*
Pol. Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves. Read on this book,
[*He gives Ophelia a prayer-book.*
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this—
'Tis too much proved—that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The Devil himself.
King. [*Aside*] O, 'tis too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!

26. *give . . . edge:* stimulate him further. 29. *closely:* secretly. 31. *Affront:* meet. 32. *espials:* spies. 34. *frankly:* freely. 40. *wildness:* madness, agitation. 43. *Gracious:* your Grace (addressed to the king). 45. *exercise:* act of devotion.

The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word.
O heavy burden!

Pol. I hear him coming. Let's withdraw, my lord.

[*Exeunt King and Polonius.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be: that is the question;
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die; to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die; to sleep;
To sleep? Perchance to dream! Ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of disprized love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,

52. *to the thing:* i.e., in comparison with the cosmetic. 56–82. Cf. Sonnet 66. 58. *slings:* field guns, small cannon. 65. *rub:* obstacle. 67. *When . . . coil:* when we have evaded the turmoil of mortal life. There is probably a pun on *coil*, a winding of rope, so that a second meaning is suggested: when we have cast off the flesh that imprisons the soul. 68. *give us pause:* make us hesitate. *respect:* consideration. 69. *of so long life:* so long-lived. 70. *time:* the world. 72. *disprized:* undervalued. 73. *spurns:* insults. 75. *quietus:* legal discharge of a debt; here, "death." 76. *bare bodkin:* either a "mere dagger" or an "unsheathed dagger." *fardels:* burdens.

To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.—Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.
Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?
Ham. I humbly thank you, well, well, well.
Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver.
I pray you, now receive them. [*She offers him a packet.*
Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught.
Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well you did;
And, with them, words of so sweet breath composed
As made the things more rich. Their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.
Ham. Ha, ha! Are you honest?

79. *bourn:* boundary. 83. *conscience:* reflection, subtle thinking. 84. *native:* natural. 85. *sicklied o'er:* given a sickly color. *cast:* tinge. 86. *pitch:* height. 87. *regard:* consideration. *currents:* courses. 89. *orisons:* prayers. 96. *I . . . aught:* i.e., I may have given you trifles, but never my very self; or, perhaps, you are no longer the girl to whom I gave the gifts. 103. *honest:* sincere. Ophelia understands the word in its other sense, "chaste." Hamlet may suspect a plot (see II, ii, 161–6), or he may hear a rustle behind the arras. His words hereafter are intended for the ears of Polonius and the king.

Oph. My lord?

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness. This was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me, for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it. I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery; why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offenses at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool nowhere but in 's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go. Farewell. Or, if

107–8. *That . . . beauty:* i.e., your sincerity ought not permit your beauty to serve as a mere bait in this way. 110. *commerce:* intercourse. 111–16. *Ay, truly . . . once.* He is thinking of his mother as well as of Ophelia. 119. *inoculate:* engraft (a gardening term). 120. *relish:* taste. *of it:* i.e., of our old stock. 124. *indifferent:* moderately. 127. *beck:* command. 131. *arrant:* thorough.

thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. O heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough. God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another. You jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on 't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages. Those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit.*

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune, and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstasy. O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter King *and* Polonius.

King. Love? His affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood,
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose

144. *monsters:* i.e., horned cuckolds. 150–2. *jig . . . creatures:* i.e., you walk and talk affectedly. 152–3. *make . . . ignorance:* i.e., excuse your wanton conduct by pretending ignorance. 155. *all but one:* all but Claudius. 160. *expectancy:* source of hope, heir apparent. 161. *glass:* mirror. *mould of form:* model of manners. 162. *observed of all observers:* courted by all courtiers. 167. *feature:* proportion of the body. *blown:* in full bloom. 168. *ecstasy:* madness. 170. *affections:* emotions. 173. *on brood:* brooding like a hen. 174. *doubt:* suspect, fear. *disclose:* hatching (of eggs).

Will be some danger, which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England
For the demand of our neglected tribute.
Haply the seas and countries different
With variable objects shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on 't?

Pol. It shall do well; but yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all. My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his griefs. Let her be round with him;
And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,
To England send him, or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so.
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. —[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A hall in the castle.*

Enter HAMLET *and* Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temper-

179. *Haply:* perhaps. 180. *variable:* various. 181. *something-settled:* somewhat settled. 182. *still beating:* always pondering. 183. *fashion of himself:* his usual behavior. 191. *round:* outspoken. 193. *find him:* discover his secret.

[ii] 8. *passion:* strong emotion. *beget a temperance:* obtain a moderation.

ance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious, periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise. I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod. Pray you, avoid it. 16

First Play. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature, to show Virtue her own feature, Scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. 39

First Play. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

10. *robustious:* boisterous. *periwig-pated:* wearing a wig. 12. *groundlings:* the inferior part of the audience standing in the pit. 13. *are capable of:* can appreciate. 14. *inexplicable dumb-shows:* pantomimes so crude as to defy explanation. 15. *Termagant:* a boisterous character in the old drama. *out-herods Herod:* i.e., outdoes even the noisy ranting of Herod in the miracle plays. 21. *modesty:* moderation. 23. *from the purpose:* contrary to the purpose. 27. *his:* its. *pressure:* stamp, character. 28. *come tardy off:* poorly done. *unskilful:* ignorant. 30. *of the which one:* of one of whom. 31. *allowance:* acknowledgment. 37. *journeymen:* unskillful workmen. 39. *abominably.* The spelling of Q_2 and F_1, *abhominably*, revealing the supposed derivation from *ab homine*, emphasizes the contrast with *humanity*. 40. *indifferently:* moderately.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered. That's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the Fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. [*Exeunt Players.* 50

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord! Will the king hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste. [*Exit Polonius.*] Will you two help to hasten them?

Ros. } We will, my lord.
Guil. }

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Ham. What ho! Horatio!

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation coped withal. 60

Hor. O, my dear lord—

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter,
For what advancement may I hope from thee
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?

43. *clowns.* Clowns were inclined to interpolate jests even in serious plays. 44. *of them:* some of them. 46. *barren:* i.e., of wit. 53. *presently:* immediately. 59. *just:* honorable, well-balanced. 60. *conversation:* experience. *coped:* met. 65–7. *candied . . . fawning.* The image is that of a spaniel at table, its tongue "candied" with sweetmeats, yet "fawning" for more. (C. F. E. Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery*, p. 196.) 66. *pregnant:* fertile in results. 67. *thrift:* profit.

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play tonight before the king.
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle. If his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imagination are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord,
If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be idle.
Get you a place.

69. *election:* choice. 74. *blood:* passions. 76. *stop:* hole in a wind-instrument for controlling the sound. 77. *passion's slave:* the slave of his emotions. 84. *very comment:* most intense scrutiny. 85. *occulted:* hidden. 86. *unkennel:* reveal. 87. *damned ghost:* evil spirit. 89. *Vulcan's stithy:* the anvil or the forge of Vulcan, the armorer of the gods. 92. *censure . . . seeming:* judgment of his behavior. 95. *be idle:* i.e., assume my antic disposition.

Danish march. A flourish. Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and others.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith—of the chameleon's dish. I eat the air, promise-crammed. You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now. [*To Polonius.*] My lord, you played once i' the university, you say?

Pol. That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. What did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar. I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord, they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Pol. [*To the King*] O, ho! Do you mark that?

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

98. *chameleon's dish.* The chameleon was believed to feed on air. Hamlet wilfully misunderstands the question, and his reply is an elaborate quibble. 101. *have nothing with:* make nothing of. 102. *are not mine:* do not concern me. 112. *stay . . . patience:* wait for your permission. 123. *country matters:* improprieties.

Ham. O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? For, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay then, let the Devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! Die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by 'r lady, he must build churches then, or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters.

Enter a King *and a* Queen *very lovingly, the* Queen *embracing him, and he her. She kneels and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up and declines his head upon her neck; lays him down upon a bank of flowers. She, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the* King's *ears, and exit. The* Queen *returns, finds the* King *dead, and makes passionate action. The* Poisoner, *with some two or three* Mutes, *comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The* Poisoner *woos the* Queen *with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.*

[*Exeunt.*

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho; that means mischief.

Oph. Belike this show imports the argument of the play?

132. *your only jig-maker:* i.e., the only jig-maker. The death of the elder Hamlet, instead of making the queen sad, has, like a jig, made her cheerful. 138. *suit of sables:* (a) suit trimmed with rich fur, worn by elderly gentlemen, (b) black suit for mourning. 143. *suffer . . . on:* be forgotten. 144–5. "*For . . . forgot.*" This is from an old song. In the morris dances, frowned upon by the Puritans, the hobby-horse was a dancer representing a horse. S. D. *Hautboys:* wood-wind instruments of high pitch. The modern spelling is "oboe." *passionate:* sorrowful. 147. *miching mallecho:* sneaking mischief. 149. *imports:* indicates. *argument:* theme, summary.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow. The players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll show him. Be not you ashamed to show; he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught. I'll mark the play.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently. [*Exit.*

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter two Players, King *and* Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been,
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must;
For women's fear and love holds quantity,
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is sized, my fear is so.

157. *naught:* improper. 160. *stooping:* bowing, submitting. 162. *posy:* short motto engraved on a ring. 165. *Phœbus' cart:* the chariot of the sun. 166. *Tellus':* the earth's. 169. *Hymen:* the god of matrimony. 175. *distrust you:* am anxious about you. 177. *holds quantity:* are equal in amount. 178. *In . . . extremity:* either in naught or in the highest degree.

Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.
P. King. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too.
My operant powers their functions leave to do;
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, beloved; and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou—
P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast!
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.
Ham. [*Aside*] Wormwood, wormwood.
P. Queen. The instances that second marriage move
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love.
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.
P. King. I do believe you think what now you speak,
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity;
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;
But fall unshaken when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt.
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either Grief or Joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy.
Where Joy most revels, Grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, Joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,

181–2. Omitted in F_1. 184. *My . . . do:* my active powers cease to perform their functions. 186. *haply:* perhaps. 192. *instances:* motives. *move:* suggest. 193. *respects:* considerations. 199. *validity:* strength. 207. *enactures:* fulfillment. 212. *prove:* test.

Whether Love lead Fortune, or else Fortune Love.
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth Love on Fortune tend;
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun,
Our wills and fates do so contrary run
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own;
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.
P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy
Meet what I would have well and it destroy!
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!
Ham. If she should break it now!
P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile.
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*
P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain! [*Exit.*
Ham. Madam, how like you this play?
Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.
Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.
King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offense in 't?

219. *seasons:* matures. 221. *contrary:* counter to one another. 222. *still:* always. 223. *ends:* results. 228–9. Omitted in F_1. 229. *anchor's:* anchorite's. *cheer:* fare, or, perhaps, chair. 230. *opposite:* hostile thing. *blanks:* blanches, makes pale. 240. *protest:* vow. 242. *argument:* summary of the plot.

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest. No offense i' the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna. Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon. 'Tis a knavish piece of work, but what o' that? Your Majesty and we that have free souls—it touches us not. Let the galled jade wince; our withers are unwrung. 253

Enter player, as Lucianus.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge. 260

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you must take your husbands. Begin, murderer; pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: "the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge."

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing,
Confederate season, else no creature seeing,
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,

247. *Tropically:* figuratively. The Q_1 reading, *trapically*, suggests a pun on *trap*. 252. *free:* guiltless. 253. *galled jade:* horse sore from chafing. *wince:* kick. *withers:* ridge between a horse's shoulder bones. *unwrung:* not chafed, as by a bad saddle. 255. *chorus.* In some Elizabethan plays the chorus explained the action. 256. *interpret:* i.e., like an explainer at a puppet show. 258. *keen:* bitter, cruel. 262. *So . . . husbands.* There is here an allusion to the marriage service, where husband and wife "take" each other "for better, for worse." 263. *pox:* an imprecation. 264–5. *the croaking . . . revenge.* A travesty of two lines from *The True Tragedy of Richard III*, printed in 1594: "The screeking raven sits croaking for revenge, Whole herds of beasts come bellowing for revenge." 267. *Confederate:* conspiring to help. 269. *Hecate's ban:* curse of the queen of witches.

Thy natural magic and dire property
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.*

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for 's estate. His name's Gonzago; the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What? Frighted with false fire?

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light! Away!

All. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.*

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep;
So runs the world away.
Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers—if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me—with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I.
For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very—pajock.

277. *false fire:* fireworks, or a blank discharge. 279. *Give o'er:* stop. 282–5. Probably from a lost ballad. 286. *feathers:* plumes worn by tragic actors. 287. *turn Turk:* prove false. 288. *Provincial roses.* The reference is to a well-known variety of rose, Gerard's *Rosa provincialis*, with a pun on "provincial" acting, i.e., in the provinces. Actors wore *razed* or slashed shoes, decorated with rose-shaped ornaments of ribbon. 289. *fellowship . . . players:* partnership in a company of actors. 290. *Half a share:* i.e., of the profits. 292–5. Probably from the ballad quoted above. 295. *pajock:* peacock. There is probably an allusion to the fable of the birds choosing as king, not the eagle, but the peacock, typifying lechery and vanity.

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning? 300

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha! Come, some music! Come, the recorders!
For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.
Come, some music!

Re-enter Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir— 310

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair. 321

Ham. I am tame, sir; pronounce.

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment; if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business. 330

303. *recorders:* wind instruments of the flute kind. 305. *perdy:* "par Dieu." 312. *distempered:* disordered. 315. *choler:* anger. Hamlet gives the word the meaning "bilious disorder." 318. *purgation:* (a) judicial examination, (b) medicinal purging. 321. *frame:* order. 322. *pronounce:* speak. 328. *wholesome:* reasonable.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer. My wit's diseased; but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command, or, rather, as you say, my mother. Therefore no more, but to the matter. My mother, you say—

Ros. Then thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? You do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, but "While the grass grows"—the proverb is something musty.

Re-enter Players *with recorders.*

O, the recorders! Let me see one. To withdraw with you—why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

339. *admiration:* wonder. 348–9. *pickers and stealers:* hands, alluding to the phrase in the catechism, "Keep my hands from picking and stealing." 356. *voice:* approval. 358. *"While the grass grows."* The rest of the proverb is "the silly horse starves." 360. *withdraw:* speak in private. 361. *recover the wind:* keep to windward (a hunting term). 362. *toil:* snare. 363–4. *if . . . unmannerly:* i.e., my boldness proceeds from my affection for you.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying. Govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony. I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me, you would seem to know my stops, you would pluck out the heart of my mystery, you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.

Enter Polonius.

God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

371. *touch:* fingering or playing (a musical instrument). 373. *ventages:* stops. 384. *compass:* range. 385. *organ:* i.e., the recorder, or, possibly, Hamlet himself. 388. *fret:* (a) irritate, (b) finger the frets. 392. *presently:* at once.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by. [*Aside.*] They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so.

Ham. "By and by" is easily said. [*Exit Polonius.*] Leave me, friends. [*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

'Tis now the very witching time of night
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft now! To my mother!
O heart, lose not thy nature! Let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom;
Let me be cruel, not unnatural.
I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you.
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you.
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

Guil. We will ourselves provide.
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your Majesty.

400. *by and by:* at once. 401. *top of my bent:* limit of my endurance. 412. *Nero.* He murdered his mother. 416. *shent:* rebuked. 417. *give them seals:* confirm them with deeds.

[iii] 2. *range:* rove, roam. 3. *dispatch:* execute promptly. 5. *terms:* condition. *estate:* state, administration of government. 8. *fear:* caution, anxiety.

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound
With all the strength and armour of the mind
To keep itself from noyance, but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone, but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near it with it. It is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortised and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage,
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros.
Guil. We will haste us.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Enter Polonius.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet.
Behind the arras I'll convey myself
To hear the process. I'll warrant she'll tax him home;
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege.
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit Polonius.*

11. *peculiar:* private. 13. *noyance:* harm. 14. *weal:* welfare. 16. *gulf:* whirlpool. 22. *Attends:* accompanies. 24. *Arm:* prepare. 25. *fear:* cause of fear. 29. *process:* interview. *tax him home:* reprove him severely. 30. Polonius made the suggestion. Cf. III, i, 189 ff. 33. *of vantage:* from a point of vantage, or, possibly, in addition.

O, my offense is rank; it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will.
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offense?
And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul murder"?
That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardon'd and retain the offense?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offense's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law. But 'tis not so above.
There is no shuffling; there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? What rests?
Try what repentance can. What can it not?
Yet what can it when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,

37. *the . . . curse:* the curse of Cain. 49. *forestalled:* prevented. 56. *offense:* i.e., benefits resulting from the offense. 58. *gilded:* (a) bloody, (b) bribing. *shove by:* thrust aside. 61. *shuffling:* trickery. *lies:* is sustainable (as an action at law). 64. *rests:* remains. 68. *limed:* caught as with birdlime.

Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
All may be well. [*Retires and kneels.*

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying.
And now I'll do't. And so he goes to heaven;
And so am I revenged. That would be scann'd.
A villain kills my father, and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread,
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And how his audit stands who knows save Heaven?
But in our circumstance and course of thought
'Tis heavy with him. And am I then revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No!
Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent.
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed,
At gaming, swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in 't—
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays.
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*

69. *engaged:* entangled. *assay:* trial. 73 ff. There is here perhaps an echo of the old "revenge play," in which the avenger is satisfied only when he destroys both the body and the soul of his victim. 75. *would be scann'd:* needs to be considered. 80. *full of bread:* unfasting, not spiritually prepared. 81. *broad blown:* in full bloom. *flush:* vigorous. 83. *in . . . thought:* in the roundabout course of our thought. 88. *hent:* opportunity, or, possibly, grip. 92. *relish:* touch, trace. 95. *stays:* awaits. 96. *physic:* medicine, i.e., the delay.

King. [*Rising*] My words fly up; my thoughts remain below.
Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *The* QUEEN'S *bedroom.*

Enter QUEEN *and* POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come straight. Look you lay home to him.
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your Grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll silence me even here.
Pray you, be round with him.
Ham. [*Within*] Mother, mother, mother!
Queen. I'll warrant you,
Fear me not. Withdraw; I hear him coming.
[*Polonius hides behind the arras.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother, what's the matter?
Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.
Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.
Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.
Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.
Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!
Ham. What's the matter now?
Queen. Have you forgot me?
Ham. No, by the rood, not so.
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
But would you were not so! You are my mother.
Queen. Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.
Ham. Come, come, and sit you down. You shall not budge.
You go not till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.
Queen. What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!

[iv] 1. *straight:* at once. *lay home:* talk plainly. 2. *broad:* unrestrained. 4. *Much heat:* i.e., the king's anger. 6. *warrant:* promise. 11. *idle:* frivolous, or, perhaps, crazy. 14. *rood:* cross. 19. *glass:* mirror.

Pol. [*Behind*] What, ho! Help, help, help!
Ham. [*Drawing*] How now? A rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead!
[*Makes a pass through the arras.*
Pol. [*Behind*] O, I am slain! [*Falls and dies.*
Queen. O me, what hast thou done?
Ham. Nay, I know not.
Is it the king?
Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!
Ham. A bloody deed! Almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.
Queen. As kill a king?
Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.
[*Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius, dead.*
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better. Take thy fortune.
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.
Leave wringing of your hands. Peace! Sit you down,
And let me wring your heart; for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff,
If damned custom have not brass'd it so
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.
Queen. What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?
Ham. Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love
And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows
As false as dicers' oaths; O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words. Heaven's face doth glow;

33. *busy:* meddling. 37. *brass'd:* hardened. 38. *proof:* armor. *sense:* feeling, sensibility. 42. *rose:* charm, grace; the symbol of perfection. 44. *blister.* Harlots were branded on the forehead. 46. *contraction:* marriage contract. 48. *rhapsody:* medley, string. *glow:* blush.

Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.
Queen. Ay me, what act,
That roars so loud and thunders in the index?
Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow:
Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command,
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill,
A combination and a form indeed
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man.
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! Have you eyes?
You cannot call it love, for at your age
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment
Would step from this to this? Sense sure you have,
Else could you not have motion; but sure that sense
Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd

49. *this . . . mass:* the earth. 50. *tristful:* sad. *against the doom:* before doomsday. 52. *index:* table of contents, prelude. 53. *on this.* Here Hamlet points either to portraits on the wall or to miniatures that he and his mother wear. 54. *counterfeit presentment:* pictured likeness. 56. *Hyperion:* the sun-god. *front:* forehead. 58. *station:* posture. 62. *assurance:* guarantee. 64. *ear:* head of wheat. 67. *batten:* grow fat. *moor:* waste land, with a quibble on the meaning "negro." 69. *hey-day:* state of excitement. 71–6. *Sense . . . difference.* Omitted in F_1. 71. *Sense:* feeling, sensibility. 72. *motion:* emotion, desire. 73. *apoplex'd:* paralyzed. 74–5. *Nor . . . choice:* feeling was never so enslaved by madness that it did not retain some fragment of the power of choice.

