THE TRAGEDIE OF

KING LEAR.

by

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Based on the Folio Text of 1623
## Shakespeare: First Folio

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The Tragedie of King Lear

Enter Kent, Gloucester, and Edmond.

Kent.

I thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany, then Cornwall.

Glou. It did always seeme so to vs: But now in the division of the Kingdome, it appeares not which of the Dukes hee valewes most, for qualities are so weigh’d, that curiosity in nei-ther, can make choise of eithers moity.

Kent. Is not this your Son, my Lord?

Glou. His breeding Sir, hath bin at my charge. I haue so often blush’d to acknowledge him, that now I am braz’d too’t.

Kent. I cannot conceiue you.

Glou. Sir, this yong Fellowes mother could; where-vpon she grew round womb’d, and had indeede (Sir) a Sonne for her Cradle, ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

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

Glou. But I haue a Sonne, Sir, by order of Law, some yeere elder then this; who, yet is no deerer in my ac-count, though this Knaue came somthing sawcily to the world before he was sent for: yet was his Mother fayre, there was good sport at his making, and the horson must be acknowledged. Doe you know this Noble Gentle-man, Edmond?

Edm. No, my Lord.

Glou. My Lord of Kent:

Remember him hereafter, as my Honourable Friend.

Edm. My seruices to your Lordship.

Kent. I must loue you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deseruing.

Glou. He hath bin out nine yeares, and away he shall againe. The King is comming.

Sennet. Enter King Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Gonerill, Re-gan, Cordelia, and attendants.

Lear. Attend the Lords of France & Burgundy, Gloster.
Glou. I shall, my Lord. Exit.

Lear. Meane time we shal expresse our darker purpose.

Giue me the Map there. Know, that we haue diuided
In three our Kingdome: and ´tis our fast intent,
To shake all Cares and Businesse from our Age,
Conferring them on yonger strengths, while we
Unburthen’d crawle toward death. Our son of Cornwal,
And you our no lesse louing Sonne of Albany,
We haue this houre a constant will to publish
Our daughters seuerall Dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. The Princes, France & Burgundy,
Great Riuals in our yongest daughters loue,
Long in our Court, haue made their amorous sojourn,
And heere are to be answer’d. Tell me my daughters
(Since now we will diuest vs both of Rule,
Interest of Territory, Cares of State)
Which of you shall we say doth loue vs most,
That we, our largest bountie may extend
Where Nature doth with merit challenge. Gonerill,
Our eldest borne, speake first.

Gon. Sir, I loue you more then word can weild y matter,
Deerer then eye- sight, space, and libertie,
Beyond what can be valewed, rich or rare,
No lesse then life, with grace, health, beauty, honor:
As much as Childe ere lou’d, or Father found.
A loue that makes breath poore, and speech vnable,
Beyond all manner of so much I loue you.

Cor. What shall Cordelia speake? Loue, and be silent.
Lear. Of all these bounds euen from this Line, to this,
With shadowie Forrests, and with Champains rich’d
With plenteous Riuers, and wide- skirted Meades
We make thee Lady. To thine and Albanies issues
Be this perpetuall. What sayes our second Daughter?
Our dearest Regan, wife of Cornwall?

Reg. I am made of that selfe- mettle as my Sister,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart,
I finde she names my very deede of loue:
Onely she comes too short, that I professe
My selfe an enemy to all other ioyes,
Which the most precious square of sense professes,
And finde I am alone felicitate
In your deere Highnesse loue.

Cor. Then poore Cordelia,
And yet not so, since I am sure my loue’s
More ponderous then my tongue.

Lear. To thee, and thine hereditarie euer,
Remaine this ample third of our faire Kingdome,
No lesse in space, validitie, and pleasure
Then that conferr’d on Gonerill. Now our Ioy,
Although our last and least; to whose yong loue,
The Vines of France, and Milke of Burgundie,
Striue to be interest. What can you say, to draw
A third, more opilent then your Sisters? speake.
Cor. Nothing my Lord.
Lear. Nothing? [qq2v
Cor. Nothing.
Lear. Nothing will come of nothing, speake againe.
Cor. Vnhappie that I am, I cannot heaue
My heart into my mouth: I loue your Maiesty
According to my bond, no more nor lesse.
Lear. How, how Cordelia? Mend your speech a little,
Least you may marre your Fortunes.
Cor. Good my Lord,
You haue begot me, bred me, lou’d me.
I returne those duties backe as are right fit,
Obey you, Loue you, and most Honour you.
Why haue my Sisters Husbands, if they say
They loue you all? Happily when I shall wed,
That Lord, whose hand must take my plight, shall carry
Halfe my loue with him, halfe my Care, and Dutie,
Sure I shall neuer marry like my Sisters.
Lear. But goes thy heart with this?
Cor. I my good Lord.
Lear. So young, and so vntender?
Cor. So young my Lord, and true.
Lear. Let it be so, thy truth then be thy dowre:
For by the sacred radience of the Sunne,
The misteries of Heccat and the night:
By all the operation of the Orbes,
From whom we do exist, and cease to be,
Heere I disclaime all my Paternall care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me,
Hold thee from this for euer. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosome
Be as well neighbour’d, pittied, and releeu’d,
As thou my sometime Daughter.
Kent. Good my Liege.
Lear. Peace Kent,
Come not betweene the Dragon and his wrath,
I lou’d her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery. Hence and avoid my sight:
So be my graue my peace, as here I giue
Her Fathers heart from her; call France, who stirres?
Call Burgundy, Cornwall, and Albanie,
With my two Daughters Dowres, digest the third,
Let pride, which she cals plainnesse, marry her:
I doe inuest you ioyntly with my power,
Preheminence, and all the large effects
That troope with Maiesty. Our selfe by Monthly course,
With reseruation of an hundred Knights,
By you to be sustain’d, shall our abode
Make with you by due turne, onely we shall retaine
The name, and all th’ addition to a King: the Sway,
Reuennew, Execution of the rest,
Beloued Sonnes be yours, which to confirme,
This Coronet part betweene you.

Kent. Royall Lear,
Whom I haue euer honor’d as my King,
Lou’d as my Father, as my Master follow’d,
As my great Patron thought on in my praiers.
Le. The bow is bent & drawne, make from the shaft.
Kent. Let it fall rather, though the forke inuade
The region of my heart, be Kent vnmanerly,
When Lear is mad, what wouldest thou do old man?
Think’st thou that dutie shall haue dread to speake,
When power to flattery bowes?
To plainnesse honour’s bound,
When Maiesty falls to folly, reserve thy state,
And in thy best consideration checke
This hideous rashnesse, anwere my life, my judgement:
Thy yongest Daughter do’s not loue thee least,
Nor are those empty hearted, whose low sounds
Reuerbe no hollownesse.
Lear.Kent, on thy life no more.
Kent. My life I neuer held but as pawne
To wage against thine enemies, nere feare to loose it,
Thy safety being motiue.
Lear. Out of my sight.
Kent. See better Lear, and let me still remaine
The true blanke of thine eie.
Lear. Now by Apollo,
Kent. Now by Apollo, King
Thou swear’st thy Gods in vaine.
Lear. O Vassall! Miscreant.
Alb. Cor. Deare Sir forbeare.
Kent. Kill thy Physition, and thy fee bestow
Vpon the foule disease, reuoke thy guift,
Or whil’st I can vent clamour from my throate,
Ile tell thee thou dost euill.

Lea. Heare me recreant, on thine allegeance heare me;
That thou hast sought to make vs breake our vowes,
Which we durst neuer yet; and with strain’d pride,
To come betwixt our sentences, and our power,
Which, nor our nature, nor our place can beare;
Our potencie made good, take thy reward.

Fiue dayes we do allot thee for prouision,
To shield thee from disasters of the world,
And on the sixt to turne thy hated backe
Vpon our kingdome: if on the tenth day following,
Thy banisht trunke be found in our Dominions,
The moment is thy death, away. By Iupiter,
This shall not be reuok’d,

Kent. Fare thee well King, sith thus thou wilt appeare,
Freedome liues hence, and banishment is here;
The Gods to their deere shelter take thee Maid,
That iustly think’st, and hast most rightly said:
And your large speeches, may your deeds approue,
That good effects may spring from words of loue:
Thus Kent, O Princes, bids you all adew,
Hee’l shape his old course, in a Country new. Exit.

Flourish. Enter Gloster with France, and Bur-gundy,
Attendants.

Cor. Heere’s France and Burgundy, my Noble Lord.
Lear. My Lord of Burgundie,
We first addresse toward you, who with this King
Hath riueld for our Daughter; what in the least
Will you require in present Dower with her,
Or cease your quest of Loue?
Bur. Most Royall Maiesty,
I craue no more then hath your Highnesse offer’d,
Nor will you tender lesse?
Lear. Right Noble Burgundy,
When she was deare to vs, we did hold her so,
But now her price is fallen: Sir, there she stands,
If ought within that little seeming substance,
Or all of it with our displeasure piec’d,
And nothing more may fitly like your Grace,
Shee’s there, and she is yours.
Bur. I know no answer.
Lear. Will you with those infirmities she owes,
Vnfriended, new adopted to our hate,
Dow’rd with our curse, and stranger’d with our oath,
Take her or, leave her. [qq3

Bur. Pardon me Royall Sir,

Election makes not vp in such conditions.

Le. Then leave her sir, for by the power that made me,

I tell you all her wealth. For you great King,

I would not from your love make such a stray,

To match you where I hate, therefore beseech you

T’ avert your liking a more worthier way,

Then on a wretch whom Nature is ashamed

Almost t’ acknowledge hers.

Fra. This is most strange,

That she whom even but now, was your object,

The argument of your praise, balm of your age,

The best, the dearest, should in this trice of time

Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle

So many folds of favour: sure her offence

Must be of such unnatural degree,

That monsters it: Or your forevoucht affection

Must be a faith that reason without miracle

Should never plant in me.

Cor. I yet beseech your Maiesty.

If for I want that glib and oylie Art,

To speak and purpose not, since what I will intend,

Ile do’t before I speake, that you make knowne

It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,

No vnchaste action or dishonoured step

That hath depriu’d me of your Grace and favour,

But even for want of that, for which I am richer,

A still soliciting eye, and such a tongue,

That I am glad I have not, though not to have it,

Hath lost me in your liking.

Lear. Better thou had’st not beene borne, then not t’haue pleas’d me better.

Fra. Is it but this? A tardinesse in nature,

Which often leaues the history vnspoke

That it intends to do: my Lord of Burgundy,

What say you to the Lady? Love’s not love

When it is mingled with regards, that stands

Aloofe from th’ intire point, will you have her?

She is herself a Dowrie.

Bur. Royall King,

Gieue but that portion which your selfe propos’d,

And here I take Cordelia by the hand,

Duchesse of Burgundie.

Lear. Nothing, I haue sworn, I am firme.
Bur. I am sorry then you haue so lost a Father,
That you must loose a husband.
Cor. Peace be with Burgundie,
Since that respect and Fortunes are his loue,
I shall not be his wife.
Fra. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich being poore,
Most choise forsaken, and most lou’d despis’d,
Thee and thy vertues here I seize vpon,
Be it lawfull I take vp what’s cast away.
Gods, Gods! 'Tis strange, that from their cold’st neglect
My Loue should kindle to enflam’d respect.
Thy dowrelesse Daughter King, throwne to my chance,
Is Queene of vs, of ours, and our faire France:
Not all the Dukes of watrish Burgundy,
Can buy this vnpriz’d precious Maid of me.
Bid them farewell Cordelia, though vnkinde,
Thou loosest here a better where to finde.
Lear. Thou hast her France, let her be thine, for we
Haue no such Daughter, nor shall euer see
That face of hers againe, therfore be gone,
Without our Grace, our Loue, our Benizon:
Fra. Bid farwell to your Sisters.
Cor. The Iewels of our Father, with wash’d eies
Cordelia leaues you, I know you what you are,
And like a Sister am most loth to call
Your faults as they are named. Loue well our Father:
To your professed bosomes I commit him,
But yet alas, stood I within his Grace,
I would prefer him to a better place,
So farewell to you both.
Regn. Prescribe not vs our dutie.
Gon. Let your study
Be to content your Lord, who hath receiu’d you
At Fortunes almes, you haue obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you haue wanted.
Cor. Time shall vnfold what plighted cunning hides,
Who couers faults, at last with shame derides:
Well may you prosper.
Fra. Come my faire Cordelia. Exit France and Cor.
Gon. Sister, it is not little I haue to say,
Of what most neerely appertaines to vs both,
I thinke our Father will hence to night.
Reg. That’s most certaine, and with you: next moneth ||(with vs.
Gon. You see how full of changes his age is, the ob-seruation
we haue made of it hath beene little; he alwaies
lou’d our Sister most, and with what poore iudgement he
hath now cast her off, appeares too grossely.
Reg. ’Tis the infirmity of his age, yet he hath euer but
slenderly knowne himselfe.
Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath bin but
rash, then must we looke from his age, to receiue not a-lone
the imperfections of long ingraffed condition, but
therewithall the vnruuly way- wardnesse, that infirme and
cholericke yeares bring with them.
Reg. Such vnconstant starts are we like to haue from
him, as this of Kents banishment.
Gon. There is further complement of leaue- taking be-tweene
France and him, pray you let vs sit together, if our
Father carry authority with such disposition as he beares,
this last surrender of his will but offend vs.
Reg. We shall further thinke of it.
Gon. We must do something, and i’th’ heate. Exeunt.

Scena Secunda.

Enter Bastard.

Bast. Thou Nature art my Goddesse, to thy Law
My seruices are bound, wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custome, and permit
The curiosity of Nations, to depriue me?
For that I am some twelue, or fourteene Moonshines
Lag of a Brother? Why Bastard? Wherefore base?
When my Dimensions are as well compact,
My minde as generous, and my shape as true
As honest Madams issue? Why brand they vs
With Base? With basenes Bastardie? Base, Base?
Who in the lustie stealth of Nature, take
More composition, and fierce qualitie,
Then doth within a dull stale tyred bed
Goe to th’ creating a whole tribe of Fops
Got ’tweenee a sleepe, and wake? Well then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must haue your land,
Our Fathers loue, is to the Bastard Edmond,
As to th’ legitimate: fine word: Legitimate. [qq3v
Well, my Legittimate, if this Letter speed,
And my inuention thrive, Edmond the base
Shall to’th’ Legitimate: I grow, I prosper:
Now Gods, stand vp for Bastards.
Enter Gloucester.
Glo. Kent banish’d thus? and France in choller parted?
And the King gone to night? Prescrib’d his powre,
Confin’d to exhibition? All this done
Vpon the gad? Edmond, how now? What newes?
Bast. So please your Lordship, none.
Glo. Why so earnestly seeke you to put vp y Letter?
Bast. I know no newes, my Lord.
Glo. What Paper were you reading?
Bast. Nothing my Lord.
Glo. No? what needed then that terrible dispatch of
it into your Pocket? The quality of nothing, hath not
such neede to hide it selfe. Let’s see: come, if it bee no-thing,
I shall not neede Spectacles.
Bast. I beseech you Sir, pardon mee; it is a Letter
from my Brother, that I haue not all ore- read; and for so
much as I haue perus’d, I finde it not fit for your ore- looke-king.
Glo. Giue me the Letter, Sir.
Bast. I shall offend, either to detaine, or giue it:
The Contents, as in part I vnderstand them,
Are too blame.
Glo. Let’s see, let’s see.
Bast. I hope for my Brothers iustification, hee wrote
this but as an essay, or taste of my Vertue.
Glo. reads. This policie, and reuerence of Age, makes the
world bitter to the best of our times: keepes our Fortunes from
vs, till our oldnesse cannot rellish them. I begin to finde an idle
and fond bondage, in the oppression of aged tyrany, who swayes
not as it hath power, but as it is suffer’d. Come to me, that of
this I may speake more. If our Father would sleepe till I wak’d
him, you should enioy halfe his Reuennew for euer, and liue the
beloued of your Brother. Edgar.
Hum? Conspiracy? Sleepe till I wake him, you should
enioy halfe his Reuennew: my Sonne Edgar, had hee a
hand to write this? A heart and braine to breede it in?
When came you to this? Who brought it?
Bast. It was not brought mee, my Lord; there’s the
cunning of it. I found it throwne in at the Casement of
my Closset.
Glo. You know the character to be your Brothers?
Bast. If the matter were good my Lord, I durst swear
it were his: but in respect of that, I would faine thinke it
were not.
Glo. It is his.
Bast. It is his hand, my Lord: but I hope his heart is
not in the Contents.
Glo. Has he neuer before sounded you in this busines?
Bast. Neuer my Lord. But I haue heard him oft main-taine
it to be fit, that Sonnes at perfect age, and Fathers
declin’d, the Father should bee as Ward to the Son, and
the Sonne manage his Reuennew.

Glou. O Villain, villain: his very opinion in the Let-ter.
Abhorred Villaine, vnnaturall, detested, brutish
Villaine; worse then brutish: Go sirrah, seeke him: Ile
apprehend him. Abhominable Villaine, where is he?

Bast. I do not well know my L[ord]. If it shall please you to
suspend your indignation against my Brother, til you can
derie from him better testimony of his intent, you shold
run a certaine course: where, if you violently proceed a-gainst
him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great
gap in your owne Honor, and shake in peeces, the heart of
his obedience. I dare pawne downe my life for him, that
he hath writ this to feele my affection to your Honor, &
to no other pretence of danger.

Glou. Thinke you so?

Bast. If your Honor iudge it meete, I will place you
where you shall heare vs conferre of this, and by an Auri-cular
assurance haue your satisfaction, and that without
any further delay, then this very Euening.

Glou. He cannot bee such a Monster. Edmond seeke
him out: winde me into him, I pray you: frame the Bu-sinesse
after your owne wisedome. I would vnstate my
selfe, to be in a due resolution.

Bast. I will seeke him Sir, presently: conuey the bu-sinesse
as I shall find meanes, and acquaint you withall.

Glou. These late Eclipses in the Sun and Moone por-tend
no good to vs: though the wisedome of Nature can
reason it thus, and thus, yet Nature finds it selfe scourg’d
by the sequent effects. Loue cooles, friendship falls off,
Brothers diuide. In Cities, mutinies; in Countries, dis-cord;
in Pallaces, Treason; and the Bond crack’d, ’twixt
Sonne and Father. This villaine of mine comes vnder the
prediction; there’s Son against Father, the King fals from
byas of Nature, there’s Father against Childe. We haue
seene the best of our time. Machinations, hollownesse,
treacherie, and all ruinous disorders follow vs disquietly
to our Graues. Find out this Villain, Edmond, it shall lose
thee nothing, do it carefully: and the Noble & true- har-ted
Kent banish’d; his offence, honesty. ’Tis strange. Exit

Bast. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that
when we are sicke in fortune, often the surfets of our own
behaviour, we make guilty of our disasters, the Sun, the
Moone, and Starres, as if we were villaines on necessitie,
Fool by heauenly compulsion, Knaues, Theeues, and
Treachers by Sphericall predominance. Drunkards, Ly-ars,
and Adulterers by an inforc’d obedience of Planatary
influence; and all that we are euill in, by a diuine thru-sting
on. An admirable euasion of Whore- master- man,
to lay his Goatish disposition on the charge of a Starre,
My father compounded with my mother vnder the Dra-gons
taile, and my Natiuity was vnder Vrsa Maior, so
that it followes, I am rough and Leacherous. I should
haue bin that I am, had the maidenlest Starre in the Fir-mament
twinkled on my bastardizing.

Enter Edgar.
Pat: he comes like the Catastrophe of the old Comedie;
my Cue is villanous Melancholly, with a sighe like Tom
o’ Bedlam. — O these Eclipses do portend these diui-sions.
Fa, Sol, La, Me.

Edg. How now Brother Edmond, what serious con-templation
are you in?

Bast. I am thinking Brother of a prediction I read this
other day, what should follow these Eclipses.

Edg. Do you busie your selfe with that?

Bast. I promise you, the effects he writes of, succeede

vnhappily.
When saw you my Father last?

Edg. The night gone by.

Bast. Spake you with him?

Edg. I, two houres together.

Bast. Parted you in good termes? Found you no dis-pleasure
in him, by word, nor countenance?

Edg. None at all,

Bast. Bethink your selfe wherein you may haue offen-ded
him: and at my entreaty forbear his presence, vntill
some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure,
which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mis-chiefe
of your person, it would scarsely alay.

Edg. Some Villaine hath done me wrong.

Edm. That’s my feare, I pray you have a continent
forbearance till the speed of his rage goes slower: and as
I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will
fitly bring you to heare my Lord speake: pray ye goe,
there’s my key: if you do stirre abroad, goe arm’d.

Edg. Arm’d, Brother?

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best, I am no honest
man, if ther be any good meaning toward you: I haue told
you what I haue seene, and heard: But faintly. Nothing
like the image, and horror of it, pray you away.
497  *Edg.* Shall I heare from you anon? *Exit.*
498  *Edm.* I do serue you in this businesse:
499  A Credulous Father, and a Brother Noble,
500  Whose nature is so farre from doing harmes,
501  That he suspects none: on whose foolish honestie
502  My practises ride easie: I see the businesse.
503  Let me, if not by birth, haue lands by wit,
504  All with me’s meete, that I can fashion fit. *Exit.*

---

**Scena Tertia.**

506  *Enter Gonerill, and Steward.*
507  *Gon.* Did my Father strike my Gentleman for chi-ding
508  of his Foole?
509  *Ste.* I Madam.
510  *Gon.* By day and night, he wrongs me, euery howre
511  He flashes into one grosse crime, or other,
512  That sets vs all at ods: Ile not endure it;
513  His Knights grow riotous, and himselfe vpbraides vs
514  On euery trifle. When he returnes from hunting,
515  I will not speake with him, say I am sicke,
516  If you come slacke of former seruices,
517  You shall do well, the fault of it Ile answer.
518  *Ste.* He’s comming Madam, I heare him.
519  *Gon.* Put on what weary negligence you please,
520  You and your Fellowes: I’de haue it come to question;
521  If he distaste it, let him to my Sister,
522  Whose mind and mine I know in that are one,
523  Remember what I haue said.
524  *Ste.* Well Madam.
525  *Gon.* And let his Knights haue colder lookes among
526  you: what growes of it no matter, advise your fellowes
527  so, Ile write straight to my Sister to hold my course; pre-pare
528  for dinner. *Exeunt.*

---

**Scena Quarta.**

530  *Enter Kent.*
531  *Kent.* If but as will I other accents borrow,
532  That can my speech defuse, my good intent
533  May carry through it selfe to that full issue
534  For which I raiz’d my likenesse. Now banisht *Kent,*
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn’d,
So may it come, thy Master whom thou lou’st,
Shall find thee full of labours.

_Horns within. Enter Lear and Attendants._

_Lear._ Let me not stay an iot for dinner, go get it rea-dy:
how now, what art thou?

_Kent._ A man Sir.

_Lear._ What dost thou professe? What would’st thou
with vs?

_Kent._ I do professe to be no lesse then I seeme; to serue
him truely that will put me in trust, to loue him that is
honest, to conuerse with him that is wise and saies little, to
feare judgement, to fight when I cannot choose, and to
eate no fish.

_Lear._ What art thou?

_Kent._ A very honest hearted Fellow, and as poore as
the King.

_Lear._ If thou be’st as poore for a subiect, as hee’s for a
King, thou art poore enough. What wouldst thou?

_Kent._ Seruice.

_Lear._ Who wouldst thou serue?

_Kent._ You.

_Lear._ Do’st thou know me fellow?

_Kent._ No Sir, but you haue that in your countenance,
which I would faine call Master.

_Lear._ What’s that?

_Kent._ Authority.

_Lear._ What seruices canst thou do?

_Kent._ I can keepe honest counsaile, ride, run, marre a
curious tale in telling it, and deliuer a plaine message
bluntly; that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qual-lified
in, and the best of me, is Dilligence.

_Lear._ How old art thou?

_Kent._ Not so young Sir to loue a woman for singing,
nor so old to dote on her for any thing. I haue yeares on
my backe forty eight.

_Lear._ Follow me, thou shalt serue me, if I like thee no
worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet. Dinner
ho, dinner, where’s my knaue? my Foole? Go you and call
my Foole hither. You you Sirrah, where’s my Daughter?

_Enter Steward._

_Ste._ So please you— Exit.

_Lear._ What saies the Fellow there? Call the Clot-pole
backe: wher’s my Foole? Ho, I thinke the world’s
asleepe, how now? Where’s that Mungrell?

_Knigh._ He saies my Lord, your Daughters is not well.
Lear. Why came not the slaue backe to me when I call’d him?

Knigh. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not?

Knigh. My Lord, I know not what the matter is, but to my judgement your Highnesse is not entertain’d with that Ceremonious affection as you were wont, there’s a great abatement of kindnesse appeares as well in the generall dependants, as in the Duke himselfe also, and your Daughter.

Lear. Ha? Saist thou so?

Knigh. I beseech you pardon me my Lord, if I bee mistaken, for my duty cannot be silent, when I thinke your Highnesse wrong’d.

Lear. Thou but remembrest me of mine owne Con-ception, I haue perceiued a most faint neglect of late, which I haue rather blamed as mine owne iealous curio-sitie, then as a very pretence and purpose of vnkindnesse; I will looke further intoo’t: but where’s my Foole? I haue not seene him this two daies.

Knigh. Since my young Ladies going into France

Sir, the Foole hath much pined away.

Lear. No more of that, I haue noted it well, goe you and tell my Daughter, I would speake with her. Goe you call hither my Foole; Oh you Sir, you, come you hither Sir, who am I Sir?

Enter Steward.

Ste. My Ladies Father.

Lear. My Ladies Father? my Lords knaue, you whor-son dog, you slaue, you curre.

Ste. I am none of these my Lord,

Lear. I haue not seene him this two daies.

Ste. I beseech your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy lookes with me, you Rascall?

Ste. Ile not be strucken my Lord.

Kent. Nor tript neither, you base Foot- ball plaier.

Lear. I thanke thee fellow.

Thou seru’st me, and Ie loue thee.

Kent. Come sir, arise, away, Ile teach you differences:

away, away, if you will measure your lubbers length a-gaine, tarry, but away, goe too, haue you wisedome, so.

Lear. Now my friendly knaue I thanke thee, there’s earnest of thy seruice.

Enter Foole.

Foole. Let me hire him too, here’s my Coxcombe.

Lear. How now my pretty knaue, how dost thou?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Line</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>627</td>
<td><em>Foole.</em> Sirrah, you were best take my Coxcombe.</td>
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<td>628</td>
<td><em>Lear.</em> Why my Boy?</td>
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<td>629</td>
<td><em>Foole.</em> Why? for taking ones part that’s out of fauour,</td>
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<td>630</td>
<td>nay, &amp; thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou’lt catch</td>
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<td>631</td>
<td>colde shortly, there take my Coxcombe; why this fellow</td>
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<tr>
<td>632</td>
<td>ha’s banish’d two on’s Daughters, and did the third a</td>
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<td>633</td>
<td>blessing against his will, if thou follow him, thou must</td>
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<td>634</td>
<td>needs weare my Coxcombe. How now Nunckle? would</td>
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<tr>
<td>635</td>
<td>I had two Coxcombes and two Daughters.</td>
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<td>636</td>
<td><em>Lear.</em> Why my Boy?</td>
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<tr>
<td>637</td>
<td><em>Fool.</em> If I gaue them all my liuing, I’ld keepe my Cox-combes</td>
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<td>638</td>
<td>my selfe, there’s mine, beg another of thy</td>
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<td>639</td>
<td>Daughters.</td>
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<td>640</td>
<td><em>Lear.</em> Take heed Sirrah, the whip.</td>
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<td>641</td>
<td><em>Foole.</em> Truth’s a dog must to kennell, hee must bee</td>
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<td>642</td>
<td>whipt out, when the Lady Brach may stand by’th’ fire</td>
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<td>643</td>
<td>and stinke.</td>
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<td>644</td>
<td><em>Lear.</em> A pestilent gall to me.</td>
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<td>645</td>
<td><em>Foole.</em> Sirha, Ile teach thee a speech.</td>
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<td>646</td>
<td><em>Lear.</em> Do.</td>
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<td>647</td>
<td><em>Foole.</em> Marke it Nuncl;</td>
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<td>648</td>
<td>Haue more then thou showest,</td>
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<td>649</td>
<td>Speake lesse then thou knowest,</td>
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<td>650</td>
<td>Lend lesse then thou owest,</td>
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<td>651</td>
<td>Ride more then thou goest,</td>
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<td>652</td>
<td>Learne more then thou trowest,</td>
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<td>653</td>
<td>Set lesse then thou throwest;</td>
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<td>654</td>
<td>Leaue thy drinke and thy whore,</td>
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<td>655</td>
<td>And keepe in a dore,</td>
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<td>656</td>
<td>And thou shalt haue more,</td>
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<td>657</td>
<td>Then two tens to a score,</td>
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<td>658</td>
<td><em>Kent.</em> This is nothing Foole.</td>
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<td>659</td>
<td><em>Foole.</em> Then ’tis like the breath of an vnfeed Lawyer,</td>
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<td>660</td>
<td>you gaue me nothing for’t, can you make no vse of no-thing</td>
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<td>661</td>
<td>Nuncl?</td>
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<td>662</td>
<td><em>Lear.</em> Why no Boy,</td>
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<td>663</td>
<td>Nothing can be made out of nothing.</td>
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<td>664</td>
<td><em>Foole.</em> Prythee tell him, so much the rent of his land</td>
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<td>665</td>
<td>comes to, he will not beleue a Foole.</td>
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<tr>
<td>666</td>
<td><em>Lear.</em> A bitter Foole.</td>
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<tr>
<td>667</td>
<td><em>Foole.</em> Do’st thou know the difference my Boy, be-tweene</td>
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<tr>
<td>668</td>
<td>a bitter Foole, and a sweet one.</td>
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<td>669</td>
<td><em>Lear.</em> No Lad, teach me.</td>
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<td>670</td>
<td><em>Foole.</em> Nunckle, giue me an egge, and Ile giue thee</td>
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<td>671</td>
<td>two Crownes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>672</td>
<td><em>Lear.</em> What two Crownes shall they be?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
673    *Foole.* Why after I haue cut the egge i’th middle and
674    eate vp the meate, the two Crownes of the egge: when
675    thou clouest thy Crownes i’th middle, and gau’st away
676    both parts, thou boar’st thine Asse on thy backe o’re the
677    durt, thou hadst little wit in thy bald crowne, when thou
678    gau’st thy golden one away; if I speake like my selfe in
679    this, let him be whipt that first findes it so.
680    Fooles had nere lesse grace in a yeere,
681    For wisemen are growne foppish,
682    And know not how their wits to weare,
683    Their manners are so apish.
684    *Le.* When were you wont to be so full of Songs sirrah?
685    *Foole.* I haue vsed it Nunckle, ere since thou mad’st
686    thy Daughters thy Mothers, for when thou gau’st them
687    the rod, and put’st downe thine owne breeches, then they
688    For sodaine ioy did weepe,
689    And I for sorrow sung,
690    That such a King should play bo-peepe,
691    And goe the Foole among.
692    Pry’thy Nunckle keepe a Schoolemaster that can teach
693    thy Foole to lie, I would faine learne to lie.
694    *Lear.* And you lie sirrah, wee’l haue you whipt.
695    *Foole.* I maruell what kin thou and thy daughters are,
696    they’l haue me whipt for speaking true: thou’lt haue me
697    whipt for lying, and sometimes I am whipt for holding
698    my peace. I had rather be any kind o’ thing then a foole,
699    and yet I would not be thee Nunckle, thou hast pared thy
700    wit o’ both sides, and left nothing i’th middle; heere
701    comes one o’the parings.
702    *Enter Gonerill.*
703    *Lear.* How now Daughter? what makes that Frontlet
704    on? You are too much of late i’th frowne.
705    *Foole.* Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no
706    need to care for her frowning, now thou art an O with-out
707    a figure, I am better then thou art now, I am a Foole,
708    thou art nothing. Yes forsooth I will hold my tongue, so
709    your face bids me, though you say nothing.
710    Mum, mum, he that keepes nor crust, nor crum,
711    Weary of all, shall want some. That’s a sheal’d Pescod.
712    *Gon.* Not only Sir this, your all-lycenc’d Foole,
713    But other of your insolent retinue
714    Do hourly Carpe and Quarrell, breaking forth
715    In ranke, and (not to be endur’d) riots Sir.
716    I had thought by making this well knowne vnto you,
717    To haue found a safe redresse, but now grow fearefull
718    By what your selfe too late haue spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance, which if you should, the fault
Would not scape censure, nor the redresses sleepe,
Which in the tender of a wholesome weale,
Mighty in their working do you that offence,
Which else were shame, that then necessitie
Will call discreet proceeding.

Foole. For you know Nunckle, the Hedge- Sparrow
fed the Cuckoo so long, that it’s had it head bit off by it
young, so out went the Candle, and we were left dark-ling.