But it reserved some quantity of choice
To serve in such a difference. What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.
O shame! Where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire. Proclaim no shame
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
Since frost itself as actively doth burn
And reason pandars will.
Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more!
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct.
Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,
Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty—
Queen. O, speak to me no more!
These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears;
No more, sweet Hamlet!
Ham. A murderer and a villain!
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord! A Vice of kings!
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!

77. *cozen'd:* cheated, deceived. *hoodman-blind:* blindman's buff. 78–81. Omitted in F_1. 79. *sans:* without. 81. *mope:* be bewildered. 83. *mutine:* rebel. 86. *charge:* command. 88. *pandars will:* gratifies desire. 90. *grained:* ingrained, indelibly dyed. 91. *tinct:* color. 92. *enseamed:* greasy. 97. *tithe:* tenth part. 98. *Vice:* buffoon (in the morality plays). 99. *cutpurse:* thief.

Queen. No more!
Ham. A king of shreds and patches—

Enter the Ghost, *in his night-gown.*

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?
Queen. Alas, he's mad!
Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!
Ghost. Do not forget! This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look, amazement on thy mother sits.
O, step between her and her fighting soul.
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.
Speak to her, Hamlet.
Ham. How is it with you, lady?
Queen. Alas, how is 't with you
That you do bend your eye on vacancy
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep,
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,
Start up and stand an end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?
Ham. On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable. Do not look upon me,
Lest with this piteous action you convert

102. *shreds and patches.* The Vice in the morality plays wore motley. S. D. *night-gown:* dressing gown. 107. *lapsed . . . passion:* having lost opportunity and intense feeling. 108. *important:* urgent. 112. *amazement:* bewilderment. 114. *Conceit:* imagination, fancy. 118. *incorporal:* incorporeal. 121. *bedded:* laid flat. *life in excrements:* living outgrowths. 122. *an:* on. 126. *conjoin'd:* united. 127. *capable:* capable of feeling.

My stern effects; then what I have to do
Will want true colour, tears perchance for blood.
Queen. To whom do you speak this?
Ham. Do you see nothing there?
Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.
Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?
Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.
Ham. Why, look you there! Look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he lived!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal! [*Exit Ghost.*
Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain.
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.
Ham. Ecstasy?
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness
That I have utter'd. Bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word, which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness, speaks.
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to Heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue,
For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of Vice must pardon beg—
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.
Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

129. *effects:* outward signs (of my stern purpose). 130. *want true colour:* lack good reason, with quibble on the normal sense of *colour*. 135. *habit:* dress. 138. *ecstasy:* madness. 143. *re-word:* repeat. 145. *unction:* salve. 150. *what is to come:* i.e., future sin. 151. *compost:* manure. 153. *fatness:* grossness. *pursy:* corpulent. 155. *curb and woo:* bow and beg.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night; but go not to mine uncle's bed.
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, Custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain tonight,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence; the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either . . . the Devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night;
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,
[*Pointing to Polonius.*
I do repent; but Heaven hath pleased it so,
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind.
This bad begins and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed,
Pinch wanton on your cheek, call you his mouse,

160. *Assume:* act as if you had. 161–5. *That . . . on.* Omitted in F_1. 161. *sense:* feeling, sensibility. 162. *Of habits devil:* the evil spirit of our habits. 163. *use:* habitual practice. 167–70. *the next more . . . potency.* Omitted in F_1. 169. In the early texts, a word, possibly *curb*, *quell*, or *shame*, is omitted after *either*. 171. *bless'd:* i.e., repentant. 176. *answer:* justify, atone for. 179. *This.* Q_2 reads *This*, F_1 *Thus*. *This* means the corpse; cf. line 174. 180. *One . . . lady.* Omitted in F_1. 182. *bloat:* bloated. 183. *wanton:* wantonly.

And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him know;
For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
Such dear concernings hide? Who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assured, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that?

Queen. Alack,
I had forgot. 'Tis so concluded on.

Ham. There's letters seal'd, and my two schoolfellows,
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
They bear the mandate. They must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For 'tis the sport to have the enginer
Hoist with his own petar; and 't shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet
This man shall set me packing.

184. *reechy:* dirty. 190. *paddock:* toad. *gib:* tomcat. 191. *dear concernings:* things that closely concern him. 194. *the famous ape.* The allusion has not been explained. 195. *conclusions:* experiments. 202–10. Omitted in F_1. 204. *mandate:* orders. *sweep my way:* clear my path. 206. *enginer:* one who constructs "engines" or military machines. 207. *Hoist:* blown up. *petar:* small mortar used to blow up gates or walls. 208. *delve:* dig. 210. *crafts:* (a) boats, (b) acts of guile. 211. *packing:* (a) plotting, (b) hurrying, (c) preparing for a journey.

I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.
Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally, Hamlet dragging Polonius.*

ACT IV

SCENE I. *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. There's matter in these sighs; these profound heaves
You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them.
Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Ah, mine own lord, what have I seen tonight!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries, "A rat, a rat!"
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there.
His liberty is full of threats to all,
To you yourself, to us, to everyone.
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?

216. *to draw . . . you:* (a) to finish my talk with you, (b) to drag you to your grave. 217 S. D. In Shakespeare's theatre the action was here continuous, and the Queen did not leave the stage. F_1 reads *Exit Hamlet tugging in Polonius. Enter King.*

[IV. i] 1. *heaves:* deep sighs. 4. Omitted in F_1. 11. *brainish apprehension:* insane imagination. 12. *heavy:* grievous. 16. *answer'd:* justified, explained.

It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt,
This mad young man. But so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit,
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd,
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence, and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. Ho, Guildenstern!

Re-enter Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid.
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him.
Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done. . . .
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name,

17. *providence:* foresight. 18. *short:* i.e., on a short tether. *haunt:* company. 22. *divulging:* becoming known. 24. *apart:* away. 25. *ore:* gold. 26. *mineral:* mine. 36. *fair:* courteously. 40 Q_2 and F_1 omit the half-line. Theobald, Capell, and many modern editors add *so, haply, slander.* 41–4. *Whose . . . air.* Omitted in F_1. 42. *level:* straight. *blank:* white spot in the center of a target.

And hit the woundless air. O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Safely stowed.

Ros. } [*Within*] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!
Guil. }

Ham. What noise? Who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what? 10

Ham. That I can keep your counsel and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge! What replication should be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir, that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end. He keeps them, as an ape does nuts, in the corner of his jaw—first mouthed, to be last swallowed. When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again. 23

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it. A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

44. *woundless:* invulnerable.

[ii] 11–12. *keep . . . own:* accept your advice and not keep my own secret. 12. *demanded of:* questioned by. 13. *replication:* reply. 17. *countenance:* favor. *authorities:* offices of authority (?). 19. *as . . . nuts.* So reads Q_1. Q_2 reads *like an apple;* F_1 reads *like an ape.*

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Ham. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing—

Guil. A thing, my lord!

Ham. Of nothing. Bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter King, *attended.*

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him.
He's loved of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offense. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause. Diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are relieved,
Or not at all.

Enter Rosencrantz.

How now? What hath befallen?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord, guarded, to know your pleasure.

29–30. If Hamlet is not talking nonsense, he may mean "Polonius is with my father, but Claudius has not yet joined him" (J. D. Wilson), or "the body lies in death with my father, but my father walks disembodied" (Dowden). 32–3. *Hide . . . after:* hide-and-seek.

[iii] 4. *distracted:* confused, unstable. 6. *scourge:* punishment. *weigh'd:* considered. 7–9. *To bear . . . pause:* in order to conduct all pleasantly and equably, my sudden sending Hamlet away must seem (to the multitude) deliberate hesitation (and not the result of fear). 10. *appliance:* medical treatment.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! Bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper? Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten. A certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet. We fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table; that's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see. If your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. [*To some Attendants*] Go seek him there.

Ham. He will stay till you come. [*Exeunt Attendants.*

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety—
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done—must send thee hence
With fiery quickness. Therefore prepare thyself.
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and everything is bent
For England.

21. *politic:* crafty. There is perhaps an allusion to the convocation or Diet held at Worms in 1521. 25. *but variable service:* only various courses. 27–30. *King. Alas . . . that worm.* Omitted in F_1. 33. *progress:* royal journey. 43. *tender:* hold dear. 47. *The associates tend:* the escorts attend, await. *bent:* prepared.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them. But, come, for England! Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother. Father and mother is man and wife, man and wife is one flesh, and so, my mother. Come, for England! [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard;
Delay it not; I'll have him hence tonight.
Away! for everything is seal'd and done
That else leans on the affair. Pray you, make haste.
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught—
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us—thou mayst not coldly set
Our sovereign process, which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. [*Exit.*

50. *cherub.* Cherubim are angels of knowledge, the sentinels of Heaven. Perhaps, as Chambers suggests, Hamlet says in effect, "Whatever your purposes are, the angels are on my side." 56. *at foot:* close. *tempt:* entice. 59. *leans:* depends. 62. *cicatrice:* scar. 63. *free:* voluntary, not enforced by arms. 64. *coldly set:* lightly regard. 65. *process:* command. *imports:* signifies. 66. *conjuring:* entreating earnestly. 68. *hectic:* wasting fever. 70. *haps:* fortunes.

SCENE IV. *A plain in Denmark.*

Enter FORTINBRAS, *a* Captain, *and* Soldiers, *marching.*

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king.
Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras
Craves the conveyance of a promised march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his Majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye;
And let him know so.
Cap. I will do 't, my lord.
For. Go softly on. [*Exeunt Fortinbras and Soldiers.*

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and others.*

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?
Cap. They are of Norway, sir.
Ham. How purposed, sir, I pray you?
Cap. Against some part of Poland.
Ham. Who commands them, sir?
Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.
Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?
Cap. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.
Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.
Cap. Yes, it is already garrison'd.

[iv] 2. *license:* leave. 3. *conveyance:* convoy, escort. 6. *in his eye:* in his presence. 8. *softly:* slowly. 9–66. Omitted in F_1. This soliloquy is one of two in which Hamlet bitterly reproaches himself. 9. *powers:* troops. 15. *main:* chief part. 17. *addition:* amplification. 18–26. Shakespeare probably alludes to the defense of Ostend against the Spaniards in 1601 and 1602. The English force under Sir Francis Vere suffered heavy losses. 20. *farm:* rent. 22. *ranker:* higher. *in fee:* fee simple, outright.

Ham. Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats
Will not debate the question of this straw.
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.
Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit.*
Ros. Will 't please you go, my lord?
Ham. I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.
[*Exeunt all except Hamlet.*
How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.
Sure, He that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom
And ever three parts coward, I do not know
Why yet I live to say, "This thing's to do,"
Sith I have cause and will and strength and means
To do 't. Examples gross as earth exhort me;
Witness this army of such mass and charge
Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd
Makes mouths at the invisible event,
Exposing what is mortal and unsure
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,

26. *debate . . . straw:* dispute this trifling matter. 27. *imposthume:* abscess. 32. *inform . . . me:* i.e., reveal my delay. 34. *market . . . time:* that for which he sells his time. 36. *discourse:* reasoning power. 39. *fust:* grow moldy. 40. *Bestial oblivion:* animal-like forgetfulness. 41. *event:* consequence. 45. *Sith:* since. 47. *charge:* expense. 50. *mouths:* scornful grimaces. 54. *argument:* cause.

But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep, while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That for a fantasy and trick of fame
Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough and continent
To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [*Exit.*

SCENE V. *Elsinore. A room in the castle.*

Enter QUEEN, HORATIO, *and a* Gentleman.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Gent. She is importunate, indeed distract.
Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Gent. She speaks much of her father; says she hears
There's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats her heart,
Spurns enviously at straws, speaks things in doubt
That carry but half sense. Her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection. They aim at it
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
Which, as her winks and nods and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

58. *Excitements of:* spurs to. 61. *trick:* whim. 63. *Whereon . . . cause:* the plot of ground is too small for a battlefield. 64. *continent:* receptacle.

[v] 2. *importunate:* persistent. *distract:* crazy. 6. *Spurns . . . straws:* maliciously attacks trifles. *in doubt:* in perplexity. 8. *unshaped use:* incoherence. 9. *collection:* conjecture. *aim:* guess 10. *botch:* patch. 11. *yield:* bring forth (her words). 13. *nothing:* not at all. *much:* very.

Hor. 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.
Queen. Let her come in. [*Exit Horatio.*
[*Aside.*] To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss;
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter Horatio, *with* Ophelia, *distracted.*

Oph. Where is the beauteous Majesty of Denmark?
Queen. How now, Ophelia?
Oph. [*Sings*] How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.
Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?
Oph. Say you? Nay, pray you, mark.
[*Sings.*] He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.
Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia—
Oph. Pray you, mark.
[*Sings.*] White his shroud as the mountain snow—

Enter King.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.
Oph. [*Sings*] Larded with sweet flowers;
Which bewept to the grave did go
With true-love showers.

15. *ill-breeding:* troublemaking. 18. *toy:* trifle. *amiss:* disaster. 19–20. Guilt is so full of uncontrollable suspicion that it betrays itself in fearing to be betrayed. 20. S. D. Q_1 reads *Enter Ophelia playing on a lute, and her hair down, singing.* 23. Ophelia's ballad-snatches, with the exception of *For bonny sweet Robin* (187), are unknown elsewhere. The music used today is believed to be the same as in Shakespeare's time. It is printed in the Furness *Variorum.* 25–6. *cockle hat . . . shoon.* The staff, the sandals, and the hat adorned with a

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray you, let's have no words of this, but when they ask you what it means, say you this:

[*Sings.*] Tomorrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.

Then up he rose and donn'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an end on 't:

[*Sings.*] By Gis and by Saint Charity,
Alack, and fie for shame!
Young men will do 't, if they come to 't;
By cock, they are to blame.

Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promised me to wed.
So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be patient, but I

cockleshell, worn in evidence of a visit to the shrine of St. James of Compostella in Spain, were marks of the pilgrim. The lover, sworn to worship at the shrine of his "saint," sometimes wore this habit. 27. *imports:* means. 37. *Larded:* garnished.

41. *God 'ild:* God yield (or reward). *owl.* There is an old legend that a baker's daugher was turned into an owl for refusing bread to Jesus. 45. *Conceit:* imagination. 51. *Valentine.* The first girl that a man saw on the morning of February 14 was regarded as his valentine or truelove. 53. *dupp'd:* opened. 59. *Gis:* Jesus. 62. *cock:* God. 65. Before this line Q_2 inserts *He answers.* 66. *An:* if.

cannot choose but weep to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [*Exit.* 74

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit Horatio.*

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author 80
Of his own just remove; the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly,
In hugger-mugger to inter him; poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgment,
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts;
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France,
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear 90
With pestilent speeches of his father's death,
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death. [*A noise within.*

Queen. Alack, what noise is this?

King. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.

Enter another Gentleman.

What is the matter?

81. ***muddied:*** agitated. 83. ***greenly:*** foolishly. 84. ***hugger-mugger:*** secrecy. 89. ***wonder:*** grief. ***in clouds:*** invisible. 90. ***wants not buzzers:*** lacks not gossipers. 92–4. ***Wherein . . . ear:*** in which ***buzzers***, who must talk but who lack subject matter, will not hesitate to accuse me in the ear of one person after another. 95. ***murdering-piece:*** small cannon firing shrapnel. 97. ***Switzers:*** Swiss guards.

Gent. Save yourself, my lord!
The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry, "Choose we! Laertes shall be king!"
Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds,
"Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!"
Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!
King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*

Enter LAERTES, *armed;* Danes *following.*

Laer. Where is this king? Sirs, stand you all without.
Danes. No, let's come in.
Laer. I pray you, give me leave.
Danes. We will, we will. [*They retire without the door.*
Laer. I thank you; keep the door. O thou vile king,
Give me my father!
Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.
Laer. That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard,
Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow
Of my true mother.
King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person.
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That Treason can but peep to what it would,

99. *overpeering . . . list:* rising above its edge. 101. *head:* armed force. 102. *O'erbears:* overwhelms. 105. *word:* promise, pledge. 110. *counter:* a hunting term used when dogs follow the trail in the direction opposite to that taken by the game. 118. *cuckold:* husband whose wife is unfaithful. *harlot.* See III, iv, 44. 124. *would:* wishes (to do).

Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incensed. Let him go, Gertrude.
Speak, man.
Laer. Where is my father?
King. Dead.
Queen. But not by him.
King. Let him demand his fill.
Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with.
To hell, allegiance! Vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged
Most throughly for my father.
King. Who shall stay you?
Laer. My will, not all the world.
And for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.
King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is 't writ in your revenge
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?
Laer. None but his enemies.
King. Will you know them then?
Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms,
And like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood.
King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,

125. *his:* its. 132. *grace:* sense of duty. 134. *That . . . negligence:* that this world and the next I disregard. 136. *throughly:* thoroughly. *stay:* stop. 138. *husband:* manage. 142. *swoopstake:* taking all the stake at once; indiscriminately. 146. *pelican.* It was believed that the pelican fed its young with its own blood. 147. *Repast:* feed.

And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye.
Danes. [*Within*] Let her come in.
Laer. How now? What noise is that?

Re-enter OPHELIA.

O heat, dry up my brains! Tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!
By Heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
O heavens! Is 't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.
Oph. [*Sings*]
They bore him barefaced on the bier;
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;
And in his grave rain'd many a tear—
Fare you well, my dove!
Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.
Oph. [*Sings*] You must sing a-down a-down,
An you call him a-down-a.
O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward that stole his master's daughter.
Laer. This nothing's more than matter.
Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember; and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

150. *sensibly:* feelingly. 151. *level:* straight. 155. *virtue:* power. 161. *Nature:* natural affection. 162. *instance:* token. Ophelia's affection for her father has sent her sanity after him. 172. *wheel:* probably her nurse's spinning wheel, to the accompaniment of which she first heard these songs. *becomes:* befits, graces. 174. *more:* more moving.

Laer. A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines; there's rue for you; and here's some for me. We may call it herb of grace o' Sundays. O, you must wear your rue with a difference. There's a daisy. I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died. They say he made a good end—

[*Sings*] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Oph. [*Sings*] And will he not come again?
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead;
Go to thy death-bed;
He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll.
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan.
God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be wi' ye. [*Exit.*

Laer. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.
If by direct or by collateral hand

178. *document:* lesson. 180–4. Ophelia distributes her flowers appropriately. Rosemary and pansies she gives to Laertes, fennel (emblem of flattery) and columbines (cuckoldry) to the king, the daisy (faithfulness) and rue (repentance) to the queen. Some of the rue, as the emblem of sorrow, she keeps for herself. The queen must wear her rue *with a difference,* i.e., for a different reason, with a pun on *difference,* a heraldic term for the distinction in the coat of arms of different branches of a family. Violets symbolize faithfulness. 188. *passion:* suffering. 189. *favour:* charm. 196. *poll:* head. 198. *cast away:* bereaved. 202. *commune with:* share. 203. *right:* just treatment. 206. *collateral:* indirect.

They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.
Laer. Let this be so.
His means of death, his obscure burial—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
No noble rite nor formal ostentation—
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call 't in question.
King. So you shall;
And where the offense is, let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter HORATIO *and a* Servant.

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?
Serv. Sailors, sir. They say they have letters for you.
Hor. Let them come in. [*Exit Servant.*
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

First Sail. God bless you, sir.
Hor. Let Him bless thee too.
First Sail. He shall, sir, an 't please Him. There's a letter for you, sir—it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England—if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.
Hor. [*Reads*] "Horatio, When thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king; they have

207. *touch'd:* implicated. 213. *means:* manner. 214. *hatchment:* tablet showing the armorial bearings of a deceased person. 215. *ostentation:* display. 217. *call 't in question:* demand an explanation.

[vi] 13. *overlooked:* read. *means:* i.e., means of access.

letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded them. On the instant they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy, but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent, and repair thou to me with as much speed as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England; of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

"He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet."

Come, I will make you way for these your letters;
And do 't the speedier that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

Scene vii. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter King *and* Laertes.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

Laer. It well appears. But tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O, for two special reasons,
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,

16. *appointment:* equipment. 21. *thieves of mercy:* merciful thieves. 26. *bore:* caliber; hence, "importance." 32. *way:* passage.

[vii] 1. *conscience . . . seal:* reasonableness confirm fully my acquittal. 5. *Pursued:* sought. 9. *mainly:* strongly. 10. *much unsinew'd:* very weak.

But yet to me they are strong. The queen, his mother,
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself—
My virtue or my plague, be it either which—
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him,
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost,
A sister driven into desperate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that. You must not think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with danger
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more.
I loved your father, and we love ourself,
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine—

Enter a Messenger.

How now? What news?