Lear. Are you our Daughter?

Gon. I would you would make vse of your good wise-(dome
(Whereof I know you are fraught), and put away
These dispositions, which of late transport you
From what you rightly are.  [qq5

Foole. May not an Asse know, when the Cart drawes
the Horse?

Whoop Iugge I loue thee.

Lear. Do’s any heere know me?

This is not Lear:
Do’s Lear walke thus? Speake thus? Where are his eies?
Either his Notion weakens, his Discernings
Are Lethargied. Ha! Waking? ’Tis not so?
Who is it that can tell me who I am?

Foole. Lear’s shadow.

Lear. Your name, faire Gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration Sir, is much o’th’ sauour
Of other your new prankes. I do beseech you
To vnderstand my purposes aright:
As you are Old, and Reuerend, should be Wise.
Heere do you keepe a hundred Knights and Squires,
Men so disorder’d, so deboish’d and bold,
That this our Court infected with their manners,
Shewes like a riotous Inne; Epicurisme and Lust
Makes it more like a Tauerne, or a Brothell,
Then a grac’d Pallace. The shame it selfe doth speake
For instant remedy. Be then desir’d
By her, that else will take the thing she begges,
A little to disquantity your Traine,
And the remainders that shall still depend,
To be such men as may besort your Age,
Which know themselues, and you.

Lear. Darknesse, and Diuels.

Saddle my horses: call my Traine together.

Degenerate Bastard, Ile not trouble thee;
Yet haue I left a daughter.
Gon. You strike my people, and your disorder'd rable,
make Servants of their Bettors.

Enter Albany.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents:
Is it your will, speake Sir? Prepare my Horses.

Ingratitude! thou Marble-hearted Fiend,
More hideous when thou shew'st thee in a Child,
Then the Sea-monster.

Alb. Pray Sir be patient.

Lear. Detested Kite, thou lyest.

My Traine are men of choice, and rarest parts,
That all particulars of dutie know,
And in the most exact regard, support
The worships of their name. O most small fault,
How vgly did'st thou in Cordelia shew?
From the fixt place: drew from my heart all loue,
And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beate at this gate that let thy Folly in,
And thy deere Judgement out. Go, go, my people.

Alb. My Lord, I am guiltlesse, as I am ignorant
Of what hath moued you.

Lear. It may be so, my Lord.

Heare Nature, heare deere Goddesse, heare:
Suspend thy purpose, if thou did'st intend
To make this Creature fruitfull:
Into her Wombe conuey stirrility,
Drie vp in her the Organs of increase,
A Babe to honor her. If she must teeme,
Create her childe of Spleene, that it may liue
And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her.
Let it stampe wrinkles in her brow of youth,
With cadent Teares fret Channels in her cheekes,
Turne all her Mothers paines, and benefits
To laughter, and contempt: That she may feele,
How sharper then a Serpents tooth it is,
To have a thanklesse Childe. Away, away. Exit.

Alb. Now Gods that we adore,
Whereof comes this?

Gon. Neuer afflict your selfe to know more of it:
But let his disposition haue that scope
As dotage giues it.

Enter Lear.

Lear. What fiftie of my Followers at a clap?
Within a fortnight?
Alb. What’s the matter, Sir?

Lear. Ile tell thee:

Life and death, I am asham’d
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus,
That these hot teares, which breake from me perforce
Should make thee worth them.
Blastes and Fogges vpon thee:
Th’ unvented woundings of a Fathers curse
Pierce euery sense about thee. Old fond eyes,
Beweepe this cause againe, Ile plucke ye out,
And cast you with the waters that you loose
To temper Clay. Ha? Let it be so.
I haue another daughter,
Who I am sure is kinde and comfortable:
When she shall heare this of thee, with her nailes
Shee’l fle thy Woluish visage. Thou shalt finde,
That Ile resume the shape which thou dost thinke
I haue cast off for euer. Exit
Gon. Do you marke that?
Alb. I cannot be so partiall Gonerill,
To the great loue I beare you.
Gon. Pray you content. What Oswald, hoa?
You Sir, more Knaue then Foole, after your Master.
Foole. Nunkle Lear, Nunkle Lear,
Tarry, take the Foole with thee:
A Fox, when one has caught her,
And such a Daughter,
Should sure to the Slaughter,
If my Cap would buy a Halter,
So the Foole followes after. Exit
Gon. This man hath had good Counsell,
A hundred Knights?
’Tis politike, and safe to let him keepe
At point a hundred Knights: yes, that on euerie dreame,
Each buz, each fancie, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their powres,
And hold our liues in mercy. Oswald, I say.
Alb. Well, you may feare too farre.
Gon. Safer then trust too farre;
Let me still take away the harmes I feare,
Not feare still to be taken. I know his heart,
What he hath vther’d I haue writ my Sister:
If she sustaine him, and his hundred Knights
When I haue shew’d th’ vnfitnesse.
Enter Steward.
How now Oswald?
What haue you writ that Letter to my Sister?

Stew. I Madam.

Gon. Take you some company, and away to horse,
Informe her full of my particular feare,
And thereto adde such reasons of your owne,
As may compact it more. Get you gone, [qq5v
And hasten your returne; no, no, my Lord,
This milky gentlenesse, and course of yours
Though I condemne not, yet vnder pardon
You are much more at task for want of wisedome,
Then prais’d for harmefull mildnesse.
Alb. How farre your eies may pierce I cannot tell;
Striuing to better, oft we marre what’s well.
Gon. Nay then—
Alb. Well, well, th’ euent. Exeunt

Scena Quinta.

Enter Lear, Kent, Gentleman, and Foole.
Lear. Go you before to Gloster with these Letters;
acquaint my Daughter no further with any thing you
know, then comes from her demand out of the Letter,
if your Dilligence be not speedy, I shall be there afore
you.
Kent. I will not sleepe my Lord, till I haue deliuered
your Letter. Exit.
Foole. If a mans braines were in’s heeles, wert not in
danger of kybes?
Lear. I Boy.
Foole. Then I prythee be merry, thy wit shall not go
slip- shod.
Lear. Ha, ha, ha.
Fool. Shalt see thy other Daughter will use thee kind-ly,
for though she’s as like this, as a Crabbe’s like an
Apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.
Lear. What can’st tell Boy?
Foole. She will taste as like this as, a Crabbe do’s to a
Crab: thou canst, tell why ones nose stands i’th’ middle
on’s face?
Lear. No.
Foole. Why to keepe ones eyes of either side ’s nose,
that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.
Lear. I did her wrong.
Foole. Can’st tell how an Oyster makes his shell?
Lear. No.

Foole. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a Snaile ha’s a house.

Lear. Why?

Foole. Why to put’s head in, not to giue it away to his daughters, and leaue his hornes without a case.

Lear. I will forget my Nature, so kind a Father? Be my Horsses ready?

Foole. Thy Asses are gone about ’em; the reason why the seuen Starres are no mo then seuen, is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight.

Foole. Yes indeed, thou would’st make a good Foole.

Lear. To tak’t againe perforce; Monster Ingratitude!

Foole. If thou wert my Foole Nunckle, I’d haue thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How’s that?

Foole. Thou shouldst not haue bin old, till thou hadst bin wise.

Lear. O let me not be mad, not mad sweet Heauen: keepe me in temper, I would not be mad. How now are the Horses ready?

Gent. Ready my Lord.

Lear. Come Boy.

Fool. She that’s a Maid now, & laughs at my departure, Shall not be a Maid long, vnlesse things be cut shorter.

Exeunt.

Actus Secundus. Scena Prima.

Enter Bastard, and Curan, seuerally.

Bast. Saue thee Curan.

Cur. And you Sir, I haue bin With your Father, and giuen him notice That the Duke of Cornwall, and Regan his Duchesse Will be here with him this night.

Bast. How comes that?

Cur. Nay I know not, you haue heard of the newes a-broad, I meane the whisper’d ones, for they are yet but ear- kissing arguments.

Bast. Not I: pray you what are they?

Cur. Haue you heard of no likely Warres toward, ’Twixt the Dukes of Cornwall, and Albany?

Bast. Not a word.

Cur. You may do then in time,
Fare you well Sir. Exit. 
Bast. The Duke be here to night? The better best, 
This weaues it selfe perforce into my businesse, 
My Father hath set guard to take my Brother, 
And I haue one thing of a queazie question 
Which I must act, Briefenesse, and Fortune worke. 
Enter Edgar. 
Brother, a word, discend; Brother I say, 
My Father watches: O Sir, fly this place, 
Intelligence is giuen where you are hid; 
You haue now the good advantage of the night, 
Haue you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornewall? 
Hee’s comming hither, now i’th’ night, i’th’ haste, 
And Regan with him, haue you nothing said 
Vpon his partie ’gainst the Duke of Albany? 
Aduise your selfe. 
Edg. I am sure on’t, not a word. 
Bast. I heare my Father comming, pardon me: 
In cunning, I must draw my Sword vpon you: 
Draw, seeme to defend your selfe, 
Now quit you well. 
Yeeld, come before my Father, light hoa, here, 
Fly Brother, Torches, Torches, so farewell. 
Exit Edgar. 
Some blood drawne on me, would beget opinion 
Of my more fierce endeauour. I haue seene drunkards 
Do more then this in sport; Father, Father, 
Stop, stop, no helpe? 
Enter Gloster, and Seruants with Torches. 
Glo. Now Edmund, where’s the villaine? 
Bast. Here stood he in the dark, his sharpe Sword out, 
Mumbling of wicked charmes, conjuring the Moone 
To stand auspicious Mistris. 
Glo. But where is he? 
Bast. Looke Sir, I bleed. 
Glo. Where is the villaine, Edmund? 
Bast. Fled this way Sir, when by no meanes he could. 
Glo. Pursue him, ho: go after. By no meanes, what? 
Bast. Perswade me to the murther of your Lordship, [qq6 
But that I told him the reuenging Gods, 
’Gainst Paricides did all the thunder bend, 
Spoke with how manifold, and strong a Bond 
The Child was bound to’th’ Father; Sir in fine, 
Seeing how lothly opposite I stood 
To his vnnaturall purpose, in fell motion 
With his prepared Sword, he charges home
My vnprouided body, latch’d mine arme;
And when he saw my best alarum’d spirits
Bold in the quarrels right, rouz’d to th’ encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noyse I made,
Full sodainely he fled.

_Glost._ Let him fly farre:

Not in this Land shall he remaine vncaught
And found; dispatch, the Noble Duke my Master,
My worthy Arch and Patron comes to night,
By his authoritie I will proclaime it,
That he which finds him shall deserue our thankes,
Bringing the murderous Coward to the stake:
He that conceales him death.

_Bast._ When I disswaded him from his intent,
And found him pight to doe it, with curst speech
I threaten’d to discouer him; he replied,
Thou vnpossessing Bastard, dost thou thinke,
If I would stand against thee, would the reposall
Of any trust, vertue, or worth in thee
Make thy words faith’d? No, what should I denie,
(As this I would, though thou didst produce
My very Character) I’ld turne it all
To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practise:
And thou must make a dullard of the world,
If they not thought the profits of my death
Were very pregnant and potentiall spirits
To make thee seeke it. _Tucket within._

_Glo._ O strange and fastned Villaine,
Would he deny his Letter, said he?
Harke, the Dukes Trumpets, I know not wher he comes;
All Ports Ile barre, the villaine shall not scape,
The Duke must grant me that: besides, his picture
I will send farre and neere, that all the kingdome
May haue due note of him, and of my land,
(Loyall and naturall Boy) Ile worke the meanes
To make thee capable.

_Enter Cornewall, Regan, and Attendants._
_Corn._ How now my Noble friend, since I came hither
(Which I can call but now,) I haue heard strangenesse.
_Reg._ If it be true, all vengeance comes too short
Which can pursue th’ offender; how dost my Lord?
_Glo._ O Madam, my old heart is crack’d, it’s crack’d.
_Reg._ What, did my Fathers Godsonne seeke your life?

He whom my Father nam’d, your _Edgar_?
_Glo._ O Lady, Lady, shame would haue it hid.
_Reg._ Was he not companion with the riotous Knights
That tended upon my Father?

Glo. I know not Madam, ’tis too bad, too bad.

Bast. Yes Madam, he was of that consort.

Reg. No maruaile then, though he were ill affected,

’Tis they have put him on the old mans death,

To haue th’ expence and wast of his Reuennues:

I haue this present euening from my Sister

Beene well inform’d of them, and with such cautions,

That if they come to soiourne at my house,

Ile not be there.

Cor. Nor I, assure thee Regan;

Edmund, I heare that you haue shewne your Father

A Child-like Office.

Bast. It was my duty Sir.

Glo. He did bewray his practise, and receiued

This hurt you see, struing to apprehend him.

Cor. Is he pursued?

Glo. I my good Lord.

Cor. If he be taken, he shall never more

Be fear’d of doing harme, make your owne purpose,

How in my strength you please: for you Edmund,

Whose vertue and obedience doth this instant

So much commend it selfe, you shall be ours,

Nature’s of such deepe trust, we shall much need:

You we first seize on.

Bast. I shall serue you Sir truely, how euer else.

Glo. For him I thanke your Grace.

Cor. You know not why we came to visit you?

Reg. Thus out of season, thredding darke ey’d night,

Occasions Noble Gloster of some prize,

Wherein we must haue vse of your aduise.

Our Father he hath writ, so hath our Sister,

Of differences, which I best thought it fit

To answere from our home: the seuerall Messengers

From hence attend dispatch, our good old Friend,

Lay comforts to your bosome, and bestow

Your needfull counsaile to our businesses,

Which craues the instant vse.

Glo. I serue you Madam,

Your Graces are right welcome. Exeunt. Flourish.
Enter Kent, and Steward severally.

Stew. Good dawning to thee Friend, art of this house?

Kent. I.

Stew. Where may we set our horses?

Kent. I’th myre.

Stew. Prythee, if thou lou’st me, tell me.

Kent. I loue thee not.

Stew. Why then I care not for thee.

Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury Pinfold, I would make thee care for me.

Stew. Why do’st thou use me thus? I know thee not.

Kent. Fellow I know thee.

Stew. What do’st thou know me for?

Kent. A Knaue, a Rascall, an eater of broken meates, a base, proud, shallow, beggerly, three- suited- hundred pound, filthy woosted- stocking knaue, a Lilly- liuered, action- taking, whoreson glasse- gazing super- seruiceable finicall Rogue, one Trunke- inheriting slaeue, one that would’st be a Baud in way of good seruice, and art no-thing but the composition of a Knaue, Begger, Coward, Pandar, and the Sonne and Heire of a Mungrill Bitch, one whom I will beate into clamours whining, if thou deny’st the least sillable of thy addition.

Stew. Why, what a monstrous Fellow art thou, thus to raile on one, that is neither knowne of thee, nor knowes thee?

Kent. What a brazen- fac’d Varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me? Is it two dayes since I tript vp thy heeles, and beate thee before the King? Draw you rogue, for though it be night, yet the Moone shines, Ile make a sop oth’ Moonshine of you, you whoreson Cullyenly Barber- monger, draw.

Stew. Away, I haue nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw you Rascall, you come with Letters a-gainst the King, and take Vanitie the puppets part, a-gainst the Royaltie of her Father: draw you Rogue, or Ile so carbonado your shanks, draw you Rascall, come your waies.

Ste. Helpe, ho, murther, helpe.

Kent. Strike you slaeue: stand rogue, stand you neat slaeue, strike.

Stew. Helpe hoa, murther, murther.

Enter Bastard, Cornewall, Regan, Gloster, Servants.

Bast. How now, what’s the matter? Part.
Kent. With you goodman Boy, if you please, come, Ile flesh ye, come on yong Master.
Glo. Weapons? Armes? what’s the matter here?
Cor. Kepee peace vpon your liues, he dies that strikes againe, what is the matter?
Reg. The Messengers from our Sister, and the King?
Cor. What is your difference, speake?
Stew. I am scarce in breath my Lord.
Kent. No Maruell, you haue so bestir’d your valour, you cowardly Rascall, nature disclaimes in thee: a Taylor made thee.
Cor. Thou art a strange fellow, a Taylor make a man?
Kent. A Taylor Sir, a Stone-cutter, or a Painter, could not haue made him so ill, though they had bin but two yeares oth’ trade.
Cor. Speake yet, how grew your quarrell?
Ste. This ancient Ruffian Sir, whose life I haue spar’d at sute of his gray-beard.
Kent. Thou whoreson Zed, thou unnecessary letter: my Lord, if you will giue me leaue, I will tread this vn-boulted villaine into morter, and daube the wall of a Iakes with him. Spare my gray-beard, you wagtaile?
Cor. Peace sirrah,
You beastly knaue, know you no reuerence?
Kent. Yes Sir, but anger hath a priuiledge.
Cor. Why art thou angrie?
Kent. That such a slaue as this should weare a Sword, Who weares no honesty: such smiling rogues as these, Like Rats oft bite the holy cords a twaine, Which are t’ intrince, t’ vnloose: smooth euery passion That in the natures of their Lords rebell,
Cor. What art thou mad old Fellow?
Glost. How fell you out, say that?
Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy,
Then I, and such a knaue.
Cor. Why do’st thou call him Knaue?
What is his fault?
His countenance likes me not.
1165  Cor. No more perchance do’s mine, nor his, nor hers.
1166  Kent. Sir, ’tis my occupation to be plaine,
1167  I haue seene better faces in my Time,
1168  Then stands on any shoulder that I see
1169  Before me, at this instant.
1170  Cor. This is some Fellow,
1171  Who hauing beene prais’d for bluntnesse, doth affect
1172  A saucy roughnes, and constraines the garb
1173  Quite from his Nature. He cannot flatter he,
1174  An honest mind and plaine, he must speake truth,
1175  And they will take it so, if not, hee’s plaine.
1176  These kind of Knaues I know, which in this plainnesse
1177  Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends,
1178  Then twenty silly- ducking observants,
1179  That stretch their duties nicely.
1180  Kent. Sir, in good faith, in sincere verity,
1181  Vnder th’ allowance of your great aspect,
1182  Whose influence like the wreath of radiant fire
1183  On flickring Phoebus front.
1184  Cor. What mean’st by this?
1185  Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discom-mend
1186  so much; I know Sir, I am no flatterer, he that be-guild
1187  you in a plaine accent, was a plaine Knaue, which
1188  for my part I will not be, though I should win your
1189  displeasure to entreat me too’t.
1190  Cor. What was th’ offence you gaue him?
1191  Ste. I neuer gaue him any:
1192  It pleas’d the King his Master very late
1193  To strike at me vpon his misconstraction,
1194  When he compact, and flattering his displeasure
1195  Tript me behind: being downe, insulted, rail’d,
1196  And put vpon him such a deale of Man,
1197  That worthied him, got praises of the King,
1198  For him attempting, who was selfe- subdued,
1199  And in the flesment of this dead exploit,
1200  Drew on me here againe.
1201  Kent. None of these Rogues, and Cowards
1202  But Aiax is there Foole.
1203  Cor. Fetch forth the Stocks?
1204  You stubborne ancient Knaue, you reuerent Bragart,
1205  Wee’l teach you.
1206  Kent. Sir, I am too old to learne:
1207  Call not your Stocks for me, I serue the King.
1208  On whose imployment I was sent to you,
1209  You shall doe small respects, show too bold malice
1210  Against the Grace, and Person of my Master,
Stocking his Messenger.

Corn. Fetch forth the Stocks;

As I haue life and Honour, there shall he sit till Noone.

Reg. Till noone? till night my Lord, and all night too.

Kent. Why Madam, if I were your Fathers dog,

You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his Knaue, I will. Stocks brought out.

Cor. This is a Fellow of the selfe same colour,

Our Sister speakes of. Come, bring away the Stocks.

Glo. Let me beseech your Grace, not to do so,

The King his Master, needs must take it ill

That he so slightly valued in his Messenger,

Should haue him thus restrained.

Cor. Ile answere that.

Reg. My Sister may recieue it much more worsse,

To haue her Gentleman abus'd, assaulted.

Cor. Come my Lord, away. Exit.

Glo. This is a Fellow of the selfe same colour,

Our Sister speakes of. Come, bring away the Stocks.

Glo. Let me beseech your Grace, not to do so,

The King his Master, needs must take it ill

That he so slightly valued in his Messenger,

Should haue him thus restrained.

Cor. Ile answere that.

Reg. My Sister may recieue it much more worsse,

To haue her Gentleman abus'd, assaulted.

Cor. Come my Lord, away. Exit.

Glo. I am sorry for thee friend, 'tis the Dukes pleasure,

Whose disposition all the world well knowes

Will not be rub'd nor stopt, Ile entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray do not Sir, I haue watch'd and travailed hard,

Some time I shall sleepe out, the rest Ile whistle:

A good mans fortune may grow out at heeles: 

Give you good morrow.

Glo. The Duke's too blame in this,

'Twill be ill taken. Exit.

Kent. Good King, that must approve the common saw,

Thou out of Heauens benediction com'st

To the warme Sun.

Approach thou Beacon to this vnder Globe,

That by thy comfortable Beames I may

Peruse this Letter. Nothing almost sees miracles

But miserie. I know 'tis from Cordelia,

Who hath most fortunately beene inform'd

Of my obscured course. And shall finde time

From this enormous State, seeking to glue

Losses their remedies. All weary and o're- watch'd,

Take vantage heauie eyes, not to behold

This shamefull lodging. Fortune goodnight,

Smile once more, turne thy wheele.

Enter Edgar.

Edg. I heard my selfe proclaim'd,

And by the happy hollow of a Tree,

Escap'd the hunt. No Port is free, no place

That guard, and most vnusall vigilance

Do's not attend my taking. While I may scape
I will preserve myselfe: and am bethought
To take the basest, and most poorest shape
That euer penury in contempt of man,
Brought neere to beast; my face Ile grime with filth,
Blanket my loines, else all my hairies in knots,
And with presented nakednesse out-face
The Windes, and persecutions of the skie;
The Country giues me proofe, and president
Of Bedlam beggers, who with roaring voices,
Strike in their num’d and mortified Armes.
Pins, Wodden-prickes, Nayles, Sprigs of Rosemarie:
And with this horrible obiect, from low Farmes,
Poore pelting Villages, Sheeps-Coates, and Milles,
Sometimes with Lunaticke bans, sometime with Praiers
Inforce their charitie: poore Turlygod poore Tom,
That’s something yet: Edgar I nothing am. Exit.
Enter Lear, Foole, and Gentleman.
'Tis strange that they should so depart from home,
And not send backe my Messengers.
Gent. As I learn’d,
The night before, there was no purpose in them
Of this remoue.
Kent. Haile to thee Noble Master.
Lear. Ha? Mak’st thou this shame thy pastime?
Kent. No my Lord.
Foole. Hah, ha, he weares Cruell Garters Horses are
tide by the heads, Dogges and Beares by’th’ necke,
Monkies by’th’ loynes, and Men by’th’ legs: when a man
ouerlustie at legs, then he weares wodden nether-stocks.
Lear. What’s he,
That hath so much thy place mistooke
To set thee heere?
Kent. It is both he and she,
Your Son, and Daughter.
Lear. No.
Kent. Yes.
Lear. No I say.
Kent. I say yea.
Lear. By Jupiter I sweare no.
Kent. By Juno, I sweare I.
Lear. They durst not do’t:
They could not, would not do’t: ’tis worse then murther,
To do vpon respect such violent outrage:
Resolue me with all modest haste, which way
Thou miight’st deserue, or they impose this vsage,
Comming from vs.
Kent. My Lord, when at their home
I did commend your Highnesse Letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place, that shewed
My dutie kneeling, came there a reeking Poste,
Stew’d in his haste, halfe breathlesse, painting forth
From Gonerill his Mistris, salutations;
Deliquer’d Letters spight of intermission,
Which presently they read; on those contents
They summon’d vp their meiney, straight tooke Horse,
Commanded me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer, gaue me cold lookes,
And meeting heere the other Messenger,
Whose welcome I perceiu’d had poison’d mine,
Being the very fellow which of late
Displaid so sawcily against your Highnesse,
Hauing more man then wit about me, drew;
He rais’d the house, with loud and coward cries,
Your Sonne and Daughter found this trespasse worth
The shame which heere it suffers.

Fool. Winters not gon yet, if the wil’d Geese fly that way,
Fathers that weare rags, do make their Children blind,
But Fathers that beare bags, shall see their children kind.
Fortune that arrant whore, nere turns the key toth’ poore.
But for all this thou shalt haue as many Dolors for thy
Daughters, as thou canst tell in a yeare.

Lear. Oh how this Mother swels vp toward my heart!
Historica passio, downe thou climing sorrow,
Thy Elements below where is this Daughter?
Kent. With the Earle Sir, here within.

Lear. Follow me not, stay here.

Exit.

Gen. Made you no more offence,
But what you speake of?
Kent. None:
How chance the King comes with so small a number?
Fool. And thou hadst beene set i’th Stockes for that
tuestion, thoud’st well deseru’d it.
Kent. Why Fool?
Fool. Wee’l set thee to schoole to an Ant, to teach
thee ther’s no labouring i’th’ winter. All that follow their
noses, are led by their eyes, but blinde men, and there’s
not a nose among twenty, but can smell him that’s stink-ing;
let go thy hold when a great wheele runs downe a
hill, least it breake thy necke with following. But the
great one that goes vpward, let him draw thee after:
when a wiseman giues thee better counsell giue me mine
again, I would haue none but knaues follow it, since a
Foole giues it.
That Sir, which serues and seekes for gaine,
And followes but for forme;
Will packe, when it begins to raine,
And leaue thee in the storme,
But I will tarry, the Foole will stay,
And let the wiseman flie:
The knaue turnes Foole that runnes away,
The Foole no knaue perdie.

Enter Lear, and Gloster:
Kent. Where learn’d you this Foole?
Foole. Not i’th’ Stocks Foole. [rr1v
Lear. Deny to speake with me?
They are sicke, they are weary,
They haue traual’d all the night? meere fetches,
The images of reuolt and flying off.
Fetch me a better answer.
Glo. My deere Lord,
You know the fiery quality of the Duke,
How vnremoueable and fixt he is
In his owne course.
Lear. Vengeance, Plague, Death, Confusion:
Fiery? What quality? Why Gloster, Gloster,
I’ld speake with the Duke of Cornwall, and his wife.
Glo. Well my good Lord, I haue inform’d them so.
Lear. Inform’d them? Do’st thou vnderstand me man.
Glo. I my good Lord.
Lear. The King would speake with Cornwall,
The deere Father
Would with his Daughter speake, commands, tends, ser-juice,
Are they inform’d of this? My breath and blood:
Fiery? The fiery Duke, tell the hot Duke that—
No, but not yet, may be he is not well,
Infirmity doth still neglect all office,
Where to our health is bound, we are not our selues,
When Nature being opprest, commands the mind
To suffer with the body; Ile forbeare,
And am fallen out with my more headier will,
To take the indispos’d and sickly fit,
For the sound man. Death on my state: wherefore
Should he sit heere? This act perswades me,
That this remotion of the Duke and her
Is practise only. Giue me my Servant forth;
Goe tell the Duke, and’s wife, Il’d speake with them:
Now, presentely: bid them come forth and heare me,
Or at their Chamber doore Ile beate the Drum,
Till it crie sleepe to death.

Glo. I would haue all well betwixt you. Exit.

Lear. Oh me my heart! My rising heart! But downe.

Foole. Cry to it Nunckle, as the Cockney did to the

Eeles, when she put ’em i’th’ Paste aliue, she knapt ’em

o’th’ coxcombs with a sticke, and cryed downe wantons,
downe; ’twas her Brother, that in pure kindnesse to his
Horse buttered his Hay.

Enter Cornewall, Regan, Gloster, Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Corn. Haile to your Grace. Kent here set at liberty.

Reg. I am glad to see your Highnesse.

Regan, I thinke you are. I know what reason
I haue to thinke so, if thou should’st not be glad,
I would diuorce me from thy Mother Tombe,
Sepulchring an Adultresse. O are you free?
Some other time for that. Beloued
Thy Sisters naught: oh Regan, she hath tied
Sharpe-tooth’d vnkindnesse, like a vulture heere,
I can scarce speake to thee, thou’lt not beleue
With how deprau’d a quality. Oh Regan.
Reg. I pray you Sir, take patience, I haue hope
You lesse know how to value her desert,
Then she to scant her dutie.

Lear. Say? How is that?
Reg. I cannot thinke my Sister in the least
Would faile her Obligation. If Sir perchance
She haue restrained the Riots of your Followres,
’Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As cleeres her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her. 
Reg. O Sir, you are old,
Nature in you stands on the very Verge
Of his confine: you should be rul’d, and led
By some discretion, that discernes your state
Better then you your selfe: therefore I pray you,
That to our Sister, you do make returne,
Say you haue wrong’d her.

Lear. Aske her forgiuences?
Do you but marke how this becomes the house?
Deere daughter, I confesse that I am old;
Age is vnnecessary: on my knees I begge,
That you’l vouchsafe me Rayment, Bed, and Food.
Reg. Good Sir, no more: these are vnsightly trickes:
Returne you to my Sister.

Lear. Neuer Regan:
She hath abated me of halfe my Traine;
Look’d blacke vpon me, strooke me with her Tongue
Most Serpent-like, vpon the very Heart.
All the stor’d Vengeances of Heauen, fall
On her ingratefull top: strike her yong bones
You taking Ayres, with Lamenesse.
Corn. Fye sir, fie.
Le. You nimble Lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornfull eyes: Infect her Beauty,
You Fen-suck’d Fogges, drawne by the powrfull Sunne,
To fall, and blister.
Reg. O the blest Gods!
So will you wish on me, when the rash moode is on.
Lear. No Regan, thou shalt neuer haue my curse:
Thy tender- hefted Nature shall not glie
Thee o’re to harshnesse: Her eyes are fierce, but thine
Do comfort, and not burne. ’Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my Traine,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my comming in. Thou better know’st
The Offices of Nature, bond of Childhood,
Effects of Curtesie, dues of Gratitude:
Thy halfe o’th’ Kingdome hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow’d.
Reg. Good Sir, to’th’ purpose. Tucket within.
Lear. Who put my man i’th’ Stockes?
Corn. What Trumpet’s that?
Reg. I know’t, my Sisters: this approues her Letter,
That she would soone be heere. Is your Lady come?
Lear. This is a Slaue, whose easie borrowed pride
Dwels in the sickly grace of her he followes.
Out Varlet, from my sight.
Corn. What meanes your Grace?
Lear. Who stockt my Seruant? Regan, I haue good hope
Thou did’st not know on’t.
Who comes here? O Heauens!
If you do loue old men; if your sweet sway
Allow Obedience; if you your selues are old,
Make it your cause: Send downe, and take my part.
Art not asham’d to looke vpon this Beard?
O Regan, will you take her by the hand?
Gon. Why not by’th’ hand Sir? How haue I offended?
All’s not offence that indiscretion findes,
And dotage termes so.

Lear. O sides, you are too tough!

Will you yet hold?

How came my man i’th’ Stockes?

Corn. I set him there, Sir: but his owne Disorders

Deseru’d much lesse advancemenc.

Lear. You? Did you?

Reg. I pray you Father being weake, seeme so.

If till the expiration of your Moneth

You will returne and soiourne with my Sister,

Dismissing halfe your traine, come then to me,

I am now from home, and out of that prouision

Which shall be needfull for your entertainement.

Lear. Returne to her? and fifty men dismiss’d?

No, rather I abiure all roofes, and chuse

To wage against the enmity oth’ ayre,

To be a Comrade with the Wolfe, and Owle,

Necessities sharpe pinch. Returne with her?

Why the hot- bloodied France, that dowerlesse tooke

Our yongest borne, I could as well be brought

To knee his Throne, and Squire- like pension beg,

To keepe base life a foot; returne with her?

Perswade me rather to be slaeue and sumpter

To this detested groome.

Gon. At your choice Sir.

Lear. I prythee Daughter do not make me mad,

I will not trouble thee my Child; farewell:

Wee’l no more meete, no more see one another.

But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my Daughter,

Or rather a disease that’s in my flesh,

Which I must needs call mine. Thou art a Byle,

A plague sore, or imbossed Carbuncle

In my corrupted blood. But Ile not chide thee,

Let shame come when it will, I do not call it,

I do not bid the Thunder- bearer shoote,

Nor tell tales of thee to high- judging Ioue,

Mend when thou can’st, be better at thy leisure,

I can be patient, I can stay with Regan,

I and my hundred Knights.

Reg. Not altogether so,

I look’d not for you yet, nor am prouided

For your fit welcome, giue eare Sir to my Sister,

For those that mingle reason with your passion,

Must be content to thinke you old, and so,

But she knowes what she doe’s.

Lear. Is this well spoken?
Reg. I dare auouch it Sir, what fifty Followers?
Is it not well? What should you need of more?
Yea, or so many? Sith that both charge and danger,
Speake ’gainst so great a number? How in one house
Should many people, vnder two commands
Hold amity? ’Tis hard, almost impossible.