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet.
This to your Majesty; this to the queen.

14. *conjunctive:* closely joined. 15. *sphere.* The Ptolemaic theory was that the stars were fixed in crystal spheres which revolved around the earth. 17. *count:* account, trial. 18. *general gender:* common people. 20. *spring.* Such a spring, according to William Harrison's *Description of England*, printed with Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1577), existed at King's Newnham, Warwickshire. 21. *gyves:* fetters. 22. *Too . . . wind:* having shafts too light for so strong a wind. 26. *terms:* state. 28. *on mount:* on high, conspicuously.

King. From Hamlet? Who brought them?
Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not.
They were given me by Claudio. He received them
Of him that brought them.
King. Laertes, you shall hear them.
Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*
[*Reads.*] "High and mighty, You shall know I am set naked on your kingdom. Tomorrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes, when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return.
"Hamlet."
What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?
Laer. Know you the hand?
King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. "Naked!"
And in a postscript here, he says "alone."
Can you advise me?
Laer. I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come.
It warms the very sickness in my heart
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
"Thus didest thou."
King. If it be so, Laertes—
As how should it be so? How otherwise?—
Will you be ruled by me?
Laer. Ay, my lord,
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.
King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,
As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice
And call it accident.

44. *naked:* destitute. 51. *abuse:* deception. 52. *character:* handwriting. 63. *checking at:* turning aside from (a term of falconry). 65. *device:* plan. 68. *uncharge the practice:* not suspect the trickery.

Laer. My lord, I will be ruled;
The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.
King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine. Your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one, and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.
Laer. What part is that, my lord?
King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy—
I've seen myself, and served against the French,
And they can well on horseback; but this gallant
Had witchcraft in 't. He grew unto his seat,
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As had he been incorpsed and demi-natured
With the brave beast. So far he topp'd my thought,
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
Come short of what he did.
Laer. A Norman was 't?
King. A Norman.
Laer. Upon my life, Lamond.
King. The very same.
Laer. I know him well. He is the brooch indeed
And gem of all the nation.
King. He made confession of you,

69–82. *Laer. My . . . graveness.* Omitted in F_1. 71. *organ:* instrument. *falls:* happens. 77. *siege:* rank. *part:* talent. 85. *can well:* are skillful. 88. *incorpsed and demi-natured:* of one body and half of the nature. 89. *topp'd:* surpassed. 90. *in . . . tricks:* in imagining attitudes and tricks. 96. *confession:* report.

And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defense
And for your rapier most especial,
That he cried out 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you. The scrimers of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er to play with him.
Now, out of this—
Laer. What out of this, my lord?
King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?
Laer. Why ask you this?
King. Not that I think you did not love your father,
But that I know love is begun by time,
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it,
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in his own too much. That we would do,
We should do when we would; for this "would" changes
And hath abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;

97. *masterly report:* i.e., report describing Laertes as a master of fence. 98. *art and exercise:* skillful exercise. *defense:* science of defense. 101–3. *The scrimers . . . them.* Omitted in F_1. 101. *scrimers:* fencers. 106. *sudden:* immediate. *play:* fence. 112. *time:* circumstances of the moment. 113. *passages of proof:* proved cases. 114. *qualifies:* diminishes. 115–24. Omitted in F_1. 117. *still:* always. 118. *plurisy:* excess. 119. *in . . . much:* of its own excess. 119–24. *That . . . easing.* These words Shakespeare probably intended as a comment upon Hamlet's character. 121. *abatements:* reductions. 122. *accidents:* occurrences.

And then this "should" is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer—
Hamlet comes back. What would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home.
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together,
And wager on your heads. He, being remiss,
Most generous and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils, so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do 't;
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death
That is but scratch'd withal. I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

123. *spendthrift.* Sighing was believed to thin the blood. 124. *quick o' the ulcer:* heart of the trouble. 128. *sanctuarize:* protect from punishment. 130. *Will:* if you will. 132. *put . . . shall:* instigate those who shall. 134. *in fine:* at last. 137 *peruse:* examine. 138. *shuffling:* trickery. 139. *unbated:* not blunted. *pass of practice:* (a) bout for practice, (b) treacherous thrust. 142. *unction:* ointment. *mountebank:* quack. 143. *mortal:* deadly. 144. *cataplasm:* plaster. 145–6. *simples . . . moon:* herbs the medicinal value of which was believed greater if they were gathered by moonlight. 148. *gall:* wound.

King. Let's further think of this;
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit us to our shape. If this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'Twere better not assay'd; therefore this project
Should have a back or second, that might hold,
If this should blast in proof. Soft! Let me see.
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings—
I ha' 't!
When in your motion you are hot and dry—
As make your bouts more violent to that end—
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him
A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there.

Enter Queen, *weeping.*

How now, sweet queen?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow. Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd? O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,

151. *shape:* plan. 152. *our drift . . . performance:* our purpose be revealed by our bungling. 155. *blast in proof:* burst in testing (like a cannon). 156. *cunnings:* skill. 158. *motion:* exertion. 161. *chalice:* cup. *nonce:* occasion. 162. *stuck:* thrust. 168. *hoar:* gray-white (on the underside). 170. *crow-flowers:* buttercups. *long purples:* early purple orchis. 171. *liberal:* free of speech. 173. *coronet:* garlanded. 174. *envious sliver:* spiteful branch.

And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element. But long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas, then, is she drown'd?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears. But yet
It is our trick. Nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will; when these are gone,
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord;
I have a speech of fire that fain would blaze,
But that this folly douts it. [*Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude.
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I this will give it start again;
Therefore let's follow. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I. *A churchyard. An open grave.*

Enter two Clowns, *with spades. They prepare to dig.*

First. Clo. Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

Sec. Clo. I tell thee she is, and therefore make her grave straight. The crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

179. *one incapable of:* one insensible to. 180. *indued:* endowed. 188. *trick:* way, custom. 189–90. *when . . . out:* when these tears are shed, my womanly weakness will be gone. 192. *folly:* i.e., his tears. *douts:* extinguishes.

[V. i] S. D. *Clowns:* rustics. 4. *straight:* (a) at once, (b) not crooked. *crowner:* coroner.

First Clo. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defense?

Sec. Clo. Why, 'tis found so.

First Clo. It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act, and an act hath three branches; it is to act, to do, and to perform; argal, she drowned herself wittingly. 13

Sec. Clo. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver—

First Clo. Give me leave. Here lies the water—good. Here stands the man—good. If the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes—mark you that? But if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself; argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life. 22

Sec. Clo. But is this law?

First Clo. Ay, marry, is 't; crowner's quest law.

Sec. Clo. Will you ha' the truth on 't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

First Clo. Why, there thou say'st; and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession. 35

[*He goes down into the open grave.*

Sec. Clo. Was he a gentleman?

First Clo. A' was the first that ever bore arms.

Sec. Clo. Why, he had none.

First Clo. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand

9. *se offendendo*: blunder for *se defendendo*, in self-defense. The reasoning in this speech and the next is perhaps a parody of the arguments used in the inquest following the suicide of Sir James Hales (Furness, *Variorum*, I, 376). 11. *wittingly:* deliberately. 13. *argal:* corruption of *ergo*, therefore. 15. *delver:* digger. 24. *quest:* inquest. 29. *there thou say'st:* you are right. 30. *countenance:* privilege. 32. *even Christian:* fellow-Christian. 35. *hold up:* continue. 37. *bore arms:* (a) bore a coat of arms, (b) carried weapons, (c) had arms.

the Scripture? The Scripture says Adam digged. Could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee. If thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself— 44

Sec. Clo. Go to.

First. Clo. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

Sec. Clo. The gallows-maker, for that frame outlives a thousand tenants. 50

First Clo. I like thy wit well, in good faith. The gallows does well; but how does it well? It does well to those that do ill. Now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To 't again, come.

Sec. Clo. "Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?"

First Clo. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

Sec. Clo. Marry, now I can tell. 60

First Clo. To 't.

Sec. Clo. Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO, *at a distance.*

First Clo. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say "a grave-maker"; the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor. [*Exit Second Clown.*

[*He digs and sings.*]

In youth, when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet, 70
To contract—O—the time for—ah—my behove,
O, methought there was nothing meet.

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

44. *confess thyself.* There is a proverb, "Confess thyself, and be hanged." 59. *unyoke:* unharness (your wits). 62. *Mass:* by the Mass. 68. *Yaughan:* perhaps a well-known tavern keeper. *stoup:* flagon. 69. The clown's song is an inaccurate rendering of part of a poem in *Tottel's Miscellany.* The poem and the music are in the Furness *Variorum,* I, 380 ff. 71. *behove:* advantage.

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so. The hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

First Clo. [*Sings*] But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intil the land,
As if I had never been such.
[*Throws up a skull.*

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once. How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say, "Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?" This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so; and now my Lady Worm's, chapless and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see 't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? Mine ache to think on 't.

First Clo. [*Sings*] A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade
For and a shrouding sheet;
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.
[*Throws up another skull.*

Ham. There's another. Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quillets, his cases, his

75–6. *a property of easiness:* a characteristic of indifference. 81. *intil:* into. 84. *jowls:* dashes. 85. *Cain's jaw-bone.* According to a legend, Cain killed Abel with the jawbone of an ass. 86. *politician:* schemer. 87. *o'er-reaches:* gets the better of. 97. *chapless:* lacking the lower jaw. *mazzard:* head. 99. *trick:* skill, knack. 100. *loggats:* game in which sticks were tossed at a mark. 103. *For and:* and also. 107. *quiddities:* subleties. 108. *quillets:* verbal niceties.

tenures, and his tricks? Why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in 's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries. Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? Will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box, and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha? 121

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sirrah?

First Clo. Mine, sir.

[*Sings*] O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet. 130

Ham. I think it be thine indeed, for thou liest in 't.

First Clo. You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it is not yours. For my part, I do not lie in 't, and yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't and say it is thine. 'Tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

First Clo. 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you. 140

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

First Clo. For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

First Clo. For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in 't?

First Clo. One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead. 147

110. *sconce:* head. 113–14. *statutes . . . recoveries:* technical terms in the transfer of land. 115. *fine of his fines:* end of his fines. 120. *conveyances:* deeds. 121. *this box:* the grave. *inheritor:* owner. 126. *assurance:* (a) safety, (b) conveyance of land. *in that:* i.e., in legal parchments. 137. *quick:* living.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

First Clo. Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras. 157

Ham. How long is that since?

First Clo. Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that. It was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England. 162

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

First Clo. Why, because he was mad. He shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

First Clo. 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he. 170

Ham. How came he mad?

First Clo. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How "strangely"?

First Clo. Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

First Clo. Why, here in Denmark. I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot? 179

First Clo. I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die—as we have many pocky corses nowadays that will scarce hold the

148. *absolute:* positive, precise. 149. *by the card:* with precision, i.e., by the card on which the thirty-two points of the mariner's compass are marked. *equivocation:* ambiguity. This probably alludes to the Jesuit doctrine of equivocation, much discussed in 1600 and 1601. See also *Macbeth*, II, iii, 10–14, for an unquestioned allusion following the Gunpowder Plot trial in 1606. 150. *three years.* This is probably an allusion to the Poor Law passed in 1597 and re-enacted in 1601 with some changes. 151. *picked:* fastidious, with a probable allusion to the pointed or peaked shoes then in fashion. 153. *galls his kibe:* chafes the chilblain on his heel, i.e., is annoyingly close to him. 181. *pocky:* rotten.

laying in—he will last you some eight year or nine year. A tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

First Clo. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade that he will keep out water a great while, and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

First Clo. A whoreson mad fellow's it was. Whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

First Clo. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! A' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Ham. This?

First Clo. E'en that.

Ham. Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He hath borne me on his back a thousand times. And now how abhorred in my imagination it is! My gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now, your gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? Quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come. Make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? Pah! [*Puts down the skull.*

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why

188. *sore:* grievous. 189. *whoreson:* a coarse intensive. 212. *chap-fallen:* (a) dejected, (b) with lower jaw fallen away. 214. *favour:* appearance.

may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it, as thus: Alexander died; Alexander was buried; Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam whereto he was converted might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.
O, that that earth which kept the world in awe
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

But soft! But soft! Aside! Here comes the king,

Enter Priests, *&c. in procession;* King, Queen, Laertes, Mourners, *with a coffin.*

The queen, the courtiers. Who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo it own life. 'Twas of some estate.
Couch we awhile, and mark. [*Retiring with Horatio.*

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,
A very noble youth. Mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

First Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarged
As we have warranty. Her death was doubtful,
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodged
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her.
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,

227. *curiously:* minutely. 230. *modesty:* moderation, reasonableness. 239. *flaw:* gust of wind. 242. *maimed:* incomplete. 244. *Fordo it:* destroy its. *estate:* rank. 245. *Couch:* hide. 249. *enlarged:* extended. 251. *great . . . order:* the royal command prevails over the rule of the church. 253. *for:* instead of. 255. *crants:* garlands.

Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.
Laer. Must there no more be done?
First Priest. No more be done.
We should profane the service of the dead
To sing a requiem and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.
Laer. Lay her i' the earth,
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.
Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!
Queen. Sweets to the sweet; farewell! [*Scattering flowers.*
I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife.
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.
Laer. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.
[*Leaps into the grave.*
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made
To o'ertop old Pelion or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.
Ham. [*Advancing*] What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis, whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane! [*Leaps into the grave.*
Laer. The Devil take thy soul! [*Grappling with him.*

256. *strewments:* flowers strewn on a grave. 261. *peace-parted:* departed in peace. 265. *howling:* i.e., in hell. 271. *ingenious sense:* keen mind. 274. *quick:* living. 276. *Pelion.* Pelion, Olympus, and Ossa (306) are mountains in Thessaly.

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat,
For, though I am not splenitive and rash,
Yet have I something in me dangerous,
Which let thy wiseness fear. Hold off thy hand.
King. Pluck them asunder.
Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!
All. Gentlemen—
Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.
[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*
Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.
Queen. O my son, what theme?
Ham. I loved Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?
King. O, he is mad, Laertes.
Queen. For love of God, forbear him.
Ham. 'Swounds, show me what thou 'lt do.
Woo 't weep? Woo 't fight? Woo 't fast? Woo 't tear thyself?
Woo 't drink up eisel? Eat a crocodile?
I'll do 't. Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I;
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou 'lt mouth,
I'll rant as well as thou.
Queen. This is mere madness,
And thus awhile the fit will work on him.
Anon, as patient as the female dove,

284. *splenitive:* impetuous, splenetic. 290. *wag:* move (without ludicrous associations). 296. *forbear him:* leave him alone. 297. *'Swounds:* by God's wounds. 298. *Woo 't:* wilt thou. 299. *eisel:* vinegar. 305. *burning zone:* path of the sun. 306. *an thou 'lt mouth:* if thou wilt declaim. 307. *mere:* sheer, perfect.

When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
His silence will sit drooping.
Ham. Hear you, sir.
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I loved you ever. But it is no matter.
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*
King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.
[*Exit Horatio.*
[*To Laertes.*] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
We'll put the matter to the present push.
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
This grave shall have a living monument.
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A hall in the castle.*

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this, sir; now shall you see the other.
You do remember all the circumstance?
Hor. Remember it, my lord!
Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep. Methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly—
And praised be rashness for it; let us know
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well
When our deep plots do pall; and that should teach us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will—
Hor. That is most certain.

310. *When . . . disclosed:* when her two young birds, covered with golden down, are hatched. 317. *in:* i.e., by recalling. 318. *present push:* immediate test, with a pun on the sense of "rapier-thrust." 320. *living:* permanent. For Laertes' benefit, the king alludes to their plot to kill Hamlet.

[ii] 6. *mutines:* mutineers. *bilboes:* fetters. *Rashly:* quickly, impulsively. It modifies *groped* (14). 9. *pall:* fail.

Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Groped I to find out them; had my desire;
Finger'd their packet; and in fine withdrew
To mine own room again; making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio—
O royal knavery!—an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons
Importing Denmark's health and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.
Hor. Is 't possible?
Ham. Here's the commission; read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?
Hor. I beseech you.
Ham. Being thus be-netted round with villainies—
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play—I sat me down,
Devised a new commission, wrote it fair.
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?
Hor. Ay, good my lord.

13. *scarf'd:* wrapped around the shoulders. 14. *them:* i.e., Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. 15. *Finger'd:* stole. *in fine:* finally. 20. *Larded:* enriched, greased. 21. *Importing:* concerning. 22. *such . . . life:* such bugbears and imaginary terrors if I were allowed to live, or, better, such exaggeration of my actual conduct. 23. *supervise:* reading. *bated:* deducted. 29. *be-netted:* ensnared. 31. *They:* i.e., my brains. 32. *fair:* i.e., in the formal Italian calligraphy used in official documents. To write in this hand was, Hamlet intimates, the mark of the clerk and not of the gentleman. (*Shakespeare's England,* I, 287.) 33. *statists:* public officials. 36. *yeoman's:* i.e., faithful.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them like the palm might flourish,
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
And many such-like "as's" of great charge,
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.

Hor. How was this seal'd?

Ham. Why, even in that was Heaven ordinant.
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other,
Subscribed it, gave 't the impression, placed it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to 't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience. Their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow.
'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, thinks 't thee, stand me now upon—
He that hath kill'd my king and whored my mother,

41. *wheaten garland:* emblem of peace. 42. *comma:* connective. 43. *"as's":* i.e., the preceding conjunctions are like asses bearing heavy burdens (*great charge*). 47. *shriving-time:* time for absolution. 48. *ordinant:* guiding. 50. *model:* exact likeness. 52. *Subscribed:* signed. 53. *changeling:* substitute. 54. *sequent:* subsequent. 58. *defeat:* destruction. 59. *insinuation:* selfish interference. 61. *pass:* thrust. *fell incensed points:* fiercely angered points (of rapiers). 62. *opposites:* opponents. 63. *Does . . . upon:* does it not seem to thee imperative for me? Q_2 reads *think thee;* F_1, *thinks thee.*

Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage—is 't not perfect conscience
To quit him with this arm? And is 't not to be damn'd
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short; the interim is mine;
And a man's life's no more than to say, "One."
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his. I'll court his favours.
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace! Who comes here?

Enter Osric.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir. [*Aside to Horatio.*] Dost know this water-fly?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious, for 'tis a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile; let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess. 'Tis a chough, but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his Majesty.

65. ***election . . . hopes:*** choice of a king and my hopes of being chosen. See J. D. Wilson, *Hamlet*, liii-lvi. 66. ***angle:*** fishing hook. ***proper:*** own, very. 67. ***cozenage:*** trickery. 68. ***quit:*** requite. 69–70. ***To let . . . evil:*** to let this ulcer (or this destructive worm) do further evil. 72. ***issue:*** outcome. 79. ***bravery:*** ostentatious display. 80. S. D. Q_1 reads *Enter a Braggart Gentleman.* 84. ***water-fly:*** busy trifler. 88–9. ***let . . . mess:*** i.e., if an ass owns enough cattle, his feeding rack will stand at the king's table. 89. ***chough:*** chattering jackdaw.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed. 100

Ham. But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry—as 'twere—I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his Majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter—

Ham. I beseech you, remember—

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.*

Osr. Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes, believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing; indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what parts a gentleman would see. 116

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his

95. *bonnet.* An Elizabethan wore his hat indoors except in the presence of a superior. 100. *indifferent:* fairly. 102. *complexion:* constitution. 108. *remember:* i.e., remember your courtesy, and put on your hat as I requested. 110–41. *Sir . . . sir?* Omitted in F_1. 111. *absolute:* perfect. 112. *differences:* peculiarities. *soft:* gentle. 113. *great showing:* distinguished appearance. *feelingly:* appropriately. This is the Q_4 reading. Some copies of Q_2 have *sellingly*, others *fellingly*. But *to speak sellingly*, i.e., as a seller speaks to a buyer, may be what Shakespeare wrote. Cf. *L.L.L.*, IV, iii, 240. 114. *card:* mariner's chart. *gentry:* courtesy. 115. *continent:* (a) summary, (b) geographical continent. 116. *parts:* (a) talents, (b) foreign parts. Q_2 reads *part.* 117 ff. In his parody of Osric's affected language, Hamlet follows him even in mixing metaphors of the shop and the ship. (Wilson, *Hamlet*, p. 245.) 117. *definement:* definition. *perdition:* loss. 119. *dizzy . . . memory:* puzzle mental arithmetic. 120. *and yet . . . sail:* and yet only move so unsteadily (as a ship) as to be left behind too, in comparison with his quick sail (with a pun on "sale").

quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? Why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is 't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do 't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. [*Aside to Hamlet*] His purse is empty already. All's golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know you are not ignorant—

Ham. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir?