Gon. Why might not you my Lord, receiue attendance
From those that she cals Seruants, or from mine?

Reg. Why not my Lord?
If then they chanc’d to slacke ye,
We could comptroll them; if you will come to me,
(For now I spie a danger) I entreate you
To bring but fiue and twentie, to no more
Will I giue place or notice.

Lear. I gaue you all.

Reg. And in good time you gaue it.

Lear. Made you my Guardians, my Depositaries,
But kept a reseruation to be followed
With such a number? What, must I come to you
With fiue and twenty? Regan, said you so?

Reg. And speack’t againe my Lord, no more with me.

Lea. Those wicked Creatures yet do look wel fauor’d
When others are more wicked, not being the worst
Stands in some ranke of praise, Ile go with thee,
Thy fifty yet doth double fiue and twenty,
And thou art twice her Loue.

Gon. Heare me my Lord;
What need you fiue and twenty? Ten? Or fiue?
To follow in a house, where twice so many
Hauve a command to tend you?

Reg. What need one?

Lear. O reason not the need: our basest Beggers
Are in the poorest thing superfluous.
Allow not Nature, more then Nature needs:
Mans life is cheape as Beastes. Thou art a Lady;
If onely to go warme were gorgeous,
Why Nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear’st,
Which scarcely keepes thee warme, but for true need:
You Heauens, gie me that patience, patience I need,
You see me heere (you Gods) a poore old man,
As full of grievance as age, wretched in both,
If it be you that stirres these Daughters hearts
Against their Father, foole me not so much,
To beare it tamely: touch me with Noble anger,
And let not womens weapons, water drops,
Staine my mans cheekes. No you unnaturall Hags,
I will haue such reuenges on you both,
That all the world shall— I will do such things,
What they are yet, I know not, but they shalbe
The terrors of the earth? you thinke Ile weepe,
No, Ile not weepe, I haue full cause of weeping.

Storme and Tempest.

But this heart shal break into a hundred thousand flawes
Or ere Ile weepe; O Foole, I shall go mad. Exeunt.

Corn. Let vs withdraw, 'twill be a Storme.
Reg. This house is little, the old man and’s people,
Cannot be well bestow’d.
Gon. 'Tis his owne blame hath put himselfe from rest,
And must needs taste his folly.
Reg. For his particular, Ile receiue him gladly,
But not one follower.
Gon. So am I purpos’d,
Where is my Lord of Gloster?

Enter Gloster.

Corn. Followed the old man forth, he is return’d.
Glo. The King is in high rage.
Corn. Whether is he going?
Glo. He cals to Horse, but will I know not whether.
Corn. 'Tis best to giue him way, he leads himselfe.
Gon. My Lord, entreate him by no meanes to stay.
Glo. Alacke the night comes on, and the high windes
Do sorely ruffle, for many Miles about
There’s scarce a Bush.
Reg. O Sir, to wilfull men,
The injuries that they themelves procure,
Must be their Schoole- Masters: shut vp your doores,
He is attended with a desperate traine,
And what they may incense him too, being apt,
To haue his eare abus’d, wisedome bids feare.
Cor. Shut vp your doores my Lord, 'tis a wil’d night,
My Regan counsels well: come out oth’ storme. Exeunt.

Actus Tertius. Scena Prima.

Storme still. Enter Kent, and a Gentleman, seuerally.
Kent. Who’s there besides foule weather?
Gen. One minded like the weather, most vnquietly. [rr2v
Kent. I know you: Where’s the King?
Gent. Contending with the fretfull Elements;
Bids the winde blow the Earth into the Sea,
Or swell the curled Waters 'boue the Maine,
That things might change, or cease.

Kent. But who is with him?

Gent. None but the Foole, who labours to out-iest
His heart- strooke injuries.

Kent. Sir, I do know you,
And dare vpon the warrant of my note
Commend a deere thing to you. There is diuision
(Although as yet the face of it is couer’d
With mutuall cunning) ’twixt Albany, and Cornwall:
Who haue, as who haue not, that their great Starres
Thron’d and set high; Servants, who seeme no lesse,
Which are to France the Spies and Speculations
Intelligent of our State. What hath bin seene,
Either in snuffes, and packings of the Dukes,
Or the hard Reine which both of them hath borne
Against the old kinde King; or something deeper,
Whereof (perchance) these are but furnishings.

Gent. I will talke further with you.
Kent. No, do not:
For confirmation that I am much more
Then my out- wall; open this Purse, and take
What it containes. If you shall see Cordelia,
(As feare not but you shall) shew her this Ring,
And she will tell you who that Fellow is
That yet you do not know. Fye on this Storme,
I will go seeke the King.

Gent. Giue me your hand,

Haue you no more to say?
Kent. Few words, but to effect more then all yet;
That when we haue found the King, in which your pain
That way, Ile this: He that first lights on him,
Holla the other. Exeunt.

Scena Secunda.

Storme still. Enter Lear, and Foole.
Lear. Blow windes, & crack your cheeks; Rage, blow
You Cataracts, and Hyrricano’s spout,
Till you haue drench’d our Steeples, drown the Cockes.
You Sulph’rous and Thought- executing Fires,
Vaunt- curriers of Oake- cleauing Thunder- bolts,
Sindge my white head. And thou all- shaking Thunder,
Strike flat the thicke Rotundity o’th’ world,
Cracke Natures moulds, all germaines spill at once
That makes ingratefull Man.

_Foole._ O Nunkle, Court holy- water in a dry house, is
better then this Rain- water out o’ doore. Good Nunkle,
in, aske thy Daughters blessing, heere’s a night pitties
neither Wisemen, nor Foole.

_Lear._ Rumble thy belly full: spit Fire, spowt Raine:
Nor Raine, Winde, Thunder, Fire are my Daughters;
I taxe not you, you Elements with vnkindnesse.
I neuer gaue you Kingdome, call’d you Children;
You owe me no subscription. Then let fall
Your horrible pleasure. Heere I stand your Slaue,
A poore, infirme, weake, and dispis’d old man:
But yet I call you Seruile Ministers,
That will with two pernicious Daughters ioyne
Your high- engender’d Battailes, ’gainst a head
So old, and white as this. O, ho! ’tis foule.
_Foole._ He that has a house to put’s head in, has a good
Head- preece:
The Codpiece that will house, before the head has any;
The Head, and he shall Lowse: so Beggars marry many.
The man y makes his Toe, what he his Hart shold make,
Shall of a Corne cry woe, and turne his sleepe to wake.
For there was neuer yet faire woman, but shee made
mouthes in a glasse.

_Enter Kent._

_Lear._ No, I will be the patterne of all patience,
I will say nothing.

_Kent._ Who’s there?

_Foole._ Marry here’s Grace, and a Codpiece, that’s a
Wiseman, and a Foole.

_Kent._ Alas Sir are you here? Things that loue night,
Loue not such nights as these: The wrathfull Skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the darke
And make them keepe their Cauces: Since I was man,
Such sheets of Fire, such bursts of horrid Thunder,
Such groanes of roaring Winde, and Raine, I neuer
Remember to haue heard. Mans Nature cannot carry
Th’ affliction, nor the feare.
_Lear._ Let the great Goddes
That keepe this dreadfull pudder o’re our heads,
Finde out their enemies now. Tremble thou Wretch,
That hast within thee vndivulged Crimes
Vnwhipt of Iustice. Hide thee, thou Blody hand;
Thou Periur’d, and thou Simular of Vertue
That art Incestuous. Caytiffe, to peeces shake
That vnner couert, and conuenient seeming
Ha’s practis’d on mans life. Close pent- vp guilts,
Riue your concealing Continents, and cry
These dreadfull Summoners grace. I am a man,
More sinn’d against, then sinning.
Kent. Alacke, bare- headed?
Gracious my Lord, hard by heere is a Houell,
Some friendship will it lend you ‘gainst the Tempest:
Repose you there, while I to this hard house,
(More harder then the stones whereof ’tis rais’d,
Which even but now, demanding after you,
Deny’d me to come in) returne, and force
Their scanted curtesie.
Lear. My wits begin to turne.
Come on my boy. How dost my boy? Art cold?
I am cold my selfe. Where is this straw, my Fellow?
The Art of our Necessities is strange,
And can make vile things precious. Come, your Houel;
Poore Foole, and Knaue, I haue one part in my heart
That’s sorry yet for thee.
Foole. He that has and a little- tyne wit,
With heigh- ho, the Winde and the Raine,
Must make content with his Fortunes fit,
Though the Raine it raineth euery day.
Le. True Boy: Come bring vs to this Houell. Exit.
Foole. This is a braue night to coole a Curtizan:
Ile speake a Prophesie ere I go:
When Priestes are more in word, then matter;
When Brewers marre their Malt with water;
When Nobles are their Taylors Tutors,
No Heretiques burn’d, but wenches Sutors;
When euery Case in Law, is right;
No Squire in debt, nor no poore Knight;
When Slanders do not liue in Tongues;
Nor Cut- purses come not to throngs;
When Vsurers tell their Gold i’th’ Field, [rr3
And Baudes, and whores, do Churches build,
Then shal the Realme of Albion, come to great confusion:
Then comes the time, who liues to see’t,
That going shalbe vs’d with feet.
This prophecie Merlin shall make, for I liue before his |(time.
Exit.
Scaena Tertia.

Enter Gloster, and Edmund.

Glo. Alacke, alacke Edmund, I like not this vnnaturall dealing; when I desired their leave that I might pity him, they tooke from me the use of mine owne house, charg’d me on paine of perpetuall displeasure, neither to speake of him, entreat for him, or any way sustaine him.

Bast. Most saavage and vnnaturall.

Glo. Go too; say you nothing. There is diuision be-tweene the Dukes, and a worsse matter then that: I haue receiued a Letter this night, ’tis dangerous to be spoken, I haue lock’d the Letter in my Closet, these injuries the King now beares, will be reuenged home; ther is part of a Power already footed, we must incline to the King, I will looke him, and priuily relieue him; goe you and maintaine talke with the Duke, that my charity be not of him perceiued; If he aske for me, I am ill, and gone to bed, if I die for it, (as no lesse is threatened me) the King my old Master must be relieued. There is strange things toward Edmund, pray you be carefull. Exit.

Bast. This Curtesie forbid thee, shall the Duke Instantly know, and of that Letter too;

This seemes a faire deseruing, and must draw me That which my Father looses: no lesse then all,

The yonger rises, when the old doth fall. Exit.

Scena Quarta.

Enter Lear, Kent, and Foole.

Kent. Here is the place my Lord, good my Lord enter,
The tirrany of the open night’s too rough For Nature to endure. Storme still

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my Lord enter heere.

Lear. Wilt breake my heart?

Kent. I had rather breake mine owne, Good my Lord enter.

Lear. Thou think’st ’tis much that this contentious |(storme Inuades vs to the skin so: ’tis to thee,

But where the greater malady is fixt,
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou’dst shun a Beare,

But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea,
1791 Thou’st meete the Beare i’th mouth, when the mind’s ||(free,
1792 The bodies delicate: the tempest in my mind,
1793 Doth from my sences take all feeling else,
1794 Saue what beates there, Filliall ingratitude,
1795 Is it not as this mouth should teare this hand
1796 For lifting food too’t? But I will punish home;
1797 No, I will weepe no more; in such a night,
1798 To shut me out? Pour on, I will endure:
1799 In such a night as this? O Regan, Gonerill,
1800 Your old kind Father, whose franke heart gaue all,
1801 O that way madnesse lies, let me shun that:
1802 No more of that.
1803 Kent. Good my Lord enter here.
1804 Lear. Prythee go in thy selfe, seeke thine owne ease,
1805 This tempest will not giue me leaue to ponder
1806 On things would hurt me more, but Ile goe in,
1807 In Boy, go first. You houselesse pouertie, Exit.
1808 Nay get thee in; Ile pray, and then Ile sleepe.
1809 Poore naked wretches, where so ere you are
1810 That bide the pelting of this pittilesse storme,
1811 How shall your House- lesse heads, and vnfed sides,
1812 Your lop’d, and window’d raggednesse defend you
1813 From seasons such as these? O I haue tane
1814 Too little care of this: Take Physicke, Pompe,
1815 Expose thy selfe to feele what wretches feele,
1816 That thou maist shake the superflux to them,
1817 And shew the Heauens more iust.
1818 Enter Edgar, and Foole.
1819 Edg. Fathom, and halfe, Fathom and halfe; poore Tom.
1820 Foole. Come not in heere Nuncle, here’s a spirit, helpe
1821 me, helpe me.
1822 Kent. Giue my thy hand, who’s there?
1823 Foole. A spirite, a spirite, he sayes his name’s poore
1824 Tom.
1825 Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i’th’
1826 straw? Come forth.
1827 Edg. Away, the foule Fiend followes me, through the
1828 sharpe Hauthorne blow the windes. Humh, goe to thy
1829 bed and warme thee.
1830 Lear. Did’st thou giue all to thy Daughters? And art
1831 thou come to this?
1832 Edgar. Who giues any thing to poore Tom? Whom
1833 the foule fiend hath led through Fire, and through Flame,
1834 through Sword, and Whirle- Poole, o’re Bog, and Quag-mire,
1835 that hath laid Kniues vnder his Pillow, and Halters
1836 in his Pue, set Rats- bane by his Porridge, made him
Proud of heart, to ride on a Bay trotting Horse, over four inch Bridges, to course his own shadow for a Traitor.

Blisse thy five Wits, Tom's a cold. O do, do, do, do, do, do, do, blisse thee from Whirlie-Windes, Starre-blasting, and ta-king, do poore Tom some charitie, whom the foule Fiend vexes. There could I have him now, and there, and there, and there, and there. Stomge still.

Lear. Ha's his Daughters brought him to this passe? Could'st thou save nothing? Would'st thou give 'em all? Foole. Nay, he reseru'd a Blanket, else we had bin all sham'd.

Lea. Now all the plagues that in the pendulous ayre Hang fated o're mens faults, light on thy Daughters.

Kent. He hath no Daughters Sir. Lear. Death Traitor, nothing could have subdu'd ||Nature To such a lownesse, but his vnkind Daughters.

Is it the fashion, that discarded Fathers, Should haue thus little mercy on their flesh:

Judicious punishment, 'twas this flesh begot Those Pelican Daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat on Pillicock hill, alow: alow, loo, loo. Foole. This cold night will turne vs all to Fooles, and

Madmen.

Edgar. Take heed o'th' foule Fiend, obey thy Parents, keepe thy words Iustice, sweare not, commit not, [rr3v with mans sworne Spouse: set not thy Sweet-heart on proud array. Tom's a cold.

Lear. What hast thou bin?

Edg. A Seru ingman? Proud in heart, and minde; that curl'd my haire, wore Gloues in my cap; seru'd the Lust of my Mistris heart, and did the acte of darkennesse with her. Swore as many Oathes, as I spake words, & broke them in the sweet face of Heauen. One, that slept in the contriuing of Lust, and wak'd to doe it. Wine lou'd I deerely, Dice deerely; and in Woman, out-Paramour'd the Turke. False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand;

Hog in sloth, Foxe in stealth, Wolfe in greedinessse, Dog in madness, Lyon in prey. Let not the creaking of shooes, Nor the rustling of Silkes, betray thy poore heart to wo-man. Keepe thy foote out of Brothels, thy hand out of Plackets, thy pen from Lenders Bookes, and defye the foule Fiend. Still through the Hauthorne blowes the cold winde: Sayes suum, mun, nonny, Dolphin my Boy, Boy Sesey: let him trot by. Stomge still.

Lear. Thou went better in a Graue, then to answere with thy vncouer'd body, this extremitye of the Skies. Is
man no more then this? Consider him well. Thou ow’st
the Worme no Silke; the Beast, no Hide; the Sheepe, no
Wool; the Cat, no perfume. Ha? Here’s three on’s are
sophisticated. Thou art the thing it selfe; vnaccommodo-dated
man, is no more but such a poore, bare, forked A-nimall
as thou art. Off, off you Lendings: Come, vn-button
heere.

Enter Gloucester, with a Torch.

    Foole. Prythee Nunckle be contented, ’tis a naughtie
night to swimme in. Now a little fire in a wilde Field,
were like an old Letchers heart, a small spark, all the rest
on’s body, cold: Looke, heere comes a walking fire.
    Edg. This is the foule Flibbertigibbet; hee begins at
Curfew, and walkes at first Cocke: Hee giues the Web
and the Pin, squints the eye, and makes the Hare- lippe;
Mildewes the white Wheate, and hurts the poore Crea-ture
of earth.

Swithold footed thrice the old,
He met the Night- Mare, and her nine- fold;
Bid her a- light, and her troth- plight,
And aroynt thee Witch, aroynt thee.
    Kent. How fares your Grace?
    Lear. What’s he?
    Kent. Who’s there? What is’t you seeke?
    Glou. What are you there? Your Names?
    Edg. Poore Tom, that eates the swimming Frog, the
Toad, the Tod- pole, the wall- Neut, and the water: that
in the furie of his heart, when the foule Fiend rages, eats
Cow- dung for Sallets; swallowes the old Rat, and the
ditch- Dogge; drinkes the green Mantle of the standing
Poole: who is whipt from Tything to Tything, and
stockt, punish’d, and imprison’d: who hath three Suites
to his backe, sixe shirts to his body:
Horse to ride, and weapon to weare:
But Mice, and Rats, and such small Deare,
Haue bin Toms food, for seuen long yeare:
Beware my Follower. Peace Smulkin, peace thou Fiend.
    Glou. What, hath your Grace no better company?
    Edg. The Prince of Darkenesse is a Gentleman. Modo
he’s call’d, and Mahu.
    Glou. Our flesh and blood, my Lord, is growne so
vilde, that it doth hate what gets it.
    Edg. Poore Tom’s a cold.
    Glou. Go in with me; my duty cannot suffer
T' obey in all your daughters hard commands:
Though their Iniunction be to barre my doores,
And let this Tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet have I ventured to come seeke you out,
And bring you where both fire, and food is ready.

Lear. First let me talke with this Philosopher,
What is the cause of Thunder?

Kent. Good my Lord take his offer,
Go into th’ house.

Lear. Ile talke a word with this same lerned Theban:
What is your study?

Edg. How to preuent the Fiend, and to kill Vermine.

Lear. Let me aske you one word in priuate.

Kent. Importune him once more to go my Lord,
His wits begin t’ vnsettle.

Glou. Canst thou blame him? Storm still
His Daughters seeke his death: Ah, that good Kent,
He said it would be thus: poore banish’d man:
Thou sayest the King growes mad, Ile tell thee Friend
I am almost mad my selfe. I had a Sonne,
Now out- law’d from my blood: he sought thee Friend
But lately: very late: I lou’d him (Friend)
No Father his Sonne deere: true to tell thee,
The greefe hath craz’d my wits. What a night’s this?
I do beseech your grace.

Lear. O cry you mercy, Sir:
Noble Philosopher, your company.

Edg. Tom’s a cold.

Glou. In fellow there, into th’ Houel; keep thee warm.

Lear. Come, let’s in all.

Kent. This way, my Lord.

Lear. With him;
I will keepe still with my Philosopher.

Kent. Good my Lord, sooth him:
Let him take the Fellow.

Glou. Take him you on.

Kent. Sirra, come on: go along with vs.

Lear. Come, good Athenian.

Glou. No words, no words, hush.

Edg. Childe Rowland to the darke Tower came,
His word was still, fie, foh, and fumme,
I smell the blood of a Brittish man. Exeunt
Scena Quinta.

1970 Enter Cornwall, and Edmund.
1971 Corn. I will haue my reuenge, ere I depart his house.
1972 Bast. How my Lord, I may be censured, that Nature
thus giues way to Loyaltie, something feares mee to
thinke of.
1974 Cornw. I now perceiue, it was not altogether your
Brothers euill disposition made him seeke his death: but
a prouoking merit set a- worke by a reprouable badnesse
in himselfe.
1979 Bast. How malicious is my fortune, that I must re-pent
to be iust? This is the Letter which hee spoake of;
which approues him an intelligent partie to the aduanta-ges
of France. O Heauens! that this Treason were not;
or not I the detector.
1983 Corn. Go with me to the Dutchesse.
1986 Bast. If the matter of this Paper be certain, you haue
mighty businesse in hand. [rr4
1987 Corn. True or false, it hath made thee Earle of Glou-cester:
seeke out where thy Father is, that hee may bee
ready for our apprehension.
1990 Bast. If I finde him comforting the King, it will stuffe
his suspition more fully. I will perseuer in my course of
Loyalty, though the conflict be sore betweene that, and
my blood.
1994 Corn. I will lay trust vpon thee: and thou shalt finde
a deere Father in my loue. Exeunt.

Scena Sexta.

1997 Enter Kent, and Gloucester.
1998 Glou. Heere is better then the open ayre, take it thank-fully:
I will peece out the comfort with what addition I
can: I will not be long from you. Exit
2001 Kent. All the powre of his wits, haue giuen way to his
impatience: the Gods reward your kindnesse.
2003 Enter Lear, Edgar, and Foole.
2004 Edg. Fraterretto cals me, and tells me Nero is an Ang-ler
in the Lake of Darknesse: pray Innocent, and beware
the foule Fiend.
2007 Foole. Prythee Nunkle tell me, whether a madman be
a Gentleman, or a Yeoman.
2009 Lear. A King, a King.

2010 Foole. No, he’s a Yeoman, that ha’s a Gentleman to

2011 his Sonne: for hee’s a mad Yeoman that sees his Sonne a

2012 Gentleman before him.

2013 Lear. To haue a thousand with red burning spits

2014 Come hizzing in vpon ’em.

2015 Edg. Blesse thy fiue wits.

2016 Kent. O pitty: Sir, where is the patience now

2017 That you so oft haue boasted to retaine?

2018 Edg. My teares begin to take his part so much,

2019 They marre my counterfetting.

2020 Lear. The little dogges, and all;

2021 Trey, Blanch, and Sweet- heart: see, they barke at me.

2022 Edg. Tom, will throw his head at them: Auaunt you

2023 Curres, be thy mouth or blacke or white:

2024 Tooth that poysons if it bite:

2025 Mastiffe, Grey- hound, Mongrill, Grim,

2026 Hound or Spaniell, Brache, or Hym:

2027 Or Bobtaile tight, or Troude taile,

2028 Tom will make him weepe and waile,

2029 For with throwing thus my head;

2030 Dogs leapt the hatch, and all are fled.

2031 Do, de, de, de: sese: Come, march to Wakes and Fayres,

2032 And Market Townes: poore Tom thy horne is dry,

2033 Lear. Then let them Anatomize Regan: See what

2034 breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in Nature that

2035 make these hard- hearts. You sir, I entertaine for one of

2036 my hundred; only, I do not like the fashion of your gar-ments.

2037 You will say they are Persian; but let them bee

2038 chang’d.

2039 Enter Gloster.

2040 Kent. Now good my Lord, lye heere, and rest awhile.

2041 Lear. Make no noise, make no noise, draw the Cur-taines:

2042 so, so, wee’l go to Supper i’th’ morning.

2043 Foole. And Ile go to bed at noone.

2044 Glou. Come hither Friend:

2045 Where is the King my Master?

2046 Kent. Here Sir, but trouble him not, his wits are gon.

2047 Glou. Good friend, I prythee take him in thy armes;

2048 I haue ore- heard a plot of death vpon him:

2049 There is a Litter ready, lay him in’t,

2050 And drieue toward Douer friend, where thou shalt meeete

2051 Both welcome, and protection. Take vp thy Master,

2052 If thou should’st dally halfe an hour, his life

2053 With thine, and all that offer to defend him,

2054 Stand in assured losse. Take vp, take vp,
And follow me, that will to some provision
Giue thee quicke conduct. Come, come, away. Exeunt

Scena Septima.

Enter Cornwall, Regan, Gonerill, Bastard, and Servants.
Corn. Poste speedily to my Lord your husband, shew him this Letter, the Army of France is landed: seeke out the Traitor Gloouster.
Reg. Hang him instantly.
Gon. Plucke out his eyes.
Corn. Leaue him to my displeasure. Edmond, keepe you our Sister company: the reuenges wee are bound to take vpon your Traitorous Father, are not fit for your beholding. Aduice the Duke where you are going, to a most festinate preparation: we are bound to the like. Our Postes shall be swift, and intelligent betwixt vs. Fare-well deere Sister, farewell my Lord of Glouster.
Corn. Enter Steward.
How now? Where’s the King?
Stew. My Lord of Glouster hath conuey’d him hence Some fiue or six and thirty of his Knights Hot Questrists after him, met him at gate, Who, with some other of the Lords, dependants, Are gone with him toward Douer; where they boast To haue well armed Friends.
Corn. Get horses for your Mistris.
Gon. Farewell sweet Lord, and Sister. Exit
Edmond farewell: go seek the Traitor Gloosher, Pinnion him like a Theefe, bring him before vs:
Though well we may not passe vpon his life Without the forme of Justice: yet our power Shall do a curt’sie to our wrath, which men May blame, but not comptroll.
Enter Gloucester, and Servants.
Who’s there? the Traitor?
Reg. Ingratefull Fox, ’tis he.
Corn. Binde fast his corky armes.
Glou. What meanes your Graces?
Good my Friends consider you are my Ghests:
Do me no foule play, Friends.
Corn. Binde him I say.
Glou. Vnmercifull Lady, as you are, I’me none.
Corn. To this Chaire binde him,
Villaine, thou shalt finde.
Glou. By the kinde Gods, ’tis most ignobly done
To plucke me by the Beard.
Reg. So white, and such a Traitor?
Glou. Naughty Ladie,
These haires which thou dost rauish from my chin
Will quicken and accuse thee. I am your Host,
With Robbers hands, my hospitable fauours   [rr4v
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?
Corn. Come Sir.
Glou. I haue a Letter guessingly set downe
Which came from one that’s of a newtrall heart,
And not from one oppos’d.
Corn. Cunning.
Reg. And false.
Corn. Where hast thou sent the King?
Glou. To Douer.
Reg. Wherefore to Douer?
Was’t thou not charg’d at perill.
Corn. Wherefore to Douer? Let him answer that.
Glou. I am tyed to’th’ Stake,
And I must stand the Course.
Reg. Wherefore to Douer?
Glou. Because I would not see thy cruell Nailes
Plucke out his poore old eyes: nor thy fierce Sister,
In his Annointed flesh, sticke boarish phangs.
The Sea, with such a storme as his bare head,
In Hell- blacke- night indur’d, would haue buoy’d vp
And quench’d the Stelled fires:
Yet poore old heart, he holpe the Heauens to raine.
If Wolues had at thy Gate howl’d that sterne time,
Thou should’st haue said, good Porter turne the Key:
All Cruels else subscribe: but I shall see
The winged Vengeance ouertake such Children.
Corn. See’st shalt thou neuer. Fellowes hold y Chaire,
Vpon these eyes of thine, Ile set my foote.
Glou. He that will thinke to liue, till he be old,
Giue me some helpe. — O cruell! O you Gods.
Reg. One side will mocke another: Th’ other too.
Corn. If you see vengeance.
Seru. Hold your hand, my Lord:
I haue seru’d you euer since I was a Childe:
But better service haue I neuer done you,
Then now to bid you hold.
Reg. How now, you dogge?
Ser. If you did weare a beard vpon your chin,
I’ld shake it on this quarrell. What do you meane?
Corn. My Villaine?
Seru. Nay then come on, and take the chance of anger.
Reg. Giue me thy Sword. A pezant stand vp thus?
Killes him.
Ser. Oh I am slaine: my Lord, you haue one eye left
To see some mischefe on him. Oh.
Corn. Lest it see more, preuent it; Out vilde gelly:
Where is thy luster now?
Glou. All darke and comfortlesse?
Where’s my Sonne Edmund?
Edmund, enkindle all the sparkes of Nature
To quit this horrid acte.
Reg. Out treacherous Villaine,
Thou call’st on him, that hates thee. It was he
That made the ouerture of thy Treasons to vs:
Who is too good to pitty thee.
Glou. O my Follies! then Edgar was abus’d,
Kinde Gods, forgiue me that, and prosper him.
Reg. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Douer. Exit with Glouster.
How is’t my Lord? How looke you?
Corn. I haue receiu’d a hurt: Follow me Lady;
Turne out that eyelesse Villaine: throw this Slaue
Vpon the Dunghill: Regan, I bleed apace,
Vntimely comes this hurt. Giue me your arme. Exeunt.

Actus Quartus. Scena Prima.

Enter Edgar.

Edg. Yet better thus, and knowne to be contemn’d,
Then still contemn’d and flatter’d, to be worst:
The lowest, and most detected thing of Fortune,
Stands still in esperance, liues not in feare:
The lamentable change is from the best,
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome then,
Thou unsubstantiall ayre that I embrace:
The Wretch that thou hast blowne vnto the worst,
Owes nothing to thy blasts.

Enter Glouster, and an Oldman.

But who comes heere? My Father poorely led?
World, World, O world!
But that thy strange mutations make vs hate thee,
Life would not yeelde to age.

Oldm. O my good Lord, I haue bene your Tenant,
And your Fathers Tenant, these fourescore yeares.
Glou. Away, get thee away: good Friend be gone,
Thy comforts can do me no good at all,
Thee, they may hurt.

Oldm. You cannot see your way.
Glou. I haue no way, and therefore want no eyes:
I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 'tis seene,
Our meane secure vs, and our meere defects
Proue our Commodities. Oh deere Sonne Edgar,
The food of thy abused Fathers wrath:
Might I but liue to see thee in my touch,
I’d say I had eyes againe.

Oldm. How now? who’s there?
Edg. O Gods! Who is’t can say I am at the worst?
I am worse then ere I was.
Old. ’Tis poore mad Tom.
Edg. And worse I may be yet: the worst is not,
So long as we can say this is the worst.

Oldm. Fellow, where goest?
Glou. Is it a Beggar- man?
Oldm. Madman, and beggar too.
Glou. He has some reason, else he could not beg.
’Ith last nights storme, I such a fellow saw;
Which made me thinke a Man, a Worme. My Sonne
Came then into my minde, and yet my minde
Was then scarse Friends with him.
I haue heard more since:
As Flies to wanton Boyes, are we to th’ Gods,
They kill vs for their sport.

Edg. How should this be?
Bad is the Trade that must play Foole to sorrow,
Ang’ring it selfe, and others. Blesse thee Master.
Glou. Is that the naked Fellow?
Oldm. I, my Lord.
Glou. Get thee away: If for my sake
Thou wilt ore- take vs hence a mile or twaine
’Ith way toward Douer, do it for ancient loue,
And bring some couering for this naked Soule,
Which I intreate to leade me.
Old. Alacke sir, he is mad. [rr5
Glow. 'Tis the times plague,
When Madmen leade the blinde:
Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure:
Aboue the rest, be gone.
Oldm. Ile bring him the best Parrell that I haue
Come on’t what will. Exit
Glou. Sirrah, naked fellow.
Edg. Poore Tom’s a cold. I cannot daub it further.
Glow. Come hithe fellow.
Edg. And yet I must:
Blesse thy sweete eyes, they bleede.
Glow. Know’st thou the way to Douer?
Edg. Both style, and gate; Horseway, and foot- path:
poore Tom hath bin scarr’d out of his good wits. Blesse
thee good mans sonne, from the foule Fiend.
Glow. Here take this purse, y whom the heau’ns plagues
Haue humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier: Heauens deale so still:
Let the superfluous, and Lust- dieted man,
That slaues your ordinance, that will not see
Because he do’s not feele, feele your powre quickly:
So distribution should vndoo excesse,
And each man haue enough. Dost thou know Douer?
Edg. I Master.
Glow. There is a Cliffe, whose high and bending head
Lookes fearfully in the confined Deepe:
Bring me but to the very brimme of it,
And Ile repayre the misery thou do’st beare
With something rich about me: from that place,
I shall no leading neede.
Edg. Giue me thy arme;
Poore Tom shall leade thee. Exeunt.

Scena Secunda.

Enter Gonerill, Bastard, and Steward.
Gon. Welcome my Lord. I meruell our mild husband
Not met vs on the way. Now, where’s your Master?
Stew. Madam within, but neuer man so chang’d:
I told him of the Army that was Landed:
He smil’d at it. I told him you were comming,
His answer was, the worse. Of Glosters Treachery,
And of the loyall Service of his Sonne
When I inform’d him, then he call’d me Sot,
And told me I had turn’d the wrong side out:
What most he should dislike, seemes pleasant to him;
What like, offensiue.

Gon. Then shall you go no further.
It is the Cowish terror of his spirit
That dares not undertake: Hee’l not feel wrongs
Which tye him to an answer: our wishes on the way
May proove effects. Backe Edmond to my Brother,
Hasten his Musters, and conduct his powres.
I must change names at home, and give the Distaffe
Into my Husbands hands. This trustie Seruant
Shall passe betweene vs: ere long you are like to heare
(If you dare venture in your owne behalfe)
A Mistresses command. Weare this; spare speech,
Decline your head. This kisse, if it durst speake
Would stretch thy Spirits vp into the ayre:
Conceiue, and fare thee well.