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but to know a man well were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but, in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons; but well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses, against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six

122. *article:* importance (with a pun on "article," item in an inventory). *infusion:* essence. 123. *dearth:* costliness. 124. *his semblable:* his like. 125. *trace:* (a) depict, (b) follow (like a shadow). *umbrage:* (a) shadow, (b) image reflected in the mirror. 128. *concernancy:* purpose. 131. *another tongue:* i.e., plain language. 133. *imports:* means. *nomination:* naming. 141. *approve:* commend. 144–50. *Ham. I . . . unfellowed.* Omitted in F_1. 145. *compare:* vie. 149. *imputation:* reputation. *meed:* worth. 150. *unfellowed:* unequalled. 156. *imponed:* impawned, staked.

French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so. Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit. 160

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. [*Aside to Hamlet*] I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides; I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this "imponed," as you call it? 171

Osr. The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid on twelve for nine; and that would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How if I answer, "No"?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial. 179

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall. If it please his Majesty, 'tis the breathing time of day with me. Let the foils be brought. The gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship. 189

Ham. Yours, yours. [*Exit Osric.*] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for 's turn.

157. *assigns:* appurtenances. 159. *dear to fancy:* unusual in design. *responsive to:* well matched with. 160. *delicate:* ingenious. *liberal conceit:* elaborate design. 162–3. *Hor. I . . . done.* Omitted in F_1. 163. *margent:* i.e., explanatory notes in the margin of a book. 165. *german:* germane, appropriate. 172. *laid:* wagered. 176. *answer:* (a) acceptance of the challenge, (b) reply. 181. *breathing time:* time for exercise.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. He did comply with his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the same breed that I know the drossy age dotes on—only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out. 202

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord, his Majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him that you attend him in the hall. He sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure. If his fitness speaks, mine is ready, now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now. 211

Lord. The king and queen and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord. 219

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice. I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart. But it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord—

193. ***lapwing:*** peewit, with allusion to "its supposed habit of running about when newly hatched with its head in the shell" (Onions). 195. ***comply:*** observe the formalities of courtesy. 197. ***drossy:*** frivolous. 198. ***tune:*** mood. 199. ***habit of encounter:*** dress of speech. ***yesty collection:*** frothy assortment (of phrases). 201. ***fond and winnowed:*** foolish and sensible. 201–2. ***blow . . . out:*** put these (bubbles) to any test, and they disappear. 202–18. ***Enter a Lord . . . Exit Lord.*** Omitted in F_1. 206. ***hold:*** continue. 214. ***In happy time:*** at an appropriate moment. 216. ***entertainment:*** treatment.

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike anything, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit; we defy augury. There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come; the readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is 't to leave betimes? Let be.

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, OSRIC, Lords, *and* Attendants *with foils, a table, and flagons of wine.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.
[*The King puts Laertes' hand into Hamlet's.*

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir. I've done you wrong;
But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
With sore distraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour, and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was 't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet!
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
Who does it, then? His madness. If 't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir, in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,

226. *gain-giving:* misgiving. 228. *forestall their repair:* prevent their coming. 231. *sparrow.* See Matthew 10:29. 234–5. J. D. Wilson, following Q_2, reads: "Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows what is 't to leave betimes, let be." 235. *betimes:* at the proper moment. 239. *presence:* assembly. 242. *nature:* natural affection. *exception:* disapproval.

That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house
And hurt my brother.
Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge; but in my terms of honour
I stand aloof, and will no reconcilement,
Till by some elder masters of known honour
I have a voice and precedent of peace
To keep my name ungored. But till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.
Ham. I embrace it freely,
And will this brother's wager frankly play.
Give us the foils. Come on.
Laer. Come, one for me.
Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.
Laer. You mock me, sir.
Ham. No, by this hand.
King. Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?
Ham. Very well, my lord.
Your Grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.
King. I do not fear it; I have seen you both;
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.
Laer. This is too heavy; let me see another.
Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a length?
[*They prepare to play.*
Osr. Ay, my good lord.
King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,

260. *voice:* authoritative opinion. 261. *ungored:* uninjured. 264. *frankly:* freely. 266. *foil:* contrasting background. 268. *Stick fiery off:* stand out. 274. *better'd:* improved. 276. *likes:* pleases. 280. *quit . . . exchange:* repay him in the third encounter.

Let all the battlements their ordnance fire.
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath,
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups,
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
"Now the king drinks to Hamlet." Come, begin;
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*

Ham. One!

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment?

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well; again.

King. Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here's to thy health. Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*

Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.
Come. [*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat and scant of breath.
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin; rub thy brows.
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good madam!

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me. [*Drinks.*

King. [*Aside*] It is the poison'd cup; it is too late.

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. [*To the King*] My lord, I'll hit him now.

283. ***union:*** pearl. 286. ***kettle:*** kettledrum. 291. ***Judgment.*** Hamlet asks the official to decide. 298. ***fat:*** sweaty (?). 299. ***napkin:*** handkerchief. 300. ***carouses:*** drinks a toast.

King. I do not think 't.
Laer. [*Aside*] And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.
Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes; you but dally;
I pray you, pass with your best violence.
I am afeard you make a wanton of me.
Laer. Say you so? Come on. [*They play.*
Osr. Nothing, neither way.
Laer. Have at you now!
[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers.*
King. Part them; they are incensed.
Ham. Nay, come, again.
[*Hamlet wounds Laertes. The Queen falls.*
Osr. Look to the queen there! Ho!
Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord?
Osr. How is 't, Laertes?
Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.
Ham. How does the queen?
King. She swounds to see them bleed.
Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink—O my dear Hamlet—
The drink, the drink! I am poison'd. [*Dies.*
Ham. O villainy! Ho! Let the door be lock'd.
Treachery! Seek it out! [*Laertes falls.*
Laer. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain.
No medicine in the world can do thee good;
In thee there is not half an hour of life.
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenom'd. The foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me. Lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother's poison'd.
I can no more—the king, the king's to blame.
Ham. The point envenom'd too?
Then, venom, to thy work. [*Stabs the King.*

310. *you . . . me:* treat me like a child. 313. S. D. Q_1 reads *They catch one anothers's rapiers and both are wounded.* 317. *woodcock:* a bird proverbially stupid. *springe:* snare for birds. 319. *swounds:* swoons. 328. *Unbated:* unblunted. *practice:* trickery.

All. Treason! Treason!
King. O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.
Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,
[*Forces him to drink.*
Drink off this potion! Is thy union here?
Follow my mother! [*King dies.*
Laer. He is justly served;
It is a poison temper'd by himself.
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet.
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*
Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee. [*Falls.*
I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time—as this fell sergeant, Death,
Is strict in his arrest—O, I could tell you—
But let it be. Horatio, I am dead;
Thou livest. Report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.
Hor. Never believe it.
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane;
Here's yet some liquor left.
Ham. [*Rises*] As thou 'rt a man,
Give me the cup. Let go! By heaven, I'll have 't!
[*He dashes the cup to the ground and falls back.*
O God, Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
To tell my story.
[*March afar off, and shot within.*
What warlike noise is this?

335. *but hurt:* only wounded. 339. *temper'd:* compounded. 345. *chance:* mishap. 346. *mutes:* actors without speaking parts. 347. *sergeant:* sheriff's officer. 352. *Roman.* The Roman often followed his master in death. 358. *felicity:* i.e., the felicity of death.

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.
Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit.
I cannot live to hear the news from England,
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice.
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited. The rest is silence. [*Dies.*
Hor. Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

Enter Fortinbras, *the* English Ambassadors, *and others.*

Fort. Where is this sight?
Hor. What is it ye would see?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.
Fort. This quarry cries on havoc. O proud Death,
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?
First Amb. The sight is dismal,
And our affairs from England come too late.
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.
Where should we have our thanks?
Hor. Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you.
He never gave commandment for their death.

364. *o'er-crows:* triumphs over (a term from cockfighting). 367. *voice:* nomination. 368. *occurrents . . . less:* occurrences great and small. 369. *solicited:* urged, caused. 371. *flights:* companies. 375. *This . . . havoc:* this heap of dead proclaims an indiscriminate slaughter. The metaphor is from hunting. 376. *feast.* Death, the huntsman, will feast on the *quarry. toward:* at hand, ready.

But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arrived, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
How these things came about. So shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning and forced cause,
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads—all this can I
Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune.
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more.
But let this same be presently perform'd
Even while men's minds are wild, lest more mischance,
On plots and errors, happen.

Fort. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage,
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally; and, for his passage,
The soldiers' music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him.
Take up the bodies. Such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

[*A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies, after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.*

386. *jump:* exactly. *question:* subject. 393. *casual:* accidental. 400. *rights of memory:* remembered rights. Fortinbras alludes to his claim to the kingdom, to press which he had originally recruited his army. (Cf. II, ii, 60 ff.) 401. *vantage:* opportunity. 406. *On:* as a result of. 407. *stage:* platform. 413. *Becomes:* suits. *shows:* appears.

The Winter's Tale

Introduction

Dramatic Type

Tragicomedy, the type of drama of which *The Winter's Tale*, along with *Cymbeline*, *Pericles*, and *The Tempest*, is an example, permits, perhaps, of no more rigid a definition than that given by John Fletcher, its foremost exponent in Shakespeare's day. "A tragicomedy," he wrote in the address "To the Reader" of *The Faithful Shepherdess* (1608–9),

is not so-called in respect of mirth or killing, but in respect it wants deaths, which is enough to make it no tragedy, yet brings some near it, which is enough to make it no comedy, which must be a representation of familiar people, with such kind of trouble as no life be questioned [i.e., endangered] so that a god is as lawful in this as in a tragedy, and mean people as in a comedy.

In other words, a tragicomedy is a romantic drama involving serious emotions, but ending happily, and presenting a seemingly tragic situation which is satisfactorily resolved before it proceeds logically to Nemesis:

> The end men looked for cometh not,
> And a path there is where no man thought.

Shakespeare's conception of the type differed little except in degree from his formula for comedy. Here are the same romantic themes, the same course of true love that never did run smooth, the same distressful instabilities at length satisfactorily resolved, and the same mercy—human or divine—tempering justice. The difference lies in the mood in which the plays are conceived. Almost all of Shakespeare's comedies are touched with sorrow, but even in the most distressing complications the mood is such that we need never doubt that we are safely

in a world where such things smooth themselves out in the end. In the tragicomedies, on the other hand, the serious situations are treated in a spirit of tenderness and forgiveness, or conceived in the mood of tragedy and only at the last saved from the conclusion required by a severe logic. It is as if the dramatist thought with his creature, Prospero,

> Though with their high wrongs I am struck to the quick,
> Yet with my noble reason 'gainst my fury
> Do I take part. The rarer action is
> In virtue than in vengeance.

In the world of romance sincere repentance rights most wrongs; the sins of the fathers are atoned for in the loves of their grown children; and "all losses are restored and sorrows end." Hence, Shakespeare's tragicomedies are sometimes called "romances" or "reconciliation dramas."

The Winter's Tale, as a title for this type of play, has no other significance, therefore, than that the story is "an old wives' tale." "A sad tale's best for winter," remarks Mamillius, and such a story should be compact of marvels—if not of sprites and goblins, at least of unhappy losses, riddling oracles, royal infants exposed on desert coasts and nurtured by simple cottage-folk, pastoral love-making, and at length miraculous recognitions and restorations—in short, a romantic tale to keep children from play and old men from the fireside. And it is as such an importation from the never-never land of romance that *The Winter's Tale* is to be judged.

Source

For the plot of *The Winter's Tale* Shakespeare went directly to Robert Greene's novel *Pandosto, the Triumph of Time* (1588), "wherein," says the title page, "is discovered by a pleasant history, that although by the means of sinister fortune, Truth may be concealed yet by Time in spite of fortune it is most manifestly revealed." This pastoral romance, deriving like others

of its type from folklore, legend, and the Greek romances, was written in the euphuistic style of Lyly and became extraordinarily popular. No less than fourteen editions of the book were printed before it ended its life as a chapbook in the eighteenth century, and it was translated into Dutch and French, and dramatized at least twice in the latter language.

In the general framework of the story, except its conclusion, in the carefully maintained classical atmosphere, and even in the unconventional geography which makes Delphi an island and gives Bohemia a seacoast, Shakespeare follows Greene rather closely. Indeed, no better example could be chosen to illustrate how similar on the Elizabethan platform stage the general narrative technique of dramatist and novelist could be. But the story and the method of telling it are all that Greene and Shakespeare have in common, for there is little of Greene's artificial language and of the long pastoral complaints and descriptions with which his book is inflated.

Modification of the Material

In addition to ennobling the characters and through their dialogue making them timeless human creatures, Shakespeare makes numerous changes in Greene's plot. For some reason, not immediately apparent, he makes Bohemia and Sicilia change places, and he renames the characters, chiefly after Sidney's *Arcadia* and *Amadis of Gaul*. But his more significant modifications reveal both his art as a dramatist and the mood in which he reconceives the story.

(1) The opening paragraph of Greene's novel makes clear his ethical purposes:

Among all the passions wherewith human minds are perplexed, there is none that so galleth with restless despite as the infectious sore of jealousy; for all other griefs are either to be appeased with sensible persuasions, to be cured with wholesome counsel, to be relieved in want, or by tract of time to be worn out,

jealousy only excepted which is so sauced with suspicious doubts and pinching mistrust, that whoso seeks by friendly counsel to rase out this hellish passion, it forthwith suspecteth that he giveth this advice to cover his own guiltiness. Yea, whoso is pained with this restless torment doubteth all, distrusteth himself, is always frozen with fear and fired with suspicion, having that wherein consisteth all his joy to be the breeder of his misery. Yea, it is such a heavy enemy to that holy estate of matrimony, sowing between the married couples such deadly seeds of secret hatred, as, love being once rased out by spiteful distrust, there oft ensueth bloody revenge, as this ensuing history manifestly proveth: wherein Pandosto, furiously incensed by causeless jealousy, procured the death of his most loving and loyal wife and his own endless sorrow and misery.

Shakespeare retains the story without emphasizing the moral.

(2) For dramatic reasons, instead of presenting the slow development of jealousy in Leontes, as Greene had been able to do in his novel, Shakespeare concentrates the whole growth of the obsession into a single scene; furnishes it an occasion in Hermione's persuasion of Polixenes to extend his visit; has Leontes confidently send to the oracle of Apollo, not at the imploring of his queen, but to confirm his own beliefs; and then shows him unshaken until the truth of the oracle is proved by the death of his son and the apparent death of his wife.

(3) Instead of permitting Mamillius to die suddenly without apparent cause, as Greene's story permits Garinter, Shakespeare supplies a reason for the death of the little prince and prepares for it by allusions to his pining away because of the unmerited disgrace of his mother.

(4) Moreover, instead of permitting Hermione actually to die brokenhearted at the death of her son, Shakespeare has her fall merely into a deathlike swoon and entrusts Paulina with keeping her alive in anticipation of the day when the oracle should be fulfilled.

(5) Shakespeare also manages differently from Greene the details of the disposition of Perdita. To this end he invents two characters not found in *Pandosto*, Antigonus and Paulina, who serve as dramatic parallels and foils to Camillo and to one another. As a result, through the righteous but tactless speech of the lady, he motivates the casting off of the little princess, and in her honest, but weakly obedient, husband accomplishes the fact more plausibly than by setting the babe adrift at sea in a cockle boat, as Greene had done to Fawnia.

(6) To create foils for his "queen of curds and cream," Shakespeare transforms Mopsa, the scolding wife of the old shepherd in Greene's novel, into a realistic shepherdess and gives her a companion to quarrel with in Dorcas. In addition, he creates a stupid son for the shepherd, whom he transforms from a mild sort of rogue into an honest country fellow, blundering, but well-meaning.

(7) Shakespeare's elopement of the young lovers is also more dramatic than Greene's. Instead of having their love affair discovered by the old shepherd, who fears for his foster-daughter's honor, Shakespeare brings the king and Camillo in disguise to the Arcadian sheep-shearing, where against their wills they pay tribute to the beauty of the little shepherdess. Then, when disclosure makes elopement necessary, Florizel receives the assistance of the homesick Camillo (whose only duplicity thus brings about the recovery of the lost princess), as well as that of the roguish servant, now thoroughly Elizabethanized (probably at the suggestion of Greene's coney-catching pamphlets) into the lovable Autolycus, "counterfeit crank," petty chapman, ballad-monger, and "snapper-up of unconsidered trifles."

(8) The most radical modifications, however, occur in the fifth act, and illustrate more thoroughly than anything else the dramatist's mood of reconciliation referred to above. Greene's story ends tragically, and Shakespeare was obliged therefore considerably to soften one or two episodes. Florizel does not

disguise, but reveals himself openly as the son of Polixenes and instead of being imprisoned is received with honor. Leontes, though still a man of "young and fresh affections," merely sees in Perdita a reminder of his lost Hermione, instead of falling ardently in love with her. In Greene, even when the truth is known, Pandosto is unable to realize the new relation in which he must stand to Fawnia, and at her marriage takes his own life in remorse. Finally, to present all of the reunions possible at the close, Shakespeare brings Polixenes, Camillo, and the old shepherd to Sicilia, and, to the reunion of father and daughter, adds that of friend and friend, king and counsellor, and finally husband and wife. The episode of the statue coming to life, one of the few surprise scenes in Shakespeare, is entirely his own invention.

Perhaps no other play illustrates for the modern reader quite so well Coleridge's observation that "independence of the dramatic interest on the plot" was an important characteristic of Shakespeare's art. "The interest in the plot is always in fact on account of the characters, not *vice versa*, as in almost all other writers; the plot is a mere canvas and no more." The plot elements of *The Winter's Tale* were trite and threadbare, even in Shakespeare's own time; they are of importance to us because they provided Shakespeare with familiar problems on which to test his characters. The warped, tragic mind of Leontes, the superb dignity of his queen, the outspoken honesty of Paulina, the princely charm of Florizel and Perdita, the irresponsible roguery of Autolycus—these, rather than the conventional, unrealistic story, are Shakespeare's imperishable contributions to this play.

Date and Text

The date usually assigned to *The Winter's Tale* is 1610–11, though no very positive evidence can be adduced in support of it. But the similarities of the theme to contemporary dramatic fare and of the style and versification to late plays of more

positive date support the conclusion. Only one text of *The Winter's Tale* exists, that of the Folio of 1623, where it is placed last among the comedies. The Folio, therefore, is the basis of all modern texts. In spite of the involved and intricate style required dramatically by many of the scenes, and in spite of doubt as to the legitimate origin of that text—"the allowed book was missing," in August of 1623—the Folio text is unusually free from cruxes.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

LEONTES, King of Sicilia.
HERMIONE, his queen.
POLIXENES, King of Bohemia.
CAMILLO, trusted counsellor of Leontes, and later of Polixenes.
ANTIGONUS, a Sicilian nobleman.
PAULINA, his wife, and faithful attendant on Hermione.
MAMILLIUS, young son of Leontes and Hermione.
CLEOMENES, DION } Sicilian lords, messengers to the oracle at Delphi.
EMILIA, a lady attending Hermione.
ARCHIDAMUS, a Bohemian lord.
A GAOLER of the Prison.
TIME, as Chorus.
FLORIZEL, Prince of Bohemia, son of Polixenes.
PERDITA, lost Sicilian princess reared as a shepherdess.
OLD SHEPHERD, foster-father of Perdita.
A CLOWN, his son.
MOPSA, DORCAS } shepherdesses.
AUTOLYCUS, a carefree rogue.
Lords, Ladies, Attendants, Guards, Officers of a Court of Justice, a Mariner, Satyrs for a Dance, Shepherds, Shepherdesses.

Scene of the Action: Sicilia and Bohemia.

The Winter's Tale

ACT I

SCENE I. *Sicilia. An antechamber in the royal palace.*

Enter CAMILLO *and* ARCHIDAMUS, *in conversation.*

Arch. 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— 10

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 insufficience, 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. 22

Cam. Sicilia cannot show himself over-kind to Bohemia. They were trained together in their childhoods; and there rooted betwixt them then such an affection, which cannot choose but branch now. Since their more mature dignities and royal necessities made separation of their society, their encounters, though not personal, have been royally attorneyed with interchange of gifts, letters, loving embassies, that they have seemed to be together, though absent; shook hands, as over a vast; and

[I. i] 7. *Bohemia:* i.e., the King of Bohemia. 21. *honesty:* honor. 30. *attorneyed:* performed by proxy. 33. *vast:* vast space.

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 physics the subject, makes old hearts fresh. They that went on crutches ere he was born desire yet their life to see him a man.

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. *A room of state in the palace.*

Enter Leontes, Hermione, Mamillius, Polixenes, Camillo, *and* Attendants.

Pol. Nine changes of the watery star hath 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 moe
That go before it.

Leon. Stay your thanks a while,
And pay them when you part.

Pol. Sir, that's tomorrow.
I am question'd by my fears of what may chance
Or breed upon our absence; that may blow

37. *it:* the reference is *loves* in line 35. 38. *unspeakable:* indescribable. 43. *physics:* keeps in health; i.e., does one good.

[ii] 11. *question'd:* worried. 12. *that:* O, that there.

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, tomorrow.
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 I'll adventure
The borrow of a week. [*To Polixenes.*] When at Bohemia

13. ***sneaping:*** nipping. 19. ***I'll:*** I'll have. ***beseech:*** I beseech. 27. ***Tongue-tied:*** silent. 33. ***beat:*** driven. ***ward:*** guard, i.e., argument. The figure is suggested by ***charge,*** line 30. 37. ***distaffs:*** i.e., women's weapons.

You take my lord, I'll give him my commission
To let him there a month behind the gest
Prefix'd for 's parting; yet, good deed, Leontes,
I love thee not a jar o' the clock behind
What lady-she her lord. You'll stay?

[*Leontes, left out of the following conversation, withdraws, observing Hermione and Polixenes, who are completely absorbed in what they are saying.*]

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" 's
As potent as a lord's. Will you go yet?
Force me to keep you as a prisoner,
Not like a guest, so you shall pay your fees
When you depart, and save your thanks? How say you?
My prisoner? Or my guest? By your dread "verily"
One of them you shall be.

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

41. *gest:* time allotted for his stay. 42. *good deed:* indeed. 43. *jar:* tick. 44. *lady-she: she* is used here as a noun, and *lady* as an adjective. 48. *unsphere the stars:* throw the stars out of their courses. In the Ptolemaic system the stars were thought of as fixed in hollow invisible spheres which revolved one inside the other and by their varying velocities made the music of the spheres. 53. *fees.* Prisoners, whether guilty or not, were required to pay for their maintenance in Elizabethan prisons. Even the hangman had to be tipped before an execution (cf. *2 Henry VI*, III, ii, 217). 57. *import:* imply.

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 tomorrow as today,
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. O my most sacred lady,
Temptations have since then been born to 's; for
In those unfledged days was my wife a girl;
Your precious self had then not cross'd the eyes
Of my young play-fellow.
Her. Grace to boot!
Of this make no conclusion, lest you say
Your queen and I are devils—yet go on;
The offenses 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. [*Returning*] Is he won yet?
Her. He'll stay, my lord.

62. ***lordings:*** little lords. 63. ***no more behind:*** nothing more. 74–5. ***the imposition . . . ours:*** except such sin as was ours by heredity (i.e., original sin), or, cleared even of hereditary sin. 80. ***Grace to boot:*** an expression equivalent to "Gracious."

Leon. At my request he would not.
Hermione, my dearest, thou never spokest
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 's with praise, and make 's
As fat as tame things; one good deed dying tongueless
Slaughters a thousand waiting upon that.
Our praises are our wages; you may ride 's
With one soft kiss a thousand furlongs ere
With spur we 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. O, 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 for ever."
Her. 'Tis Grace indeed.
Why, lo you now, I have spoke to the purpose twice:
The one, for ever earn'd a royal husband;
The other, for some while a friend.
[*She extends her hand to Polixenes, and, exchanging courtesies, they walk apart.*
Leon. [*Watching them*] 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

91. *cram's:* cram us. 92. *tongueless:* unexpressed. 96. *acre:* a unit of length, in use in the Midlands, equal to 220 yards. *to the goal:* to the point. 104. *clap . . . love.* Clapping or striking hands was an Elizabethan custom when a bargain, such as a trothplight, was completed. 110. *tremor cordis:* palpitation of the heart.

May a free face put on, derive a liberty
From heartiness, from bounty, fertile bosom,
And well become the agent—'t may, I grant;
But to be paddling palms and pinching fingers,
As now they are, and making practiced smiles,
As in a looking-glass, and then to sigh, as 'twere
The mort o' the deer—O, that is entertainment
My bosom likes not, nor my brows! [*Turning to his son, who plays at his feet.*] 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 is a copy out of mine. [*He wipes the boy's nose.*] 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. [*Glancing again in his wife's direction.*] Still virginalling
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'er-dyed blacks, as wind, as waters—false
As dice are to be wish'd by one that fixes
No bourn 'twixt his and mine, yet were it true
To say this boy were like me. Come, sir page,

118. *mort o' the deer:* death sigh of the deer, or, "the note sounded on a hunting-horn" on such an occasion (Onions). *entertainment:* way of spending time. 119. *brows:* alluding to cuckold's horns. 120. *I' fecks:* in faith. 121. *bawcock:* a term of endearment, from Fr. *beau coq.* 125. *virginalling:* playing as upon the virginals, an Elizabethan musical instrument something like a spinet; hence, "fingering." 127. *if you will:* if you like. 128. *pash:* head. *shoots:* cuckold's horns. 132. *o'er-dyed blacks:* i.e., blacks painted white; deceivers.

Look on me with your welkin eye, sweet villain!
Most dear'st! My collop! Can thy dam—? May 't be—?
Affection, thy intention stabs the centre;
Thou dost make possible things not so held,
Communicatest with dreams—how can this be—?
With what's unreal thou coactive art,
And fellow'st nothing. Then 'tis very credent
Thou mayst co-join with something; and thou dost—
And that beyond commission—and I find it—
And that to the infection of my brains
And hardening of my brows.
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, methoughts I did recoil
Twenty-three years, and saw myself unbreech'd,
In my green velvet coat, my dagger muzzled,
Lest it should bite its master, and so prove,
As ornaments oft do 's, too dangerous.
How like, methought, I then was to this kernel,
This squash, this gentleman. Mine honest friend,
Will you take eggs for money?

136. *welkin:* sky-blue. 137. *collop:* literally, a slice from a joint of meat; hence, my flesh, my son. Cf. "chip off the old block." 138. *Affection:* sexual instinct. *intention:* purpose. *centre:* heart. While the import of this passage is clear, the meanings of individual words present some difficulty. It is the product of Leontes' disordered brain. 142. *fellow'st:* art a fellow to. 146. *hardening of my brows:* (a) knitting of my brows, (b) the growth of the cuckold's horns there. 149. *distraction:* perplexity. 158. *do 's:* do to us.

Mam. No, my lord, I'll fight.
Leon. You will? Why, happy man be 's dole! My brother,
Are you so fond of your young prince as we
Do seem to be of ours?
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's,
And with his varying childness cures in me
Thoughts that would thick 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 lovest us, show in our brother's welcome;
Let what is dear in Sicily be cheap.
Next to thyself and my young rover, he's
Apparent to my heart.
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. [*Aside.*] I am angling now,
Though you perceive me not how I give line.
Go to, go to!
How she holds up the neb, the bill to him!
And arms her with the boldness of a wife
To her allowing husband! [*He watches them as they go out.*]
Gone already!
Inch-thick, knee-deep, o'er head and ears a fork'd one!
Go, play, boy, play. Thy mother plays, and I
Play too, but so disgraced a part, whose issue

163. *be 's dole:* be his portion in life; i.e., may he be a happy man when he grows up. 175. *Let . . . cheap.* Observe the double meaning. 177. *Apparent:* heir apparent. 178. *Shall 's:* shall we. *attend:* wait for. 179. *bents:* inclination. 185. *allowing:* i.e., to her husband with whom it is allowable that she be so bold. 186. *fork'd:* horned, i.e., cuckolded. 188. *issue:* outcome.

Will hiss me to my grave; contempt and clamour
Will be my knell. Go, play, boy, play. There have been,
Or I am much deceived, cuckolds ere now,
And many a man there is, even at this present,
Now while I speak this, holds his wife by the arm,
That little thinks she has been sluiced in 's absence
And his pond fish'd by his next neighbour—by
Sir Smile, his neighbour—nay, there's comfort in 't
Whiles other men have gates and those gates open'd,
As mine, against their will. Should all despair
That have revolted wives, the tenth of mankind
Would hang themselves. Physic for 't there is none;
It is a bawdy planet that will strike
Where 'tis predominant; and 'tis powerful—think it—
From east, west, north, and south—be it concluded,
No barricado for a belly, know 't—
It will let in and out the enemy
With bag and baggage. Many thousand on 's
Have the disease, and feel 't not. How now, boy!
Mam. I am like you, 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?

200. *Physic:* remedy, medicine. 201. *strike:* destroy. 202. *predominant:* in the ascendancy. 204. *barricado:* barricade. 208. *say:* Mamillius wants to be told he is like his father; most editors, however, emend the text to read *they say*. 211. *thou . . . man:* that's a good boy.

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 pertinent;
But so it is, it is not. Was this taken
By any understanding pate but thine?
For thy conceit is soaking, will draw in
More than the common blocks—not noted, is 't,
But of the finer natures? By some severals
Of head-piece extraordinary? Lower messes
Perchance are to this business purblind? Say.

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!

217. *They're . . . already:* people are already talking about me. 219. *gust:* taste. 222. *so:* as. 224. *thy . . . soaking:* your intelligence perceives things. 226–7. *By . . . extraordinary:* by a few of extraordinary intelligence. 227. *Lower messes:* the servants, those who sit at the lower end of the table. 228. *purblind:* completely blind. 237. *chamber-councils:* confidential matters. 238. *cleansed my bosom:* shriven me.

Leon. To bide upon 't, thou art not honest, or,
If thou inclinest that way, thou art a coward,
Which hoxes Honesty behind, restraining
From course required; or else thou must be counted
A servant grafted in my serious trust
And therein negligent; or else a fool
That seest a game play'd home, the rich stake drawn,
And takest it all for jest.
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 play'd the fool, it was my negligence,
Not weighing well the end; if ever fearful
To do a thing, where I the issue doubted,
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. Ha' not you seen, Camillo—?
But that's past doubt, you have, or your eye-glass
Is thicker than a cuckold's horn—or heard—
For to a vision so apparent rumour

242. *bide:* specify. 244. *hoxes:* hamstrings. 248. *home:* in earnest. 254. *puts . . . affairs.* F_1 reads *puts forth in your affairs.* 255. *wilful-negligent:* wilfully negligent. 263. *allow'd:* admitted, acknowledged. 265–6. *know . . . visage:* bring me face to face with it. 268. *eye-glass:* the lens of the eye, not the optical instrument. 269. *thicker:* more opaque.

Cannot be mute—or thought—for cogitation
Resides not in that man that does not think—
My wife is slippery? If thou wilt confess,
Or else be impudently negative,
To have nor eyes nor ears nor thought, then say
My wife's a hobby-horse, deserves a name
As rank as any flax-wench that puts to
Before her troth-plight—say 't and justify 't.
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.

276. ***hobby-horse:*** loose woman. F_1 reads ***holy-horse.*** 277. ***flax-wench:*** flax worker. 281. ***present:*** instant. 284. ***though true:*** even if it were true. 286. ***career:*** swift run, a figure taken from jousting. 288. ***honesty:*** chastity. 291. ***pin and web:*** cataract. 296. ***nothing.*** pronounced "noting"; observe the possible pun upon the meaning "if this is being observed." 297. ***betimes:*** at once.

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, hanging
About his neck—Bohemia; who, if I
Had servants true about me, that bare eyes
To see alike mine honour as their profits
(Their own particular thrifts), they would do that
Which should undo more doing. Ay, and thou,
His cupbearer—whom I from meaner form
Have bench'd and rear'd to worship, who mayst see
Plainly, as heaven sees earth, and earth sees heaven,
How I am galled—mightst bespice a cup
To give mine enemy a lasting wink,
Which draught to me were cordial.
Cam. Sir, my lord,
I could do this, and that with no rash potion,
But with a lingering dram that should not work
Maliciously like poison. But I cannot
Believe this crack to be in my dread mistress,
So sovereignly being honourable.
I have loved thee—
Leon. Make that thy question, and go rot!
Dost think I am so muddy, so unsettled,
To appoint myself in this vexation, sully

302. ***hovering temporizer:*** time-server. 306. ***glass:*** hourglass. 307. ***her medal:*** a medal of her. 314. ***bench'd:*** raised to authority. ***worship:*** honor, dignity. 317. ***wink:*** closing of the eyes. 323. ***So . . . honourable:*** so completely honorable. 324. ***question:*** reason for doubting what I believe. 326. ***To . . . vexation:*** to bring this distress upon myself.

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 cupbearer;
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. O miserable lady! But, for me,
What case stand I in? I must be the poisoner
Of good Polixenes; and my ground to do 't
Is the obedience to a master, one
Who in rebellion with himself will have
All that are his so too. To do this deed,
Promotion follows. If I could find example
Of thousands that had struck anointed kings

333. *blench:* swerve, shy like a horse. 344. *keep:* keep friends.

And flourish'd after, I'ld 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.

Re-enter Polixenes, *perplexed.*

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,
Wafting his eyes to the contrary, and falling
A lip of much contempt, speeds from me and
So leaves me to consider what is breeding
That changeth thus his manners.
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 't.
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.

372. *Wafting . . . contrary:* turning his eyes away. *falling:* letting fall.
378. *Be . . . me:* tell me. *thereabouts:* about the truth.

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 behove my knowledge
Thereof to be inform'd, imprison 't 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 will tell you,
Since I am charged in honour and by him
That I think honourable; therefore, mark my counsel,
Which must be even as swiftly follow'd as
I mean to utter it, or both yourself and me
Cry lost, and so good night!
Pol. On, good Camillo.
Cam. I am appointed him to murder you.
Pol. By whom, Camillo?
Cam. By the king.
Pol. For what?

388. *basilisk:* a mythical king of serpents so poisonous that it could kill merely with a glance. 389. *sped:* succeeded. 390. *regard:* look. 393. *gentry:* rank. 394. *success:* succession. 397. *ignorant concealment:* concealment that causes ignorance. 410–11. *or both . . . lost:* it is all up with both of us. 412. *him:* the one.

Cam. He thinks, nay, with all confidence he swears,
As he had seen 't or been an instrument
To vice you to 't, that you have touch'd his queen
Forbiddenly.
Pol. O, then my best blood turn
To an infected jelly and my name
Be yoked with his that did betray the Best!
Turn then my freshest reputation to
A savour that may strike the dullest nostril
Where I arrive, and my approach be shunn'd—
Nay, hated too—worse than the great'st infection
That e'er was heard or read!
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 tonight!
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

416. *vice:* force, with a pun on "wickedness." 419. *that . . . Best:* Judas. 424. *Swear . . . over:* try to change his mind by swearing. 430–1. *will continue . . . body:* i.e., as long as his body stands. 436. *impawn'd:* in pledge. 438. *posterns:* little secret gates. 441. *discovery:* revealment.

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 's face. Give me thy hand;
Be pilot to me and thy places shall
Still neighbour mine. My ships are ready, and
My people did expect my hence departure
Two days ago. This jealousy
Is for a precious creature; as she's rare,
Must it be great; and as his person's mighty,
Must it be violent; and as he does conceive
He is dishonour'd by a man which ever
Profess'd to him, why, his revenges must
In that be made more bitter. Fear o'ershades me;
Good Expedition be my friend, and Comfort
The gracious queen, part of his theme, but nothing
Of his ill-ta'en suspicion! Come, Camillo;
I will respect thee as a father, if
Thou bear'st my life off hence. Let us avoid.
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. *A room in* LEONTES' *palace.*

HERMIONE *seated with her* Ladies in Waiting, *playing with* MAMILLIUS.

Her. Take the boy to you; he so troubles me,
'Tis past enduring.

443. *prove:* test. 454. *conceive:* believe. 456. *Profess'd:* professed friendship. 458–9. *Comfort . . . queen:* i.e., Comfort be the friend of the gracious queen. 462. *avoid:* escape, run away.

First Lady. Come, my gracious lord,
Shall I be your playfellow?
Mam. No, I'll none of you.
First 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.
Sec. 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 a half-moon made with a pen.
Sec. Lady. Who taught you this?
Mam. I learnt it out of women's faces. Pray now
What colour are your eyebrows?
First Lady. Blue, my lord.
Mam. Nay, that's a mock. I have seen a lady's nose
That has been blue, but not her eyebrows.
First Lady. Hark ye;
The queen your mother rounds apace; we shall
Present our services to a fine new prince
One of these days, and then you 'ld wanton with us,
If we would have you.
Sec. 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, good 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—

[II. i] 18. *wanton:* play, romp.

Her. Nay, come, sit down; then on.
Mam. Dwelt by a churchyard—I will tell it softly;
Yond crickets shall not hear it.
Her. Come on, then,
And give 't me in mine ear.

Enter LEONTES, *with* ANTIGONUS, Lords, *and others, including a Guard.*

Leon. Was he met there? His train? Camillo with him?
First Lord. Behind the tuft of pines I met them; never
Saw I men scour so on their way. I eyed them
Even to their ships.
Leon. How blest am I
In my just censure, in my true opinion!
Alack, for lesser knowledge! How accursed
In being so blest! There may be in the cup
A spider steep'd, and one may drink, depart,
And yet partake no venom, for his knowledge
Is not infected; but if one present
The abhorr'd ingredient to his eye, make known
How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,
With violent hefts. I have drunk, and seen the spider.
Camillo was his help in this—his pandar—
There is a plot against my life, my crown;
All's true that is mistrusted. That false villain
Whom I employ'd was pre-employ'd by him;
He has discover'd my design, and I
Remain a pinch'd thing; yea, a very trick
For them to play at will. How came the posterns
So easily open?
First Lord. By his great authority,
Which often hath no less prevail'd than so
On your command.

31. *Yond crickets:* the tittering maids of honor. 35. *scour:* hasten. 38. *Alack . . . knowledge:* if only I did not know it. 44. *gorge:* throat. 48. *All's . . . mistrusted:* all that I suspected is true. 50. *discover'd:* revealed.

Leon. I know 't too well.
[*To Hermione.*] 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'ld 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—O, I am out—
That Mercy does, for Calumny will sear
Virtue itself. These shrugs, these hum's and ha's,
When you have said, "She's goodly," come between
Ere you can say, "She's honest." But be 't known
(From him that has most cause to grieve it should be),
She's an adulteress.
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. O thou thing,
Which I'll not call a creature of thy place,

64. *the nayward:* disbelief. 68. *honest:* chaste. 69. *without-door:* public. 72. *I am out:* I am all confused. 79. *replenish'd:* complete. 83. *place:* rank.

Lest barbarism, making me the precedent,
Should a like language use to all degrees
And mannerly distinguishment leave out
Betwixt the prince and beggar. I have said
She's an adulteress; I have said with whom.
More, she's a traitor, and Camillo is
A federary with her, and one that knows
What she should shame to know herself
But with her most vile principal, that she's
A bed-swerver, even as bad as those
That vulgars give bold'st titles, ay, and privy
To this their late escape.
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 throughly, 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 school-boy'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,

85. ***degrees:*** ranks. 86. ***mannerly distinguishment:*** polite distinction. 90. ***federary:*** confederate. 93. ***bed-swerver:*** one unfaithful in marriage. 94. ***vulgars:*** the common people. 98. ***Gentle my lord:*** my gentle lord. 99. ***throughly:*** thoroughly, completely. 102. ***centre:*** earth. 104. ***afar off guilty:*** indirectly or remotely guilty.

With thoughts so qualified as your charities
Shall best instruct you, measure me; and so
The king's will be perform'd! [*The guard hesitates.*
Leon. 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 mistress
Has deserved prison, then abound in tears
As I come out; this action I now go on
Is for my better grace. Adieu, my lord.
I never wish'd to see you sorry; now
I trust I shall. My women, come; you have leave.
Leon. Go, do our bidding; hence!
[*The Queen is led away, attended by her women.*
First 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.
First Lord. For her, my lord,
I dare my life lay down—and will do 't, sir—
Please you to accept it, that the queen is spotless
I' the eyes of Heaven and to you; I mean,
In this which you accuse her.
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 farther 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.
First Lord. Good my lord—
Ant. It is for you we speak, not for ourselves;

113. *qualified:* of such qualities. 118. *good fools:* a term of endearment like "poor dears." 135. *go . . . her:* i.e., never permit her out of my sight.

You are abused and by some putter-on
That will be damn'd for 't; would I knew the villain—
I would land-damn him. Be she honour-flaw'd,
I have three daughters—the eldest is eleven,
The second and the third, nine and some five—
If this prove true, they'll pay for 't. By mine honour,
I'll geld 'em all; fourteen they shall not see,
To bring false generations. They are co-heirs,
And I had rather glib myself than they
Should not produce fair issue.
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 [*He tweaks Antigonus' nose.*]; and see withal
The instruments that feel.
Ant. If it be so,
We need no grave to bury Honesty;
There's not a grain of it the face to sweeten
Of the whole dungy earth.
Leon. What? Lack I credit?
First Lord. I had rather you did lack than I, my lord,
Upon this ground; and more it would content me
To have her honour true than your suspicion,
Be blamed for 't how you might.
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 a truth like us, inform yourselves

141. *abused:* deceived. *putter-on:* instigator. 143. *land-damn him.* This is a famous crux; the meaning seems to be "make a hell on earth for him." Wilson reads *lam-damn*, thrash to death. 149. *glib:* geld. 156. *the . . . sweeten:* to sweeten the face. 157. *credit:* belief. 163. *forceful instigation:* powerful impulse. 165. *Imparts:* makes known. *or:* either. 166. *seeming . . . skill:* pretending to be so.