Gon. My most deere Gloster.
Oh, the difference of man, and man,
To thee a Womans seruices are due,
My Foole vsurpes my body.

Stew. Madam, here come’s my Lord.

Enter Albany.

Gon. I haue beene worth the whistle.
Alb. Oh Gonerill,
You are not worth the dust which the rude winde
Blowes in your face.

Gon. Milke-liuer’d man,
That bear’st a cheeke for blowes, a head for wrongs,
Who hast not in thy browes an eye-discerning
Thine Honor, from thy suffering.

Alb. See thy selfe diuell:
Proper deformitie seemes not in the Fiend
So horrid as in woman.

Gon. Oh vaine Foole.

Enter a Messenger.

Mes. Oh my good Lord, the Duke of Cornwals dead,
Slaine by his Seruant, going to put out
The other eye of Glouster.
Alb. Glousters eyes.

Mes. A Seruant that he bred, thrill’d with remorse,
Oppos’d against the act: bending his Sword
To his great Master, who, threat-enrag’d
Flew on him, and among’st them fell’d him dead,
But not without that harmefull stroke, which since
Hath pluckt him after.

Alb. This shewes you are aboue
You Iustices, that these our neather crimes
So speedily can venge. But (O poore Glouster)
Lost he his other eye?

Mes. Both, both, my Lord.
This Leter Madam, craues a speedy answer:
’Tis from your Sister.

Gon. One way I like this well.
But being widdow, and my Glouster with her,
May all the building in my fancie plucke
Vpon my hatefull life. Another way
The Newes is not so tart. Ile read, and answer.

Alb. Where was his Sonne,
When they did take his eyes?

Mes. Come with my Lady hither.
Alb. He is not heere.
Mes. No my good Lord, I met him backe againe.
Alb. Knowes he the wickednesse?
Mes. I my good Lord: ’twas he inform’d against him
And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment
Might haue the freer course.

Alb. Glouster, I liue
To thanke thee for the loue thou shew’dst the King,
And to reuenge thine eyes. Come hither Friend,
Tell me what more thou know’st. Exeunt.

Scena Tertia.

Enter with Drum and Colours, Cordelia, Gentlemen,
and Souldiours.

Cor. Alacke, ’tis he: why he was met euen now
As mad as the vext Sea, singing alowd.
Crown’d with ranke Fenitar, and furrow weeds,
With Hardokes, Hemlocke, Nettles, Cuckoo flowres, [rr5v
Darnell, and all the idle weedes that grow
In our sustaining Corne. A Centery send forth;
Search euery Acre in the high- growne field,
And bring him to our eye. What can mans wisedome
In the restoring his bereaued Sense; he that helps him,
Take all my outward worth.
2361 Gent. There is meanes Madam:
2362 Our foster Nurse of Nature, is repose,
2363 The which he lackes: that to prouoke in him
2364 Are many Simples operatiue, whose power
2365 Will close the eye of Anguish.
2366 Cord. All blest Secrets,
2367 All you vnpublish’d Vertues of the earth
2368 Spring with my teares; be aydant, and remediate
2369 In the Goodmans desires: seeke, seeke for him,
2370 Least his vngouern’d rage, dissolue the life
2371 That wants the meanes to leade it.
2372 Enter Messenger.
2373 Mes. Newes Madam,
2374 The Brittish Powres are marching hitherward.
2375 Cor. ’Tis knowne before. Our preparation stands
2376 In expectation of them. O deere Father,
2377 It is thy businesse that I go about: Therfore great France
2378 My mourning, and importun’t teares hath pittied:
2379 No blowne Ambition doth our Armes incite,
2380 But loue, deere loue, and our ag’d Fathers Rite:
2381 Soone may I heare, and see him. Exeunt.

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Scena Quarta.

2383 Enter Regan, and Steward.
2384 Reg. But are my Brothers Powres set forth?
2385 Stew. I Madam.
2386 Reg. Himselfe in person there?
2387 Stew. Madam with much ado:
2388 Your Sister is the better Souldier.
2389 Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your Lord at home?
2390 Stew. No Madam.
2391 Reg. What might import my Sisters Letter to him?
2392 Stew. I know not, Lady.
2393 Reg. Faith he is poasted hence on serious matter:
2394 It was great ignorance, Glousters eyes being out
2395 To let him liue. Where he arriues, he moues
2396 All hearts against vs: Edmund, I thinke is gone
2397 In pitty of his misery, to dispatch
2398 His nighted life: Moreouer to descry
2399 The strength o’th’ Enemy.
2400 Stew. I must needs after him, Madam, with my Letter.
2401 Reg. Our troopes set forth to morrow, stay with vs:
2402 The wayes are dangerous.
2403 Stew. I may not Madam:
2404 My Lady charg’d my dutie in this busines.
2405 Reg. Why should she write to Edmund?
2406 Might not you transport her purposes by word? Belike,
2407 Some things, I know not what. Ie loue thee much
2408 Let me vnseale the Letter.
2409 Stew. Madam, I had rather—
2410 Reg. I know your Lady do’s not loue her Husband,
2411 I am sure of that: and at her late being heere,
2412 She gaue strange Eliads, and most speaking lookes
2413 To Noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosome.
2414 Stew. I, Madam?
2415 Reg. I speake in vnderstanding: Y’are: I know’t,
2416 Therefore I do aduise you take this note:
2417 My Lord is dead: Edmund, and I haue talk’d,
2418 And more conuenient is he for my hand
2419 Then for your Ladies: You may gather more:
2420 If you do finde him, pray you giue him this;
2421 And when your Mistris heares thus much from you,
2422 I pray desire her call her wisedome to her.
2423 So fare you well:
2424 If you do chance to heare of that blinde Traitor,
2425 Preferment fals on him, that cuts him off.
2426 Stew. Would I could meet Madam, I should shew
2427 What party I do follow.
2428 Reg. Fare thee well. Exeunt

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**Scena Quinta.**

2430 Enter Gloucester, and Edgar.
2431 Glou. When shall I come to th’ top of that same hill?
2432 Edg. You do climbe vp it now. Look how we labor.
2433 Glou. Me thinkes the ground is eeuen.
2434 Edg. Horrible steepe.
2435 Hearke, do you heare the Sea?
2436 Glou. No truly.
2437 Edg. Why then your other Senses grow imperfect
2438 By your eyes anguish.
2439 Glou. So may it be indeed.
2440 Me thinkes thy voyce is alter’d, and thou speak’st
2441 In better phrase, and matter then thou did’st.
2442 Edg. Y’are much decei’d: In nothing am I chang’d
2443 But in my Garments.
2444 Glou. Me thinkes y’are better spoken.
Edg. Come on Sir,
Heere’s the place: stand still: how fearefull
And dizie ’tis, to cast ones eyes so low,
The Crowes and Choughes, that wing the midway ayre
Shew scarce so grosse as Beetles. Halfe way downe
Hangs one that gathers Vampire: dreadfull Trade:
Me thinkes he seemes no bigger then his head.
The Fishermen, that walk’d vpon the beach
Appeare like Mice: and yond tall Anchoring Barke,
Diminish’d to her Cocke: her Cocke, a Buoy
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring Surge,
That on th’ vnnumbred idle Pebble chafes
Cannot be heard so high. Ile looke no more,
Least my braine turne, and the deficient sight
Topple downe headlong.
Glou. Set me where you stand.
Edg. Giue me your hand:
You are now within a foote of th’ extreme Verge:
For all beneath the Moone would I not leape vpright.
Glou. Let go my hand:
Heere Friend’s another purse: in it, a Iewell
Well worth a poore mans taking. Fayries, and Gods
Prosper it with thee. Go thou further off,
Bid me farewell, and let me heare thee going.
Edg. Now fare ye well, good Sir.
Glou. With all my heart.
Edg. Why I do trifle thus with his dispaire,
Is done to cure it.
Glou. O you mighty Gods!
This world I do renounce, and in your sights
Shake patiently my great affliction off:
If I could beare it longer, and not fall
To quarrell with your great opposelesse willes,
My snuffe, and loathed part of Nature should
Burne it selfe out. If Edgar liue, O blesse him:
Now Fellow, fare thee well.
Edg. Gone Sir, farewell:
And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The Treasury of life, when life it selfe
Yeelds to the Theft. Had he bin where he thought,
By this had thought bin past. Aliue, or dead?
Hoa, you Sir: Friend, heare you Sir, speake:
Thus might he passe indeed: yet he reuiues.
What are you Sir?
Glou. Away, and let me dye.
Edg. Had’st thou beene ought
But Gozemore, Feathers, Ayre,
(So many fathome downe precipitating)
Thou’dst shiuer’d like an Egge: but thou do’st breath:
Hast heauy substance, bleed’st not, speak’st, art sound,
Ten Masts at each, make not the altitude
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell,
Thy life’s a Myracle. Speake yet againe.

Glou. But haue I falne, or no?
Edg. From the dread Somnet of this Chalkie Bourne
Looke vp a height, the shrill- gorg’d Larke so farre
Cannot be seene, or heard: Do but looke vp.
Glou. Alacke, I haue no eyes:
To end it selfe by death? ’Twas yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the Tyrants rage,
And frustrate his proud will.
Edg. Giue me your arme.
Vp, so: How is’t? Feele you your Legges? You stand.
Glou. Too well, too well.
Edg. This is aboue all strangenesse,
Vpon the crowne o’th’ Cliffe. What thing was that
Which parted from you?
Glou. A poore vnfortunate Beggar.
Edg. As I stood heere below, me thought his eyes
Were two full Moones: he had a thousand Noses,
Hornes wealk’d, and waued like the enraged Sea:
It was some Fiend: Therefore thou happy Father,
Thinke that the cleerest Gods, who make them Honors
Of mens Impossibilities, haue preserued thee.
Glou. I do remember now: henceforth Ile beare
Affliction, till it do cry out it selfe
Enough, enough, and dye. That thing you speake of,
I tooke it for a man: often ’twould say
The Fiend, the Fiend, he led me to that place.
Edgar. Beare free and patient thoughts.

Enter Lear.
But who comes heere?
The safer sense will ne’re accommodate
His Master thus.
Lear. No, they cannot touch me for crying. I am the
King himselfe.
Edg. O thou side- piercing sight!
Lear. Nature’s aboue Art, in that respect. Ther’s your
Presse- money. That fellow handles his bow, like a Crow-keeper:
draw mee a Cloathiers yard. Looke, looke, a
Mouse: peace, peace, this peece of toasted Cheese will
doo’t. There’s my Gauntlet, Ile proue it on a Gyant.

Bring vp the browne Billes. O well flowne Bird: i’th’
cloot, i’th’ cloot: Hewgh. Giue the word.

Edg. Sweet Mariorum.

Lear. Passe.

Glov. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Gonerill with a white beard? They flatter’d
me like a Dogge, and told mee I had the white hayres in
my Beard, ere the blacke ones were there. To say I, and
no, to euery thing that I said: I, and no too, was no good
Diuinity. When the raine came to wet me once, and the
winde to make me chatter: when the Thunder would not
peace at my bidding, there I found ’em, there I smelt ’em
out. Go too, they are not men o’their words; they told
me, I was euery thing: ’Tis a Lye, I am not Agu- proofo.

Glov. The tricke of that voyce, I do well remember:
Is’t not the King?

Lear. I, euery inch a King.

When I do stare, see how the Subiect quakes.

I pardon that mans life. What was thy cause?

Adultery? thou shalt not dye: dye for Adultery?

No, the Wren goes too’t, and the small gilded Fly

Do’s lether in my sight. Let Copulation thrue:

For Glousters bastard Son was kinder to his Father,

Then my Daughters got ’tweene the lawfull sheets.

Too’t Luxury pell- mell, for I lacke Souldiers.

Behold yond simpring Dame, whose face betweene her

Forkes presages Snow; that minces Vertue, & do’s shake

the head to heare of pleasures name. The Fitchew, nor

the soyled Horse goes too’t with a more riotous appe-tite:

Downe from the waste they are Centaures, though

Women all aboue: but to the Girdle do the Gods inhe-rit,
beneath is all the Fiends. There’s hell, there’s darke-nes,

consumption: Fye, fie, fie; pah, pah: Giue me an Ounce

of Ciuet; good Apothecary sweeten my immagination:

There’s money for thee.

Glov. O let me kisse that hand.

Lear. Let me wipe it first,

It smelles of Mortality.

Glov. O ruin’d peece of Nature, this great world

Shall so weare out to naught.

Dost thou know me?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough: dost thou

squiny at me? No, doe thy worst blinde Cupid, Ile not

loue. Reade thou this challenge, marke but the penning
Glou. Were all thy Letters Sunnes, I could not see.

Edg. I would not take this from report,

It is, and my heart breakes at it.

Lear. Read.

Glou. What with the Case of eyes?

Lear. Oh ho, are you there with me? No eies in your

head, nor no mony in your purse? Your eyes are in a hea-uy

case, your purse in a light, yet you see how this world

goes.

Glou. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how this world

goes, with no eyes. Looke with thine eares: See how

yond Iustice railes vpon yond simple theefe. Hearke in

thine eare: Change places, and handy- dandy, which is

the Iustice, which is the theefe: Thou hast seene a Far-mers

dogge barke at a Beggar?

Glou. I Sir.

Lear. And the Creature run from the Cur: there thou

might’st behold the great image of Authoritie, a Dogg’s

obey’d in Office. Thou, Rascall Beadle, hold thy bloody

hand: why dost thou lash that Whore? Strip thy owne

backe, thou hotly lusts to vse her in that kind, for which

thou whip’st her. The Vsurer hangs the Cozener. Tho-rough   

ratter’d cloathes great Vices do appeare: Robes,

and Furr’d gownes hide all. Place sinnes with Gold, and

the strong Lance of Iustice, hurtlesse breakes: Arme it in

ragges, a Pigmies straw do’s pierce it. None do’s offend,

none, I say none, Ile able ’em; take that of me my Friend,

who haue the power to seale th’ accusers lips. Get thee

glasse- eyes, and like a scuruy Politician, seeme to see the

things thou dost not. Now, now, now, now. Pull off my

Bootes: harder, harder, so.

Edg. O matter, and impertinency mixt,

Reason in Madnesse.

Lear. If thou wilt weepe my Fortunes, take my eyes.

I know thee well enough, thy name is Glouster:

Thou must be patient; we came crying hither:

Thou know’st, the first time that we smell the Ayre

We wawle, and cry. I will preach to thee: Marke.

Glou. Alacke, alacke the day.

Lear. When we are borne, we cry that we are come

To this great stage of Fooles. This a good blocke:

It were a delicate stratagem to shoo

A Troope of Horse with Felt: Ile put’t in proofe,

And when I haue stolne vpon these Son in Lawes,
Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. Oh heere he is: lay hand vpon him, Sir.

Your most deere Daughter—

Lear. No rescue? What, a Prisoner? I am euen The Naturall Foole of Fortune. Vse me well,

You shall haue ransome. Let me haue Surgeons,

I am cut to’th’ Braines.

Gent. You shall haue any thing.

Lear. No Seconds? All my selfe?

Why, this would make a man, a man of Salt

To vse his eyes for Garden water- pots. I wil die brauely,

Like a smugge Bridegroome. What? I will be Iouiall:

Come, come, I am a King, Masters, know you that?

Gent. You are a Royall one, and we obey you.

Lear. Then there’s life in’t. Come, and you get it,

You shall get it by running: Sa, sa, sa, sa. Exit.

Gent. A sight most pittifull in the meanest wretch,

Past speaking of in a King. Thou hast a Daughter

Who redeemes Nature from the generall curse

Which twaine haue brought her to.

Edg. Haile gentle Sir.

Gent. Sir, speed you: what’s your will?

Edg. Do you heare ought (Sir) of a Battell toward.

Gent. Most sure, and vulgar:

Stands on the hourly thought.

Edg. I thanke you Sir, that’s all.

Gent. Though that the Queen on special cause is here

Her Army is mou’d on. Exit.

Edg. I thank you Sir.

Glou. You euer gentle Gods, take my breath from me,

Let not my worser Spirit tempt me againe

To dye before you please.

Edg. Well pray you Father.

Glou. Now good sir, what are you?

Edg. A most poore man, made tame to Fortunes blows

Who, by the Art of knowne, and feeling sorrowes,

Am pregnant to good pitty. Giue me your hand,

Ile leade you to some biding.