We need no more of your advice. The matter,
The loss, the gain, the ordering 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 dispatch'd in post
To sacred Delphos, to Apollo's temple,
Cleomenes and Dion, whom you know
Of stuff'd sufficiency. Now, from the oracle
They will bring all; whose spiritual counsel had,
Shall stop or spur me. Have I done well?
First Lord. Well done, my lord.
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,
[*Pointing to Antigonus.*
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;

172. *overture:* disclosure. 176. *touch'd conjecture:* aroused suspicion. 177. *sight:* revealment. *approbation:* confirmation. 182. *dispatch'd in post:* sent in haste. 183. *Delphos:* Delphi. 185. *stuff'd:* complete. 187. *spur me:* spur me on. 192. *ignorant credulity:* credulity causing ignorance.

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. *The outer ward of a prison in Sicilia, some weeks later.*

Enter PAULINA, *a* Gentleman, *and* Attendants.

Paul. The keeper of the prison, call to him;
Let him have knowledge who I am. [*Exit Gentleman.*
Good lady,
No court in Europe is too good for thee;
What dost thou then in prison?

Re-enter Gentleman, *with the* Gaoler.

Now, good sir,
You know me, do you not?
Gaol. For a worthy lady
And one whom much I honour.
Paul. Pray you then,
Conduct me to the queen.
Gaol. 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 't lawful, pray you,
To see her women? Any of them? Emilia?
Gaol. So please you, madam,
To put apart these your attendants, I
Shall bring Emilia forth.
Paul. I pray now, call her.
Withdraw yourselves. [*Exeunt Gentleman and Attendants.*
Gaol. And, madam,
I must be present at your conference.

198. *raise:* rouse.
[ii] 14. *put apart:* send away.

Paul. Well, be 't so, prithee. [*Exit Gaoler.*
Here's such ado to make no stain a stain
As passes colouring.

Re-enter Gaoler, *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 i' the king—beshrew them!
He must be told on 't, and he shall. The office
Becomes a woman best; I'll take 't upon me.
If I prove honey-mouth'd, let my tongue blister
And never to my red-look'd anger be
The trumpet any more. Pray you, Emilia,
Commend my best obedience to the queen;
If she dares trust me with her little babe,
I'll show 't the king and undertake to be
Her advocate to the loud'st. We do not know
How he may soften at the sight o' the child;
The silence often of pure innocence
Persuades when speaking fails.
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

20. *passes colouring:* defies disguising. 30. *lunes:* lunacies. *beshrew:* curse. 31. *on 't:* of it. 46. *meet:* suitable.

To visit the next room, I'll presently
Acquaint the queen of your most noble offer;
Who but today 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 't
As boldness from my bosom, let 't not be doubted
I shall do good.
Emil. Now be you blest for it!
I'll to the queen; please you, come something nearer.
Gaol. 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
The anger of the king nor guilty of,
If any be, the trespass of the queen.
Gaol. I do believe it.
Paul. Do not you fear; upon mine honour, I
Will stand betwixt you and danger. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A room in the palace.*

LEONTES *is alone.*

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 adulteress—(for the harlot king
Is quite beyond mine arm, out of the blank

47. *presently:* immediately. 49. *hammer'd of:* thought of, deliberated upon. 50. *tempt:* suggest it to. 52. *wit:* wisdom.
[iii] 1. *Nor:* neither. 3. *in being:* i.e., that the queen is alive and near me. 4. *harlot:* originally a lewd person of either sex. 5. *blank:* white spot in the center of a target.

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. [*Someone knocks.*] Who's there?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My lord?
Leon. How does the boy?
Serv. He took good rest tonight;
'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 Servant.*] 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, from the anteroom, PAULINA *with the child, followed by* ANTIGONUS *and other* Lords *who try to stop her.*

First 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.

6. ***level:*** range. 8. ***moiety:*** portion. 11. ***discharged:*** cured. 13. ***Conceiving:*** understanding. 17. ***solely:*** alone. 18. ***him:*** Polixenes. 28. ***tyrannous:*** cruel. 30. ***free:*** blameless.

Sec. Lord. Madam, he hath not slept tonight; commanded
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 medicinal 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. La 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.

41. *gossips:* sponsors for the child's baptism. 49. *Commit me:* put me in prison. 56. *comforting:* encouraging.

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? [*To Antigonus.*] Give her the bastard,
Thou dotard! Thou art woman-tired, unroosted
By thy Dame Partlet here. Take up the bastard;
Take 't up, I say; give 't to thy crone.
Paul. For ever
Unvenerable be thy hands, if thou
Takest 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 'ld call your children yours.
Leon. A nest of traitors!

63. *I'll off:* I'll go off. 68. *intelligencing bawd:* a go-between with messages. 74. *woman-tired:* woman-ruled, henpecked; *tire* is a term from falconry. 75. *Dame Partlet:* traditional name for "hen" as Reynard is for "fox." Cf. Chaucer's Pertelote in *The Nun's Priest's Tale.* 76. *crone:* old woman.

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 callet
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 's frown, his forehead, nay, the valley,
The pretty dimples of his chin and cheek,
His smiles,
The very mould and frame of hand, nail, finger—
And thou, good goddess Nature, which hast made it
So like to him that got it, if thou hast
The ordering of the mind too, 'mongst all colours
No yellow in 't, lest she suspect, as he does,
Her children not her husband's!
Leon. A gross hag!
And, lozel, thou art worthy to be hang'd,
That wilt not stay her tongue.

90. *callet:* lewd woman. 91, 92. *beat, baits.* These words were pronounced alike in Shakespeare's day. The latter refers to bear-baiting. 107. *yellow:* the color of jealousy. 109. *lozel:* rascal, lout. 110. *stay:* stop.

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 ha' thee burnt.
Paul. I care not;
It is an heretic that makes the fire,
Not she which burns in 't. I'll not call you tyrant;
But this most cruel usage of your queen,
Not able to produce more accusation
Than your own weak-hinged fancy, something savours
Of tyranny and will ignoble make you,
Yea, scandalous to the world.
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! [*They try to push her out.*
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 needs these hands?
[*To the Lords.*] 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

119. *weak-hinged:* hanging on a slender thread of evidence.
140. *proper:* own.

Shall I dash out. Go, take it to the fire;
For thou set'st on thy wife.
Ant. I did not, sir;
These lords, my noble fellows, if they please,
Can clear me in 't.
Lords. We can; my royal liege,
He is not guilty of her coming hither.
Leon. You're liars all.
First Lord. Beseech your Highness, give us better credit.
We have always truly served you, and beseech you
So to esteem of us, and on our knees we beg [*Kneeling.*
(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. [*To Antigonus.*] You, sir, come you hither;
You that have been so tenderly officious
With Lady Margery, your midwife there,
To save this bastard's life—for 'tis a bastard,
So sure as this beard's grey [*Pointing to Antigonus' beard.*]—
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. [*Draws his sword.*] Swear by this sword
Thou wilt perform my bidding.
Ant. I will, my lord.

147. *credit:* esteem. 154. *I . . . blows:* I am easily influenced. 160. *Lady Margery:* a cant term for "hen."

Leon. Mark and perform it, see'st thou! For the fail
Of any point in 't shall not only be
Death to thyself but to thy lewd-tongued wife,
Whom for this time we pardon. We enjoin thee,
As thou art liege-man to us, that thou carry
This female bastard hence and that thou bear it
To some remote and desert place quite out
Of our dominions, and that there thou leave it,
Without more mercy, to it 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 does 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.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Please your Highness, posts
From those you sent to the oracle are come
An hour since; Cleomenes and Dion,
Being well arrived from Delphos, are both landed,
Hasting to the court.
First Lord. So please you, sir, their speed
Hath been beyond accompt.
Leon. Twenty-three days

170. *fail:* failure. 178. *it:* its. 182. *strangely:* as a stranger or foreigner. 186. *kites:* hawks. 193. *posts:* messengers.

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. *A town in Sicilia.*

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. O, 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—O 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,

200. *suddenly:* at once. 205. *open:* public.

[III. i] 2. *isle.* Both Shakespeare and Greene have confused Delos, an island sacred to Apollo, with Delphi, the seat of the oracle on the mainland. 4. *celestial habits:* ceremonial robes.

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. *A Court of Justice.*

Leontes, *as presiding officer, his* Lords *and* Officials *about him, and a great crowd of people, assembled for the trial.*

Leon. This sessions (to our great grief we pronounce)
Even pushes 'gainst our heart: the party tried
The daughter of a king, our wife, and one
Of us too much beloved. Let us be clear'd
Of being tyrannous, since we so openly
Proceed in justice, which shall have due course,
Even to the guilt or the purgation.
Produce the prisoner.
Off. It is his Highness' pleasure that the queen
Appear in person here in court. Silence!

Enter Hermione *guarded;* Paulina *and* Ladies *attending.*

Leon. Read the indictment.
Off. [*Reads*] "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 husband; the pretense 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."

17. *carriage:* management. 20. *discover:* reveal.
[ii] 18. *pretense:* purpose.

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!

39. *owe:* own. 40. *moiety:* half, part. 41. *hopeful prince:* a prince of great promise. Cf. "young hopeful." 50. *encounter so uncurrent:* behavior so extraordinary, with a pun upon *counter*, a coin, and *uncurrent*, unpassable. 51. *strain'd:* exceeded bounds.

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 's 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—

60. *own:* admit. *More . . . of:* more than I am guilty of. 77. *Wotting:* knowing. 82. *level of your dreams:* at the mercy of your suspicions. The figure is from archery; to be "in the level" is to be within range.

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 it 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,

86. *fact:* deed; the phrase means "those who have sinned as you have done." 93. *bug:* bugbear. 94. *commodity:* profit. 96. *give lost:* acknowledge lost. 101. *it:* the possessive of the impersonal pronoun is often uninflected in Shakespeare. 103. *immodest:* immoderate. 107. *strength of limit:* even limited strength; the phrase means "before I have had the proper rest after childbearing."

I do refer me to the oracle:
Apollo be my judge!
First 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.
O that he were alive, and here beholding
His daughter's trial! That he did but see
The flatness of my misery; yet with eyes
Of pity, not revenge!

Re-enter Officers, *with* Cleomenes *and* Dion, *bearing the oracle.*

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. Dion. All this we swear.
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.

120. *Emperor of Russia.* In Greene's *Pandosto*, the Emperor of Russia is the father-in-law of Egistus (Polixenes) and not of Pandosto (Leontes). Hermione's mention of her father here is particularly moving. 123. *flatness:* absoluteness. 142. *mere:* sheer.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My lord the king, the king!
Leon. What is the business?
Serv. O sir, I shall be hated to report it!
The prince your son, with mere conceit, and fear
Of the queen's speed, is gone.
Leon. How? Gone?
Serv. Is dead.
Leon. Apollo's angry, and the heavens themselves
Do strike at my injustice. [*Hermione swoons.*] How now there?
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.
[*Exeunt Paulina and Ladies, carrying Hermione.*
Apollo, pardon
My great profaneness 'gainst thine oracle!
I'll reconcile me to Polixenes,
New woo my queen, recall the good Camillo,
Whom I proclaim a man of truth, of mercy;
For, being transported by my jealousies
To bloody thoughts and to revenge, I chose
Camillo for the minister to poison
My friend Polixenes: which had been done,
But that the good mind of Camillo tardied
My swift command, though I with death and with
Reward did threaten and encourage him,
Not doing 't and being done. He, most humane
And fill'd with honour, to my kingly guest

145. *with mere conceit:* from pure mental anguish. 146. *speed:* fortune. 159. *transported:* carried away. 164–6. Observe the respective construction: "I with (a) death and with (b) reward did (a) threaten and (b) encourage him, (a) not doing 't and (b) being done."

Unclasp'd my practice, quit his fortunes here,
Which you knew great, and to the hazard
Of all incertainties himself commended,
No richer than his honour. How he glisters
Thorough my rust! And how his piety
Does my deeds make the blacker!

Re-enter Paulina.

Paul. Woe the while!
O, cut my lace, lest my heart, cracking it,
Break too!

First 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—O, think what they have done
And then run mad indeed, stark mad! For all
Thy by-gone fooleries were but spices of it.
That thou betray'dst Polixenes, 'twas nothing;
That did but show thee, of a fool, inconstant
And damnable ingrateful. Nor was 't much,
Thou wouldst have poison'd good Camillo's honour,
To have him kill a king; poor trespasses,
More monstrous standing by—whereof I reckon
The casting forth to crows thy baby-daughter
To be or none or little, though a devil
Would have shed water out of fire ere done 't.
Nor is 't directly laid to thee, the death
Of the young prince, whose honourable thoughts
(Thoughts high for one so tender) cleft the heart

168. *Unclasp'd my practice:* revealed my treachery. 174. *cut my lace:* loose my bodice. 176. *studied:* carefully devised. 185. *spices:* seasoning. 193. *or:* either. 194. *shed . . . fire:* "dropped tears from burning eyes" (Cowden Clarke). 197. *so tender:* so young.

That could conceive a gross and foolish sire
Blemish'd his gracious dam. This is not, no,
Laid to thy answer. But the last—O lords,
When I have said, cry "woe!"—The queen, the queen,
The sweet'st, dear'st creature 's dead, and vengeance for 't
Not dropp'd down yet.
First Lord. The higher powers forbid!
Paul. I say she's dead; I'll swear 't. If word nor oath
Prevail not, go and see. If you can bring
Tincture or lustre in her lip, her eye,
Heat outwardly or breath within, I'll serve you
As I would do the gods. But, O thou tyrant,
Do not repent these things, for they are heavier
Than all thy woes can stir; therefore betake thee
To nothing but despair. A thousand knees
Ten thousand years together, naked, fasting,
Upon a barren mountain, and still winter
In storm perpetual, could not move the gods
To look that way thou wert.
Leon. Go on, go on.
Thou canst not speak too much; I have deserved
All tongues to talk their bitt'rest.
First Lord. Say no more;
Howe'er the business goes, you have made fault
I' the boldness of your speech.
Paul. I am sorry for 't;
All faults I make, when I shall come to know them,
I do repent. Alas, I have show'd too much
The rashness of a woman; he is touch'd
To the noble heart. What's gone, and what's past help,
Should be past grief. Do not receive affliction
At my petition; I beseech you, rather
Let me be punish'd, that have minded you
Of what you should forget. Now, good my liege—
Sir, royal sir—forgive a foolish woman.

206. *Tincture:* color. 220 ff. Observe the change in Paulina. 226. *minded:* reminded.

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
Unto these sorrows. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *Bohemia. A wild part of the country near the sea.*

Enter Antigonus, *carrying the child, accompanied by 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 's.
Ant. Their sacred wills be done! Go, get aboard;
Look to thy bark; I'll not be long before
I call upon thee.

231. *remember:* remind. 240–1. *tears . . . recreation:* i.e., Leontes' penitence is such that the only recreations he will allow himself will be tears.

[iii] S. D. In attributing a seacoast to Bohemia, Shakespeare follows his source, Greene's *Pandosto*. 1. *perfect:* certain. 5. *that:* what.

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 o' the dead
May walk again. If such thing be, thy mother
Appear'd to me last night, for ne'er was dream
So like a waking. To me comes a creature,
Sometimes her head on one side, some another—
I never saw a vessel of like sorrow,
So fill'd and so becoming—in pure white robes,
Like very sanctity, she did approach
My cabin where I lay, thrice bow'd before me,
And, gasping to begin some speech, her eyes
Became two spouts. The fury spent, anon
Did this break from her: "Good Antigonus,
Since Fate, against thy better disposition,
Hath made thy person for the thrower-out
Of my poor babe, according to thine oath,
Places remote enough are in Bohemia.
There weep and leave it crying; and, for the babe
Is counted lost for ever, Perdita,
I prithee, call 't. For this ungentle business,
Put on thee by my lord, thou ne'er shalt see
Thy wife Paulina more." And so, with shrieks,
She melted into air. Affrighted much,
I did in time collect myself and thought
This was so and no slumber. Dreams are toys;
Yet for this once, yea, superstitiously,
I will be squared by this. I do believe

20. *some another:* sometimes (on) another. 21. *vessel:* person. 26. *fury:* emotion. 39. *toys:* idle fancies. 41. *squared:* ruled.

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. [*Puts down the child.*] Blossom, speed thee well!
There lie, and there thy character; there these,
[*Places a bundle and papers beside it.*
Which may, if Fortune please, both breed thee, pretty,
And still rest thine. The storm begins. Poor wretch,
That for thy mother's fault art thus exposed
To loss and what may follow! Weep I cannot,
But my heart bleeds; and most accursed am I
To be by oath enjoin'd to this. Farewell!
The day frowns more and more; thou 'rt like to have
A lullaby too rough; I never saw
The heavens so dim by day. A savage clamour?
[*A bear growls.*
Well may I get aboard! This is the chase;
I am gone for ever. [*Exit, pursued by a bear.*

Enter an old Shepherd.

Shep. I would there were no age between sixteen and three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the rest; for there is nothing in the between but getting wenches with child, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting—[*A huntsman's horn is heard.*] 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 seaside, browsing of ivy. [*Spies the babe.*] Good luck (an 't be thy will), what have we here? Mercy on 's, a barne—a very pretty barne! A boy, or a child, I wonder? A pretty one, a very pretty one. Sure, some 'scape; though I am not bookish, yet I can read

47. *character:* identifying marks. 63. *the ancientry:* their elders. 64. *boiled brains:* hotheads. 70. *barne:* child. 71. *child:* dialectal for "female infant." 73. *'scape:* escapade.

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 hallooed but even now. Whoa, ho, hoa!

Enter Clown.

Clo. 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 ailest thou, man?

Clo. 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?

Clo. 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. O, the most piteous cry of the poor souls! Sometimes to see 'em, and not to see 'em; now the ship boring the moon with her main-mast, and anon swallowed with yest and froth, as you 'ld thrust a cork into a hogshead. And then for the land-service, to see how the bear tore out his shoulder-bone; how he cried to me for help and said his name was Antigonus, a nobleman. But to make an end of the ship, to see how the sea flap-dragoned it; but, first, how the poor souls roared and the sea mocked them, and how the poor gentleman roared and the bear mocked him, both roaring louder than the sea or weather.

Shep. Name of mercy, when was this, boy?

Clo. 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!

87. *bodkin's:* dagger's. 94. *yest:* foam. 96. *land-service:* the military as opposed to the naval action (used humorously). 100. *flap-dragoned:* swallowed. A flapdragon is a small combustible body, like a raisin, lighted and set afloat in a bowl of liquor and quaffed off while still afire. 106. *winked:* blinked an eye.

Clo. I would you had been by the ship side, to have helped her; there your charity would have lacked footing. 114

Shep. Heavy matters, heavy matters! But look thee here, boy. Now bless thyself; thou mettest with things dying, I with things new-born. Here's a sight for thee; look thee, a bearing-cloth for a squire's child! [*Pointing to the bundle.*] 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? 123

Clo. You're a made 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 't, keep it close; home, home, the next way. We are lucky, boy; and to be so still requires nothing but secrecy. Let my sheep go; come, good boy, the next way home. 131

Clo. 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 mayest discern by that which is left of him what he is, fetch me to the sight of him.

Clo. Marry, will I; and you shall help to put him i' the ground. 141

Shep. 'Tis a lucky day, boy, and we'll do good deeds on 't.

[*Exeunt.*

114. *footing:* (a) ground to walk on, (b) ulterior motive. 115. *Heavy:* sad, distressful. 119. *bearing-cloth:* christening robe in which the child was carried to church. 122. *changeling:* usually a child left by the fairies in exchange for one stolen; here, the child stolen. 124. *made.* The reading of F_1 is *mad.* 125. *well to live:* well-to-do. 127. *fairy gold.* Fairy gold had to be kept secret or it brought misfortune. 132. *next:* nearest. 135. *curst:* vicious.

ACT IV

SCENE I

Enter TIME, *the* Chorus.

Time. I, that please some, try all—both joy and terror
Of good and bad, that makes and unfolds error—
Now take upon me, in the name of Time,
To use my wings. Impute it not a crime
To me or my swift passage, that I slide
O'er sixteen years and leave the growth untried
Of that wide gap, since it is in my power
To o'erthrow law and in one self-born hour
To plant and o'erwhelm custom. Let me pass
The same I am, ere ancient'st order was
Or what is now received. I witness to
The times that brought them in; so shall I do
To the freshest things now reigning and make stale
The glistering of this present, as my tale
Now seems to it. Your patience this allowing,
I turn my glass and give my scene such growing
As you had slept between. Leontes leaving—
The effects of his fond jealousies so grieving
That he shuts up himself—imagine me,
Gentle spectators, that I now may be
In fair Bohemia; and remember well,
I mentioned a son o' the king's, which Florizel
I now name to you; and with speed so pace
To speak of Perdita, now grown in grace
Equal with wondering. What of her ensues
I list not prophesy; but let Time's news
Be known when 'tis brought forth. A shepherd's daughter,
And what to her adheres, which follows after,

[IV. i] S. D. *Time, the Chorus:* probably suggested by the subtitle of Greene's novel: *Pandosto, the Triumph of Time.* 6. *the growth untried:* the progress unconsidered. 25. *Equal with wondering:* i.e., equal to the wonder her grace excites. 26. *I . . . prophesy:* I do not care to prophesy.

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 II. *Bohemia. The palace of* Polixenes.

Enter Polixenes *and* Camillo *in conversation.*

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 callest him, and reconciled king, my brother; whose loss of his most precious queen and children are even now to be afresh lamented. Say to me, when sawest thou the Prince Florizel, my son? Kings are no less unhappy, their issue not being gracious, than they are in losing them when they have approved their virtues.

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

29. ***argument:*** subject, theme. ***allow:*** permit.

[ii] 8. ***feeling:*** heartfelt. 9. ***o'erween:*** presume. 25. ***reconciled:*** restored to his senses. 30. ***issue:*** children. 31. ***approved:*** demonstrated. 35. ***missingly noted:*** i.e., I have missed him.

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 neighbours, 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 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 III. *A road near the* Shepherd's *cottage.*

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.

41. *look ... removedness:* spy upon him during his absence. 42. *intelligence:* information. 46. *unspeakable:* indescribable. 52. *angle:* baited hook. 55. *question:* talk.

[iii] S. D. *Enter Autolycus, singing.* The entrance of this likeable rogue is one of the most effective in Shakespeare's comedies. His gay, rascally nature is revealed instantly by his songs—which are a kind of soliloquy—quite as much as by his naïve confidences, and the effrontery of both is disarming. At the end of the scene he swaggers off, with unruffled conscience, singing in the same carefree strain. 2. *doxy:* mistress (slang). 4. *pale:* (a) pallor, (b) fenced area, enclosure.

The white sheet bleaching on the hedge,
With heigh, the sweet birds, O, how they sing!
Doth set my pugging tooth on edge;
For a quart of ale is a dish for a king.

The lark, that tirra-lyra chants,
With heigh, with heigh, the thrush and the jay,
Are summer songs for me and my aunts,
While we lie tumbling in the hay.

I have served Prince Florizel and in my time wore three-pile, but now I am out of service.

But shall I go mourn for that, my dear?
The pale moon shines by night,
And when I wander here and there,
I then do most go right.

If tinkers may have leave to live,
And bear the sow-skin budget,
Then my account I well may give,
And in the stocks avouch it.

My traffic is sheets; when the kite builds, look to lesser linen. My father named me Autolycus, who, being (as I am) littered under Mercury, was likewise a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. With die and drab I purchased this caparison, and my revenue is the silly cheat. Gallows and knock are too powerful

7. *pugging:* thieving (slang). 10. *With heigh, with heigh.* F_1 reads *With heigh.* 11. *aunts:* familiars, wantons. 14. *three-pile:* the richest velvet, with three thicknesses of pile. 20. *sow-skin budget:* leather tool kit. 23. *traffic:* merchandise. *kite:* (a) hawk, (b) rapacious person, rogue. 24. *Autolycus.* The classical Autolycus, also supremely skillful in thievery, was the grandfather of the wily Odysseus and the son of Mercury, the trickster among the gods. Shakespeare has his Bohemian counterpart born when the planet Mercury was in the ascendant. 27. *With . . . caparison:* with gaming and women I acquired this rig. *Caparison* is a grand word for Autolycus' outfit. 28. *revenue:* source of income. *silly cheat:* petty swindling. 29. *knock:* whipping post.

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.

Clo. 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.

Clo. I cannot do 't without counters. Let me see, what am I to buy for our sheep-shearing feast? Three pound of sugar, five pound of currants, rice—what will this sister of mine do with rice? But my father hath made her mistress of the feast, and she lays it on. She hath made me four and twenty 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. O, that ever I was born! [*Grovelling on the ground.*

Clo. I' the name of me—

Aut. O, help me, help me! Pluck but off these rags; and then, death, death!

Clo. Alack, poor soul, thou hast need of more rags to lay on thee, rather than have these off.

Aut. O sir, the loathsomeness of them offends me more than the stripes I have received, which are mighty ones and millions.

Clo. Alas, poor man, a million of beating may come to a great matter.

30. ***life to come:*** the future. 33. ***tods:*** yields a tod (28 pounds) of wool. 36. ***springe:*** snare. ***cock:*** the woodcock, proverbially a stupid bird. 38. ***counters:*** an abacus (or kind of bead frame) used for calculations. 45. ***three-man-song-men:*** members of trios. 46. ***means:*** medium voices. 47. ***hornpipes:*** lively tunes. 48. ***warden:*** pear. 49. ***out of my note:*** not on the list. 50. ***race:*** root. 52. ***raisins o' the sun:*** sun-dried raisins. 59. ***offends***. F_1 reads ***offend.***

Aut. I am robbed, sir, and beaten; my money and apparel ta'en from me, and these detestable things put upon me.

Clo. What, by a horseman, or a footman?

Aut. A footman, sweet sir, a footman.

Clo. Indeed, he should be a footman by the garments he has left with thee. If this be a horseman's coat, it hath seen very hot service. Lend me thy hand, I'll help thee—come, lend me thy hand.

Aut. O, good sir, tenderly, O!

Clo. Alas, poor soul!

Aut. O, good sir, softly, good sir! I fear, sir, my shoulder-blade is out.

Clo. How now? Canst stand?

Aut. Softly, dear sir; [*Picking his pocket.*] good sir, softly. You ha' done me a charitable office.

Clo. 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.

Clo. What manner of fellow was he that robbed you?

Aut. A fellow, sir, that I have known to go about with troll-my-dames. I knew him once a servant of the prince. I cannot tell, good sir, for which of his virtues it was, but he was certainly whipped out of the court.

Clo. 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 where my land and living lies; and, having flown over many knavish professions, he settled only in rogue. Some call him Autolycus.

92. *troll-my-dames:* a game something like bagatelle. 98–9. *no more but abide:* barely stay there. 101. *ape-bearer:* animal trainer. 102–3. *compassed a motion:* conducted a puppet show.

Clo. 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.

Clo. Not a more cowardly rogue in all Bohemia; if you had but looked big and spit at him, he 'ld 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.

Clo. How do you now?

Aut. Sweet sir, much better than I was; I can stand and walk; I will even take my leave of you, and pace softly towards my kinsman's.

Clo. Shall I bring thee on the way?

Aut. No, good-faced sir; no, sweet sir.

Clo. 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 IV. *The* Shepherd's *cottage.*

Enter FLORIZEL *and* PERDITA.

Flo. These your unusual weeds to each part of you
Do give a life—no shepherdess, but Flora

108. ***Prig:*** thief (slang). 130. ***unrolled:*** struck off the roll of thieves. 133. ***hent:*** take.

[iv] 1. ***unusual weeds:*** i.e., garments you do not usually wear. Perdita's is no ordinary peasant costume, even for a queen of the sheepshearing, but, as Florizel's remarks indicate, a rich, courtly idealization of it. 2. ***Flora:*** goddess of flowers.

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;
O, pardon, that I name them! Your high self,
The gracious mark o' the land, you have obscured
With a swain's wearing, and me, poor lowly maid,
Most goddess-like prank'd up. But that our feasts
In every mess have folly and the feeders
Digest it with a custom, I should blush
To see you so attired—swoon, 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. O, the Fates!
How would he look, to see his work, so noble,
Vilely bound up? What would he say? Or how
Should I, in these my borrow'd flaunts, behold
The sternness of his presence?
Flo. Apprehend
Nothing but jollity. The gods themselves,
Humbling their deities to love, have taken

3. *Peering . . . front:* shyly peeping in the early spring. *Front* means "forehead." 4. *petty gods:* minor gods. 6. *extremes:* extravagancies, hyperboles. *it . . . me:* it does not become me. 9. *swain's wearing:* a shepherd's costume. Florizel's costume, like Perdita's, is an idealized shepherd's dress; note that when Autolycus changes clothes with the prince (ll. 736 ff.) he is mistaken, not for a shepherd, but for a courtier. 10. *prank'd:* dressed. 11. *mess:* course. 12. *Digest . . . custom:* are used to it. 13. *swoon.* The F_1 reading is *sworn.* Granted the emendation, the line means, "faint at my own presumption if I looked in a mirror." 17. *the difference:* i.e., in our ranks. 22. *bound up:* as a book; the metaphor refers to Florizel's dress. 23. *flaunts:* finery. 24. *Apprehend:* expect, anticipate.

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. O, but, sir,
Your resolution cannot hold, when 'tis
Opposed (as it must be) by the power of the king.
One of these two must be necessities,
Which then will speak that you must change this purpose,
Or I my life.

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!

Flo. See, your guests approach;
Address yourself to entertain them sprightly,
And let's be red with mirth.

Enter Shepherd, Clown, MOPSA, DORCAS, *and others, with* POLIXENES *and* CAMILLO *disguised.*

Shep. Fie, daughter! When my old wife lived, upon
This day she was both pantler, butler, cook,

42. *Or:* either. 49. *as:* as if. 53. *Address:* prepare. *sprightly:* with spirit. 56. *pantler:* servant who has charge of the pantry.

Both dame and servant; welcomed all, served all;
Would sing her song and dance her turn; now here,
At upper end o' the table, now i' the middle;
On his shoulder, and his; her face o' fire
With labour, and the thing she took to quench it
She would to each one sip. You are retired
As if you were a feasted one and not
The hostess of the meeting. Pray you, bid
These unknown friends to 's welcome; for it is
A way to make us better friends, more known.
Come, quench your blushes and present yourself
That which you are—mistress o' the feast. Come on,
And bid us welcome to your sheep-shearing,
As your good flock shall prosper.
Per. [*To Polixenes*] Sir, welcome;
It is my father's will I should take on me
The hostess-ship o' the day. [*To Camillo.*] You're welcome, sir.
Give me those flowers there, Dorcas. [*Taking the basket.*] 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 streak'd gillyvors,
Which some call nature's bastards. Of that kind
Our rustic garden's barren, and I care not
To get slips of them.

74–5. *keep . . . savour:* stay green and fragrant. 82. *gillyvors:* pinks. Both gillyflowers and carnations were associated with loose living; hence the modest Perdita's dislike for 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, over that art
Which you say adds to nature, is an art
That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentler scion to the wildest stock,
And make conceive a bark of baser kind
By bud of nobler race. This is an art
Which does mend nature, change it rather, but
The art itself is nature.
Per. So it is.
Pol. Then make your garden rich in gillyvors,
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 wi' the sun
And with him rises weeping. These are flowers
Of middle summer, and I think they are given
To men of middle age. You're very welcome.
Cam. I should leave grazing, were I of your flock,
And only live by gazing.
Per. Out, alas!
You 'ld be so lean that blasts of January
Would blow you through and through. [*To Florizel.*] Now, my fair'st friend,

87. *piedness:* diversity of color. 92–5. Observe the application of these lines to Florizel and Perdita. 100. *dibble:* trowel. 104. *Hot:* aromatic (?).

I would I had some flowers o' the spring that might
Become your time of day; and yours, and yours, [*To the girls.*
That wear upon your virgin branches yet
Your maidenheads growing. O Proserpina,
For the flowers now that frighted thou let'st fall
From Dis's waggon! Daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright 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! O, 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 'ld have you do it ever; when you sing,
I 'ld have you buy and sell so, so give alms,
Pray so; and, for the ordering your affairs,
To sing them too. When you do dance, I wish you
A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that; move still, still so,

116. *maidenheads:* maidenhoods. *Proserpina.* Ovid tells the story of how Proserpina, gathering flowers in her garden, was abducted by Dis (Pluto). 119. *take:* bewitch. 122. *Cytherea:* another name for Aphrodite. 132. *quick:* alive. 134. *Whitsun pastorals:* pastoral plays at Whitsuntide. 142. *still:* always.

And own no other function. Each your doing,
So singular in each particular,
Crowns what you are doing in the present deed,
That all your acts are queens.
Per. O Doricles,
Your praises are too large. But that your youth,
And the true blood which peepeth fairly through 't,
Do plainly give you out an unstain'd shepherd,
With wisdom I might fear, my Doricles,
You woo'd me the false way.
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.
[*They go aside to dance.*
Pol. This is the prettiest low-born lass that ever
Ran on the green-sward. Nothing she does or seems
But smacks of something greater than herself,
Too noble for this place.
Cam. He tells her something
That makes her blood look out; good sooth, she is
The queen of curds and cream.
Clo. Come on, strike up!
Dor. Mopsa must be your mistress; marry, garlic,
To mend her kissing with!
Mop. Now, in good time!
Clo. 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?

145. *deed.* F_1 reads *deeds.* 146. *Doricles:* Florizel's assumed name. 154. *turtles:* turtledoves, the poetical symbols of love and constancy. 157. *green-sward.* F_1 reads *greene-sord.* 160. *makes . . . out:* makes her blush. F_1 reads *on 't.*

Shep. They call him Doricles; and boasts himself
To have a worthy feeding; but I have it
Upon his own report and I believe it;
He looks like sooth. He says he loves my daughter—
I think so too, for never gazed the moon
Upon the water as he'll stand and read
As 'twere my daughter's eyes; and, to be plain,
I think there is not half a kiss to choose
Who loves another best.
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. O master, if you did but hear the pedlar 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.

Clo. 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-mouthed rascal would, as it were, mean mischief, and break a foul gap into the matter, he makes the maid to answer, "Whoop, do me no harm, good man"; puts him off, slights him, with "Whoop, do me no harm, good man."

168. *and boasts:* and he boasts. 169. *feeding:* pasture. 171. *sooth:* truth. 176. *featly:* gracefully. 183. *tabor and pipe:* drum and flute used by clowns and jesters. 184. *several:* different. 185. *tell:* count. 192. *milliner:* a seller, not merely of hats, but of miscellaneous feminine finery. 195. *burdens:* refrains. *dildos . . . her:* indecent refrains to old songs. 200. *Whoop . . . man:* a loose song of the time.

Pol. This is a brave fellow.

Clo. 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; inkles, caddisses, cambrics, lawns—why, he sings 'em over as they were gods or goddesses; you would think a smock were a she-angel, he so chants to the sleeve-hand and the work about the square on 't.

Clo. Prithee bring him in; and let him approach singing.

Per. Forewarn him that he use no scurrilous words in 's tunes. [*Exit Servant.*

Clo. You have of these pedlars that have more in them than you 'ld think, sister.

Per. Ay, good brother, or go about to think.

Enter AUTOLYCUS, *disguised with a false beard, bearing a pedlar's pack, and 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,

202. *brave:* rare. 203–4. *admirable conceited fellow:* very clever fellow. 204. *unbraided:* unfaded, not shopworn. 206. *points:* tagged lace for fastening clothing. 208. *inkles:* tapes. *caddises:* worsted tape used for garters. 211. *sleeve-hand:* the wrist-band. 212. *square:* neck. 217. *You have:* there are. 220. *Lawn as white,* etc. The earliest setting extant for this song is that made by the Dr. John Wilson referred to in the note on *Much Ado,* II, iii, 44. It can hardly be the original setting. 221. *Cyprus:* a fine, transparent, crepelike fabric. 222. *Gloves:* i.e., perfumed gloves. 224. *Bugle:* made of long beads. 226. *quoifs:* caps. *stomachers:* ornamental articles of women's dress. 228. *poking-sticks:* rods used for stiffening and keeping in position the plaits of ruffs.

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!

Clo. If I were not in love with Mopsa, thou shouldst take no money of me; but being enthralled as I am, it will also be the bondage of certain ribbons and gloves.

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; may be, he has paid you more, which will shame you to give him again.

Clo. 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.

Clo. 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 behoves men to be wary.

Clo. Fear not thou, man, thou shalt lose nothing here.

Aut. I hope so, sir; for I have about me many parcels of charge.

Clo. What hast here? Ballads?

Mop. Pray now, buy some; I love a ballad in print o' life, for then we are sure they are true.

237. *against:* for, before. 245. *plackets:* petticoats. 247. *kiln-hole:* the fireplace for making malt, a gossiping place. 248. *whistle off:* send off (a term in falconry). F_1 reads *of*. 250. *Clamour:* hold. 253. *tawdry-lace:* a cheap, showy, lace necktie, so called from St. Audrey (Ethelreda), who thought herself punished for wearing necklaces. Such things could be bought at St. Audrey's fair. 254. *cozened:* cheated, robbed. 261. *charge:* value. 264. *print o' life.* F_1 reads *print, o' life;* i.e., perhaps, "on my life."

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.

Clo. Come on, lay it by; and let's first see moe 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.

Clo. 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.* O, whither? *D.* Whither?

267. ***burden:*** birth. 268. ***carbonadoed:*** slashed, chopped. 297. ***'tis in request:*** it is popular.

M. It becomes thy oath full well,
Thou to me thy secrets tell.
D. Me too, let me go thither.
M. Or thou goest 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 goest? Say, whither?

Clo. We'll have this song out anon by ourselves; my father and the gentlemen are in sad talk, and we'll not trouble them. Come, bring away thy pack after me. Wenches, I'll buy for you both. Pedlar, let's have the first choice. Follow me, girls.

[*Exit with Dorcas and Mopsa.*

Aut. And you shall pay well for 'em. [*Follows singing.*
Will you buy any tape,
Or lace for your cape,
My dainty duck, my dear-a?
Any silk, any thread,
Any toys for your head,
Of the new'st and finest, finest wear-a?
Come to the pedlar;
Money's a medlar
That doth utter all men's ware-a.

Re-enter 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.

309. *grange:* farmhouse. 316. *sad:* serious. 329. *medlar:* (a) a thing of no value, like the medlar pear which is edible only when rotten, (b) a meddler. 330. *utter:* put into circulation, put into the market. 333. *men of hair:* i.e., dressed in skins. 334. *Saltiers:* leapers, acrobats; purposely confused with satyrs. 335. *gallimaufry:* hodgepodge.

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 squier.

Shep. Leave your prating. Since these good men are pleased, let them come in; but quickly now.

Serv. Why, they stay at door, sir. [*He lets the mummers in.*

Here a dance of twelve Satyrs.

Pol. O, father, you'll know more of that hereafter.
[*To Camillo.*] Is it not too far gone? 'Tis time to part them.
He's simple and tells much. [*To Florizel.*] How now, fair shepherd!
Your heart is full of something that does take
Your mind from feasting. Sooth, when I was young
And handed love as you do, I was wont
To load my she with knacks. I would have ransack'd
The pedlar's silken treasury and have pour'd it
To her acceptance; you have let him go
And nothing marted with him. If your lass
Interpretation should abuse and call this
Your lack of love or bounty, you were straited
For a reply—at least, if you make a care
Of happy holding her.

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. [*To Perdita.*] O, hear me breathe my life
Before this ancient sir, who, it should seem,
Hath sometime loved! I take thy hand, this hand,

348. *squier:* square, rule. 359. *she:* used as a noun. 362. *marted:* trafficked, bought and sold. 363. *Interpretation . . . abuse:* put the worst construction on this. 364. *straited:* in straits, at a loss.

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. O, that must be
I' the virtue of your daughter. One being dead,
I shall have more than you can dream of yet;

374. *bolted:* sifted. 377. *The hand was fair:* the hand that was fair. *put you out:* interrupted you. 391. *nothing so well:* not nearly so well.

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 bed-rid, and again does nothing
But what he did being childish?
Flo. No, good sir;
He has 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.

409. *rheums:* diseases. 416. *Something:* somewhat. 420. *yield:* grant.

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. [*Throwing off his disguise*] Mark your divorce, young sir,
Whom son I dare not call; thou art too base
To be acknowledged. Thou a sceptre's heir,
That thus affect'st a sheep-hook! Thou, old traitor,
I am sorry that by hanging thee I can
But shorten thy life one week. And thou, fresh piece
Of excellent witchcraft, who of force must know
The royal fool thou copest with—
Shep. O, my heart!
Pol. I'll have thy beauty scratch'd with briers, and made
More homely than thy state. For thee, fond boy,
If I may ever know thou dost but sigh
That thou no more shalt see this knack (as never
I mean thou shalt), we'll bar thee from succession,
Not hold thee of our blood—no, not our kin,
Far than Deucalion off; mark thou my words.
Follow us to the court. Thou churl, for this time,
Though full of our displeasure, yet we free thee
From the dead blow of it. And you, enchantment—
Worthy enough a herdsman; yea, him too,
That makes himself, but for our honour therein,
Unworthy thee—if ever henceforth thou
These rural latches to his entrance open,
Or hoop his body more with thy embraces,
I will devise a death as cruel for thee
As thou art tender to 't. [*Exit.*
Per. Even here undone!
I was not much afeard; for once or twice
I was about to speak and tell him plainly

430. *affect'st:* are in love with. 434. *copest with:* have to do with. 436. *fond:* foolish. 438. *knack:* trifle, toy; i.e., Perdita. 441. *Far:* farther. *Deucalion:* the classical Noah.

The selfsame sun that shines upon his court
Hides not his visage from our cottage, but
Looks on alike. Will 't please you, sir, be gone?
I told you what would come of this; beseech you,
Of your own state take care; this dream of mine—
Being now awake, I'll queen it no inch farther,
But milk my ewes and weep.
Cam. Why, how now, father,
Speak ere thou diest.
Shep. I cannot speak, nor think,
Nor dare to know that which I know. [*To Florizel.*] O sir!
You have undone a man of fourscore three,
That thought to fill his grave in quiet—yea,
To die upon the bed my father died,
To lie close by his honest bones; but now
Some hangman must put on my shroud and lay me
Where no priest shovels in dust. [*To Perdita.*] O cursed wretch,
That knew'st this was the prince, and wouldst adventure
To mingle faith with him! Undone! Undone!
If I might die within this hour, I have lived
To die when I desire. [*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?

459. ***queen . . . farther:*** be a queen no longer. 465. ***died:*** died upon.
476. ***Gracious my lord:*** my gracious lord.

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 ever been my father's honour'd friend,
When he shall miss me—as, in faith, I mean not
To see him any more—cast your good counsels
Upon his passion. Let myself and Fortune
Tug for the time to come. This you may know,
And so deliver, I am put to sea
With her, whom here I cannot hold on shore;
And most opportune to our need I have
A vessel rides fast by, but not prepared
For this design. What course I mean to hold
Shall nothing benefit your knowledge, nor
Concern me the reporting.

492. *fancy:* love. 500. *wombs:* encloses. 506. *passion:* anger, sorrow. 507. *Tug:* contend. 513. *nothing:* not at all.

Cam. O my lord!
I would your spirit were easier for advice,
Or stronger for your need.
Flo. Hark, Perdita. [*Drawing her aside.*
I'll hear you by and by.
Cam. He's irremoveable,
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.
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,

519. *frame:* manage. 524. *curious:* requiring care. 525. *ceremony:* formalities. 533. *embrace . . . direction:* take my advice. 536. *point:* direct.

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;

542. ***qualify:*** appease, pacify. 548. ***unthought-on:*** unanticipated. ***accident:*** event. 556. ***habited:*** dressed. 565. ***colour:*** excuse, reason.

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
She is i' the rear our 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 O, the thorns we stand upon! Camillo,
Preserver of my father, now of me,
The medicine of our house, how shall we do?

590. *as forward of:* as much above. 597. *medicine:* the doctor.

We are not furnish'd 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.*

Re-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 codpiece of a purse; I could have filed keys off that hung in chains—no hearing, no feeling, but my sir's song, and admiring the nothing of it. So that in this time of lethargy I picked and cut most of their festival purses; and had not the old man come in with a whoo-bub against his daughter and the king's son and scared my choughs from the chaff, I had not left a purse alive in the whole army.
[*Camillo, Florizel, and Perdita come forward.*

602. *appointed:* equipped. 605–6. *Honesty, Trust:* allusions to characters in the old morality plays. 608. *counterfeit stone:* amulet. *pomander:* scent ball. 609. *table-book:* notebook. 614. *was best in picture:* looked most promising. 618. *pettitoes:* feet. 621. *placket:* petticoat. 622. *codpiece of a purse:* a purse as big as a codpiece, an article of men's dress, sometimes made indelicately large. 628. *whoo-bub:* hubbub. 629. *choughs:* jackdaws.

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. [*Seeing Autolycus*] Who have we here?
We'll make an instrument of this, omit
Nothing may give us aid.
Aut. 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 a necessity in 't—and change garments with this gentleman. Though the pennyworth on his side be the worst, yet hold thee—there's some boot. [*Gives him money.*
Aut. I am a poor fellow, sir. [*Aside.*] I know ye well enough.
Cam. Nay, prithee, dispatch; the gentleman is half flayed already.
Aut. Are you in earnest, sir? [*Aside.*] I smell the trick on 't.
Flo. Dispatch, 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 ye—you must retire yourself
Into some covert. Take your sweetheart's hat
And pluck it o'er your brows, muffle your face,
Dismantle you, and, as you can, disliken
The truth of your own seeming; that you may—

636. ***instrument:*** agent. 647. ***discase:*** undress. 650. ***boot:*** something given in addition to a bargain. 654. ***flayed:*** stripped. 658. ***earnest:*** an installment to secure a bargain. 665. ***disliken:*** disguise.

For I do fear eyes over—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.
[*Takes it from Florizel and gives it to Perdita.*
Come, lady, come. Farewell, my friend.
Aut. Adieu, sir.
Flo. O Perdita, what have we twain forgot!
Pray you, a word. [*They talk 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 a piece of honesty to acquaint the king withal, I would not do 't. I hold it the more knavery to conceal it; and therein am I constant to my profession.

679. *review:* see again. 694. *clog:* encumbrance.

Re-enter Clown *and* Shepherd *with a bundle and a box.*

Aside, aside; here is more matter for a hot brain. Every lane's end, every shop, church, session, hanging, yields a careful man work.

Clo. 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.

Clo. Nay, but hear me.

Shep. Go to, then.

Clo. She being none of your flesh and blood, your flesh and blood has not offended the king; and so your flesh and blood is not to be punished by him. Show those things you found about her, those secret things, all but what she has with her. This being done, let the law go whistle. I warrant you.

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.

Clo. Indeed, brother-in-law was the farthest off you could have been to him, and then your blood had been the dearer by I know how much an ounce.

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. [*Aside*] I know not what impediment this complaint may be to the flight of my master.

Clo. Pray heartily he be at palace.

Aut. [*Aside*] Though I am not naturally honest, I am so sometimes by chance. Let me pocket up my pedlar'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,

701. *session:* sitting of court. 727. *fardel:* bundle. 733. *excrement:* beard.

of what having, breeding, and anything that is fitting to be known, discover.

Clo. 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.

Clo. Your Worship had like to have given us one, if you had not taken yourself with the manner.

Shep. Are you a courtier, an 't like you, sir?

Aut. Whether it like me or no, I am a courtier. [*Points to his dress.*] Seest thou not the air of the court in these enfoldings? [*Walks in an affected manner.*] 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? Thinkest thou, for that I insinuate, or toaze from thee thy business, I am therefore no courtier? I am courtier cap-a-pe, and one that will either push on or pluck back thy business there; whereupon I command thee to open thy affair.

Shep. My business, sir, is to the king.

Aut. What advocate hast thou to him?

Shep. I know not, an 't like you.

Clo. 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 will not disdain.

Clo. This cannot be but a great courtier.

Shep. His garments are rich, but he wears them not handsomely.

741. *discover:* reveal. 751. *with the manner:* in the act. 752. *like:* please. 755. *enfoldings:* clothes. 756. *measure of the court:* the stately walk of the courtier. 759. *toaze:* literally, "to comb out"; to elicit. 760. *cap-a-pe:* from head to foot. 767. *pheasant.* J. D. Wilson suggests that the Clown is confusing two kinds of *court* and has in mind the common practice of Shakespeare's day of bribing the magistrate with a bird of some kind. One's best advocate was a pheasant.

Clo. 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 palace; he is gone aboard a new ship to purge melancholy and air himself, for, if thou beest capable of things serious, thou must know the king is full of grief.

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.

Clo. 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.

Clo. Has the old man e'er a son, sir, do you hear, an 't 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 he be set

778. *fantastical:* fantastic. 779. *by . . . teeth:* picking the teeth in public was a court affectation in Elizabeth's time. 794. *hand-fast:* custody. 799. *wit:* ingenuity. 801. *germane:* related.

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 offenses being so capital? Tell me, for you seem to be honest plain men, what you have to the king; being something gently considered, I'll bring you where he is aboard, tender your persons to his presence, whisper him in your behalfs; and if it be in man, besides the king, to effect your suits, here is man shall do it.

Clo. 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 't please you, sir, to undertake the business for us, here is that gold I have; I'll make it as much more and leave this young man in pawn till I bring it you.

Aut. After I have done what I promised?

Shep. Ay, sir.

Aut. Well, give me the moiety. Are you a party in this business?

Clo. In some sort, sir; but though my case be a pitiful one, I hope I shall not be flayed out of it.

Aut. O, that's the case of the shepherd's son; hang him, he'll be made an example.

Clo. 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.

824. *being . . . considered:* for a gentlemanly consideration. 829. *Close:* come to an agreement. 836. *that:* what. 838. *pawn:* pledge. 841. *moiety:* the half (of my reward). 843. *case:* (a) situation, (b) skin.

Clo. We are blest in this man, as I may say, even blest.

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. *Sicilia; a room in* LEONTES' *palace.*

LEONTES, *in dejection, is seated with* CLEOMENES, DION, PAULINA, *and other attendants about him.*

Cleo. Sir, you have done enough, and have perform'd
A saint-like sorrow. No fault could you make,
Which you have not redeem'd—indeed, paid down
More penitence than done trespass. At the last,
Do as the heavens have done—forget your evil;
With them forgive yourself.

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.

859. *Let's before:* let us go ahead. 862. *suffer:* permit. 864. *occasion:* opportunity. 867. *aboard him:* aboard his ship. 868. *shore:* put on shore. 869. *nothing:* not at all. 871. *officious:* zealous in duty (not excessively so).

[V. i] 3. *redeem'd:* made up for. 8. *still:* continually.

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 strikest me
Sorely, to say I did. It is as bitter
Upon thy tongue as in my thought. Now, good now,
Say so but seldom.
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 name; consider little
What dangers, by his Highness' fail of issue,
May drop upon his kingdom and devour
Incertain 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,

12. *True, too true.* F_1 gives the first *true* to Leontes. 29. *Incertain:* uncertain. 35. *Respecting:* in comparison to. 36. *Will . . . purposes:* expect to have their purposes fulfilled.

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. [*To Leontes.*] Care not for issue;
The crown will find an heir. Great Alexander
Left his to the worthiest; so his successor
Was like to be the best.
Leon. Good Paulina,
Who hast the memory of Hermione,
I know, in honour, O, that ever I
Had squared me to thy counsel! Then, even now
I might have look'd upon my queen's full eyes,
Have taken treasure from her lips—
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're offenders now, appear soul-vex'd,
And begin, "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 'ld bid you mark
Her eye, and tell me for what dull part in 't
You chose her; then I 'ld shriek that even your ears
Should rift to hear me, and the words that follow'd
Should be, "Remember mine."

46. *Care not for issue:* do not be concerned about children. 52. *squared me to:* been ruled by. 59–60. *Where . . . me.* F_1 reads (*Where we Offenders now appeare*), *Soule-vext And begin, why to me?* 63. *mark:* observe. 66. *rift:* split.

Leon. Stars, 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 blest my spirit!
Paul. Then, good my lords, bear witness to his oath.
Cleo. You tempt him over-much.
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.

73. *tempt:* try. 85. *gives out himself:* says he is. 90. *out of circumstance:* without ceremony. 91. *framed:* planned.

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
Flow'd 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 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 and others.*
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; cease; thou know'st
He dies to me again when talk'd of. Sure,
When I shall see this gentleman, thy speeches

102. *shrewdly ebb'd:* greatly diminished. 108. *professors else:* adherents of other religions. 117. *full:* fully, quite. 120. *Sure:* assuredly.

Will bring me to consider that which may
Unfurnish me of reason. They are come.

Re-enter Cleomenes *and others, with* Florizel *and* Perdita.

Your mother was most true to wedlock, prince;
For she did print your royal father off,
Conceiving you. Were I but twenty-one,
Your father's image is so hit in you,
His very air, that I should call you brother,
As I did him, and speak of something wildly
By us perform'd before. Most dearly welcome!
And your fair princess—goddess—O, alas!
I lost a couple that 'twixt heaven and earth
Might thus have stood begetting wonder as
You, gracious couple, do; and then I lost—
All mine own folly—the society,
Amity too, of your brave father, whom,
Though bearing misery, I desire my life
Once more to look on him.

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. O my brother,
Good gentleman! The wrongs I have done thee stir
Afresh within me, and these thy offices,
So rarely kind, are as interpreters
Of my behind-hand slackness. Welcome hither,
As is the spring to the earth. And hath he too

140. *at friend:* as a friend. 142. *waits . . . times:* accompanies old age. *seized:* arrested.

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 blest,
As he from heaven merits it, with you
Worthy his goodness. What might I have been,
Might I a son and daughter now have look'd on,
Such goodly things as you!

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—

156. *adventure:* hazard. 179. *credit:* belief. 182. *attach:* arrest.

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 your city; I now came from him.
I speak amazedly; and it becomes
My marvel and my message. To your court
Whiles he was hastening (in the chase, it seems,
Of this fair couple) meets he on the way
The father of this seeming lady and
Her brother, having both their country quitted
With this young prince.
Flo. Camillo has betray'd me,
Whose honour and whose honesty till now
Endured all weathers.
Lord. Lay 't so to his charge;
He's with the king your father.
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. O my poor father!
The heaven 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.
Leon. 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,

195. *Lay . . . charge:* accuse him yourself. 198. *question:* conversation.

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 'ld 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. [*To Florizel.*] But your petition
Is yet unanswer'd. I will to your father.
Your honour not o'erthrown by your desires,
I am friend to them and you; upon which errand
I now go toward him; therefore follow me
And mark what way I make. Come, good my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Before* LEONTES' *palace.*

Enter AUTOLYCUS *meeting a* Gentleman.

Aut. Beseech you, sir, were you present at this relation?

First 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

214. *worth:* rank. 219. *since:* when. 223–8. This touching remembrance is all Shakespeare retains of the unpleasant episode in *Pandosto* in which that unhappy king unwittingly falls in love with his own daughter.

chamber; only this methought I heard the shepherd say, he found the child.

Aut. I would most gladly know the issue of it.

First 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 haply knows more. The news, Rogero?

Sec. 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?

Third 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's, her jewel about the neck of it, the letters of Antigonus found with it, which they know to be his character, the majesty of the creature in resemblance of the mother, the affection of nobleness which nature shows above her breeding, and many other evidences proclaim her, with all certainty, to be the king's daughter. Did you see the meeting of the two kings?

Sec. Gent. No.

[ii] 12. *admiration:* amazement. 20. *importance:* import. 27. *ballad-makers.* They were the popular journalists of the day. 34. *pregnant:* made plausible, significant. 38. *character:* handwriting.

Third 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, "O, thy mother, thy mother!"—then asks Bohemia forgiveness; then embraces his son-in-law; then again worries he his daughter with clipping her; now he thanks the old shepherd, which stands by like a weather-bitten conduit of many kings' reigns. I never heard of such another encounter, which lames report to follow it and undoes description to do it.

Sec. Gent. What, pray you, became of Antigonus, that carried hence the child?

Third 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.

First Gent. What became of his bark and his followers?

Third 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 O, the noble combat that 'twixt joy and sorrow was fought in Paulina! She had one eye declined for the loss of her husband, another elevated that the oracle was fulfilled; she lifted the princess from the earth, and so locks her in embracing, as if she would pin her to her heart that she might no more be in danger of losing.

First Gent. The dignity of this act was worth the audience of kings and princes, for by such was it acted.

53. *favour:* face; i.e., emotion had so altered their facial appearance. 59. *clipping:* embracing. 60. *conduit:* an allusion to the human figures on waterspouts. 67. *credit:* belief. 68. *with:* by. 77. *instruments:* agents.

Third 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 't bravely confessed and lamented by the king) how attentiveness wounded his daughter; till, from one sign of dolour to another, she did, with an "Alas," I would fain say, bleed tears; for I am sure my heart wept blood. Who was most marble there changed colour; some swooned; all sorrowed. If all the world could have seen 't, the woe had been universal.

First Gent. Are they returned to the court?

Third 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.

Sec. 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?

First 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

98. ***marble:*** unemotional, hard. 106. ***Julio Romano:*** a painter (1492–1546), not a sculptor. ***had . . . eternity:*** if he were the Creator. 108. ***beguile . . . custom:*** i.e., draw customers from Nature. 110. ***he so near to Hermione:*** he has carved a statue so much like Hermione. 116. ***removed:*** remote. 117. ***piece:*** add to. 124. ***aboard the prince:*** aboard the prince's ship.

shepherd's daughter (so he then took her to be) who began to be much sea-sick, and himself little better, extremity of weather continuing, this mystery remained undiscovered. But 'tis all one to me; for had I been the finder out of this secret, it would not have relished among my other discredits.

Enter Shepherd *and* Clown *in court apparel.*

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 moe children, but thy sons and daughters will be all gentlemen born.

Clo. 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.

Clo. Ay, and have been so any time these four hours.

Shep. And so have I, boy.

Clo. So you have; but I was a gentleman born before my father; for the king's son took me by the hand, and called me brother; and then the two kings called my father brother; and then the prince my brother and the princess my sister called my father father; and so we wept, and there was the first gentleman-like tears that ever we shed.

Shep. We may live, son, to shed many more.

Clo. 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.

Clo. Thou wilt amend thy life?

Aut. Ay, an it like your good Worship.

132. *relished:* appreciated.

Clo. 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.

Clo. 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?

Clo. If it be ne'er so false, a true gentleman may swear it in the behalf of his friend; and I'll swear to the prince thou art a tall fellow of thy hands and that thou wilt not be drunk; but I know thou art no tall fellow of thy hands and that thou wilt be drunk; but I'll swear it, and I would thou wouldst be a tall fellow of thy hands.

Aut. I will prove so, sir, to my power.

Clo. 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. *A chapel in* PAULINA'S *house.*

Enter LEONTES, POLIXENES, FLORIZEL, PERDITA, CAMILLO, PAULINA, Lords, *and* Attendants.

Leon. O 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 crown'd brother and these your contracted
Heirs of your kingdoms, my poor house to visit,
It is a surplus of your grace, which never
My life may last to answer.

Leon. O Paulina,
We honour you with trouble; but we came
To see the statue of our queen. Your gallery

173. *franklins:* landowners. 177. *tall . . . hands:* a courageous, capable, handy fellow. 187. *picture:* likeness, painted statue.
[iii] 4. *home:* fully.

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 a curtain, revealing Hermione standing like 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. O, 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. O, thus she stood,
Even with such life of majesty, warm life,
As now it coldly stands, when first I woo'd her!
I am ashamed; does not the stone rebuke me
For being more stone than it? O royal piece,
There's magic in thy majesty, which has

12. *singularities:* unique objects. S. D. Shakespeare intended this statue to be taken as such by his audience at first. 28. *nothing:* not at all. 32. *As:* as if.

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. O, 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 'ld 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 fixure of her eye has motion in 't,
As we are mock'd with art.

53. *Dear my brother:* my dear brother. 67. *fixure:* fixedness.

Paul. I'll draw the curtain;
My lord's almost so far transported that
He'll think anon it lives.
Leon. O sweet Paulina,
Make me to think so twenty years together!
No settled senses of the world can match
The pleasure of that madness. Let 't alone.
Paul. I am sorry, sir, I have thus far stirr'd you; but
I could afflict you farther.
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;

69. *transported:* carried away by his emotion. 77. *methinks:* it seems to me. 86. *presently:* forthwith.

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. [*Leontes hesitates.*] Nay, present your hand;
When she was young you woo'd her; now in age
Is she become the suitor?
Leon. O, she's warm!
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.
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

100. *look upon:* look upon it. 118. *Mark:* observe, give attention.

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. O, peace, Paulina!
Thou shouldst a husband take by my consent,
As I by thine a wife; this is a match,
And made between 's by vows. Thou hast found mine;
But how, is to be question'd; for I saw her
(As I thought) dead, and have in vain said many
A prayer upon her grave. I'll not seek far—
For him, I partly know his mind—to find thee
An honourable husband. Come, Camillo,
And take her by the hand, whose worth and honesty
Is richly noted and here justified
By us, a pair of kings. Let's from this place.
[*To Hermione.*] What? Look upon my brother. Both your pardons
That e'er I put between your holy looks
My ill suspicion. This is your son-in-law
And son unto the king, who, heavens directing,
Is troth-plight to your daughter. Good Paulina,
Lead us from hence, where we may leisurely
Each one demand and answer to his part
Perform'd in this wide gap of time since first
We were dissever'd. Hastily lead away. [*Exeunt.*

128. *issue:* outcome. 129. *push:* impulse. 132. *Partake:* impart. *turtle:* turtledove. 145. *justified:* confirmed. 150. *who.* F_1 reads *whom.* 151. *troth-plight:* betrothed.