Glou. Heartie thankes:

The bountie, and the benizon of Heauen

To boot, and boot.
Enter Steward.

Stew. A proclaim’d prize: most happie
That eyelesse head of thine, was first fram’d flesh
To raise my fortunes. Thou old, vnhappy Traitor,
Breefely thy selfe remember: the Sword is out
That must destroy thee.

Glou. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough too’t.

Stew. Wherefore, bold Pezant,
Dar’st thou support a publish’d Traitor? Hence,
Least that th’ infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arme.

Edg. Chill not let go Zir,
Without vurther ‘casion.

Stew. Let go Slaue, or thou dy’st.
Edg. Good Gentleman goe your gate, and let poore
volke passe: and ‘chud ha’ bin zwaggerd out of my life,
’twould not ha’ bin zo long as ’tis, by a vortnight. Nay,
come not neere th’ old man: keepe out che vor’ ye, or Ile
try whither your Costard, or my Ballow be the harder;
chill be plaine with you.

Stew. Out Dunghill.

Edg. Chill picke your teeth Zir: come, no matter vor
your foynes.

Stew. Slaue thou hast slaine me: Villain, take my purse;
If euer thou wilt thrue, bury my bodie,
And giue the Letters which thou find’st about me,
To Edmund Earle of Glouster: seek him out
Vpon the English party. Oh vntimely death, death.

Edg. I know thee well. A seruiceable Villaine,
As duteous to the vices of thy Mistris,
As badnesse would desire.

Glou. What, is he dead?

Edg. Sit you downe Father: rest you.
Let’s see these Pockets; the Letters that he speaks of
May be my Friends: hee’s dead; I am onely sorry
He had no other Deathsman. Let vs see:
Leaue gentle waxe, and manners: blame vs not
To know our enemies mindes, we rip their hearts,
Their Papers is more lawfull.

Reads the Letter.

Let our reciprocall vowes be remembred. You haue manie
opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and
place will be fruitfully offer’d. There is nothing done. If hee
returne the Conqueror, then am I the Prisoner, and his bed, my
Gaole, from the loathed warmth whereof, deliuer me, and sup-ply
the place for your Labour.
Your (Wife, so I would say) affectio-nate
Servant. Gonerill.
Oh indistinguish’d space of Womans will,
A plot vpon her vertuous Husbands life,
And the exchange my Brother: heere, in the sands
Thee Ile rake vp, the poste vnsanctified
Of murtherous Letchers: and in the mature time,
With this vngracious paper strike the sight
Of the death- practis’d Duke: for him ’tis well,
That of thy death, and businesse, I can tell.
Glou. The King is mad:
How stifte is my vilde sense
That I stand vp, and haue ingenious feeling
Of my huge Sorrowes? Better I were distract,
Drum afarre off.
And woes, by wrong imaginations loose   [ss1
The knowledge of themselues.
Edg. Giue me your hand:
Farre off methinkes I heare the beaten Drumme.
Come Father, Ile bestow you with a Friend. Exeunt.

Scaena Septima.

Enter Cordelia, Kent, and Gentleman.
Cor. O thou good Kent,
How shall I liue and worke
To match thy goodnesse?
My life will be too short,
And euery measure faile me.
Kent. To be acknowledg’d Madam is ore- pai’d,
All my reports go with the modest truth,
Nor more, nor clipt, but so.
Cor. Be better suited,
These weedes are memories of those worser houres:
I prythee put them off.
Kent. Pardon deere Madam,
Yet to be knowne shortens my made intent,
My boone I make it, that you know me not,
Till time, and I, thinke meet.
Cor. Then be’t so my good Lord:
How do’s the King?
Gent. Madam sleepes still.
Cor. O you kind Gods!
Cure this great breach in his abused Nature,
Th’ vntun’d and iarring senses, O winde vp,
Of this childe- changed Father.

Gent. So please your Maiesty,
That we may wake the King, he hath slept long?

Cor. Be gouern’d by your knowledge, and proceede
I’th’ sway of your owne will: is he array’d?

Enter Lear in a chaire carried by Seruants

Gent. I Madam: in the heauinesse of sleepe,
We put fresh garments on him.
Be by good Madam when we do awake him,
I doubt of his Temperance.

Cor. O my deere Father, restauratian hang
Thy medicine on my lippes, and let this kisse
Repaire those violent harmes, that my two Sisters
Haue in thy Reuerence made.

Kent. Kind and deere Princesse.
Cor. Had you not bin their Father, these white flakes
Did challenge pitty of them. Was this a face
To be oppos’d against the iarring windes?

Mine Enemies dogge, though he had bit me,
Should haue stood that night against my fire,
And was’t thou faine (poore Father)
To houell thee with Swine and Rogues forlorne,
In short, and musty straw? Alacke, alacke,
’Tis wonder that thy life and wits, at once
Had not concluded all. He wakes, speake to him.

Gen. Madam do you, ’tis fittest.

Cor. How does my Royall Lord?
How fares your Maiesty?

You do me wrong to take me out o’th’ graue,
Thou art a Soule in blisse, but I am bound
Vpon a wheele of fire, that mine owne teares
Do scal’d, like molten Lead.

Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit I know, where did you dye?
Cor. Still, still, farre wide.

Gen. He’s scarce awake,
Let him alone a while.

Lear. Where haue I bin?
Where am I? Faire day light?
I am mightily abus’d; I should eu’n dye with pitty
To see another thus. I know not what to say:
I will not sweare these are my hands: let’s see,
I feele this pin pricke, would I were assur’d
Of my condition.

Cor. O looke vpon me Sir,
And hold your hand in benediction o’re me,
You must not kneele.
Lear. Pray do not mocke me:
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourescore and vpward,
Not an houre more, nor lesse:
And to deale plainely,
I feare I am not in my perfect mind.
Me thinkes I should know you, and know this man,
Yet I am doubtfull: For I am mainly ignorant
What place this is: and all the skill I haue
Remembers not these garments: nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me,
For (as I am a man) I thinke this Lady
To be my childe Cordelia.
Cor. And so I am: I am.
Lear. Be your teares wet?
Yes faith: I pray weepe not,
If you haue poysn for me, I will drinke it:
I know you do not loue me, for your Sisters
Haue (as I do remember) done me wrong.
You haue some cause, they haue not.
Cor. No cause, no cause.
Lear. Am I in France?
Kent. In your owne kingdome Sir.
Lear. Do not abuse me.
Gent. Be comforted good Madam, the great rage
You see is kill’d in him: desire him to go in,
Trouble him no more till further settling.
Cor. Wilt please your Highnesse walke?
Lear. You must beare with me:
Pray you now forget, and forgie,
I am old and foolish. Exeunt

Actus Quintus. Scena Prima.

Enter with Drumme and Colours, Edmund, Regan.
Gentlemen, and Souldiers.
Bast. Know of the Duke if his last purpose hold,
Or whether since he is aduis’d by ought
To change the course, he’s full of alteration,
And selfereprouing, bring his constant pleasure.
Reg. Our Sisters man is certainly miscarried.

Bast. 'Tis to be doubted Madam.

Reg. Now sweet Lord, you know the goodnesse I intend upon you:

Tell me but truly, but then speake the truth,

Do you not loue my Sister?

Bast. In honour'd Loue.

Reg. But haue you neuer found my Brothers way,

To the fore-fended place?

Bast. No by mine honour, Madam.

Reg. I neuer shall endure her, deere my Lord

Be not familiar with her.

Bast. Feare not, she and the Duke her husband.

Enter with Drum and Colours, Albany, Gonerill, Soldiers.

Alb. Our very louing Sister, well met:

Sir, this I heard, the King is come to his Daughter

With others, whom the rigour of our State

Forc'd to cry out.

Regan. Why is this reasond?

Gone. Combine together 'gainst the Enemie:

For these domestick and particular broiles,

Are not the question heere.

Alb. Let's then determine with th' ancient of warre

On our proceeding.

Reg. Sister you'le go with vs?

Gon. No.

Reg. 'Tis most conuenient, pray go with vs.

Gon. Oh ho, I know the Riddle, I will goe.

Exeunt both the Armies.

Enter Edgar.

Edg. If ere your Grace had speech with man so poore,

Hear me one word.

Alb. Ile ouertake you, speake.

Edg. Before you fight the Battaile, ope this Letter:

If you haue victory, let the Trumpet sound

For him that brought it: wretched though I seeme,

I can produce a Champion, that will proue

What is auouched there. If you miscarry,

Your businesse of the world hath so an end,

And machination ceases. Fortune loues you.

Alb. Stay till I haue read the Letter.

Edg. I was forbid it:

When time shall serue, let but the Herald cry,

And Ile appeare againe. Exit.

Alb. Why farethee well, I will o’re-looke thy paper.

Enter Edmund.
Bast. The Enemy’s in view, draw vp your powers,
Here is the guess of their true strength and Forces,
By dilligent discoverie, but your hast
Is now urg’d on you.
Alb. We will greet the time. Exit.
Bast. To both these Sisters haue I sworne my loue:
Each iealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the Adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both? One? Or neither? Neither can be enjoy’d
If both remaine aliove: To take the Widdow,
Exasperates, makes mad her Sister Gonerill,
And hardly shall I carry out my side,
Her husband being aliove. Now then, wee’l vse
His countenance for the Battaile, which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him, devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercie
Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia,
The Battaile done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon: for my state,
Stands on me to defend, not to debate. Exit.

Scena Secunda.

Alarum within. Enter with Drumme and Colours, Lear,
Cordelia, and Souldiers, ouer the Stage, and Exeunt.
Enter Edgar, and Gloster.
Edg. Heere Father, take the shadow of this Tree
For your good hoast: pray that the right may thriue:
If euer I returne to you againe,
Ile bring you comfort.
Alarum and Retreat within.
Enter Edgar within.
Edgar. Away old man, giue me thy hand, away:
King Lear hath lost, he and his Daughter tane,
Giue me thy hand: Come on.
Glo. No further Sir, a man may rot euen heere.
Edg. What in ill thoughts againe?
Men must endure
Their going hence, euen as their comming hither,
Ripeness is all come on.
Glo. And that’s true too. Exeunt.
Enter in conquest with Drum and Colours, Edmund, Lear, and Cordelia, as prisoners, Souldiers, Captaine.

Bast. Some Officers take them away: good guard,

Vntill their greater pleasures first be knowne

That are to censure them.

Cor. We are not the first,

Who with best meaning haue incurr’d the worst:

For thee oppressed King I am cast downe,

My selfe could else out- frowne false Fortunes frowne.

Shall we not see these Daughters, and these Sisters?

Lear. No, no, no, no: come let’s away to prison,

We two alone will sing like Birds i’th’ Cage:

When thou dost aske me blessing, Ile kneele downe

And aske of thee forguenesse: So wee’l liue,

And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh

At gilded Butterflies: and heere (poore Rogues)

Talke of Court newes, and wee’l talke with them too,

Who looses, and who wins; who’s in, who’s out;

And take vpon’s the mystery of things,

As if we were Gods spies: And wee’l weare out

In a wall’d prison, packs and sects of great ones,

That ebbe and flow by th’ Moone.

Bast. Take them away.

Lear. Vpon such sacrifices my Cordelia,

The Gods themselues throw Incense.

Haue I caught thee?

He that parts vs, shall bring a Brand from Heauen,

And fire vs hence, like Foxes: wipe thine eyes,

The good yeares shall deuoure them, flesh and fell, [ss2

Ere they shall make vs weepe?

Weele see ’em staru’d first: come. Exit.

Bast. Come hither Captaine, hearke.

Take thou this note, go follow them to prison,

One step I haue aduanc’d thee, if thou do’st

As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way

To Noble Fortunes: know thou this, that men

Are as the time is; to be tender minded

Do’s not become a Sword, thy great imployment

Will not beare question: either say thou’lt do’t,

Or thrue by other meanes.

Capt. Il do’t my Lord.

Bast. About it, and write happy, when th’hast done,

Marke I say instantly, and carry it so

As I haue set it downe. Exit Captaine.
Flourish. Enter Albany, Gonerill, Regan, Soldiers.

Alb. Sir, you haue shew’d to day your valiant straine
And Fortune led you well: you haue the Captiues
Who were the opposites of this dayes strife:
I do require them of you so to vse them,
As we shall find their merites, and our safety
May equally determine.

Bast. Sir, I thought it fit,
To send the old and miserable King to some retention,
Whose age had Charmes in it, whose Title more,
To plucke the common bosome on his side,
And turne our imprest Launces in our eies
Which do command them. With him I sent the Queen:
My reason all the same, and they are ready
To morrow, or at further space, t’ appeare
Where you shall hold your Session.

Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subiect of this Warre,
Not as a Brother.

Reg. That’s as we list to grace him.
Methinkes our pleasure might haue bin demanded
Ere you had spoke so farre. He led our Powers,
Bore the Commission of my place and person,
The which immediacie may well stand vp,
And call it selfe your Brother.

Gon. Not so hot:
In his owne grace he doth exalt himselfe,
More then in your addition.

Reg. In my rights,
By me inuested, he compeeres the best.
Alb. That were the most, if he should husband you.
Reg. Iesters do oft proue Prophets.
Gon. Hola, hola,
That eye that told you so, look’d but a squint.
Rega. Lady I am not well, else I should answere
From a full flowing stomack. Generall,
Take thou my Souldiers, prisoners, patrimony,
Dispose of them, of me, the walls is thine:
Witness the world, that I create thee heere
My Lord, and Master.

Gon. Meane you to enioy him?
Alb. The let alone lies not in your good will.
Bast. Nor in thine Lord.
Alb. Halfe- blooded fellow, yes.
Reg. Let the Drum strike, and proue my title thine.
Alb. Stay yet, heare reason: Edmund, I arrest thee
On capittall Treason; and in thy arrest,
This guilded Serpent: for your claime faire Sisters,
I bare it in the interest of my wife,
'Tis she is sub- contracted to this Lord,
And I her husband contradict your Banes.
If you will marry, make your loues to me,
My Lady is bespoke.

Gon. An enterlude.
Alb. Thou art armed Gloster,
Let the Trumpet sound:
If none appeare to proue vpon thy person,
Thy heynous, manifest, and many Treasons,
There is my pledge: Ile make it on thy heart
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing lesse
Then I haue heere proclaim’d thee.
Reg. Sicke, O sicke.
Gon. If not, Ile nere trust medicine.
Bast. There’s my exchange, what in the world hes
That names me Traitor, villain- like he lies,
Call by the Trumpet: he that dares approach;
On him, on you, who not, I will maintaine
My truth and honor firmely.
Enter a Herald.
Trust to thy single vertue, for thy Souldiers
All leuied in my name, haue in my name
Tooke their discharge.
Regan. My sicknesse growes vpon me.
Alb. She is not well, conuey her to my Tent.
Come hither Herald, let the Trumpet sound,
And read out this. A Trumpet sounds.
Herald reads.
If any man of qualitie or degree, within the lists of the Ar-my,
will maintaine vpon Edmund, supposed Earle of Gloster,
that he is a manifold Traitor, let him appeare by the third
sound of the Trumpet: he is bold in his defence. 1 Trumpet.
Her. Againe. 2 Trumpet.
Her. Againe. 3 Trumpet.
Trumpet answers within.
Enter Edgar armed.
Alb. Aske him his purposes, why he appeares
Vpon this Call o’th’ Trumpet.
Her. What are you?
Your name, your quality, and why you answer
This present Summons?
Edg. Know my name is lost
By Treasons tooth: bare- gnawne, and Canker-bit,
Yet am I Noble as the Aduersary
I come to cope.

Alb. Which is that Aduersary?
Edg. What’s he that speakes for Edmund Earle of Glo-

Bast. Himselfe, what saist thou to him?
Edg. Draw thy Sword,
That if my speech offend a Noble heart,
Thy arme may do thee Justice, heere is mine:
Behold it is my priuiledge,
The priuiledge of mine Honours,
My oath, and my profession. I protest,
Maugre thy strength, place, youth, and eminence,
Despise thy victor- Sword, and fire new Fortune,
Thy valor, and thy heart, thou art a Traitor:
False to thy Gods, thy Brother, and thy Father,
Conspirant ‘gainst this high illustrious Prince,
And from th’ extremest vpward of thy head,
To the descent and dust below thy foote, 
A most Toad- spotted Traitor. Say thou no,
This Sword, this arme, and my best spirits are bent
To proue vpon thy heart, where to I speake,
Thou lyest.

Bast. In wisedome I should aske thy name,
But since thy out- side lookes so faire and Warlike,
And that thy tongue (some say) of breeding breathes,
What safe, and nicely I might well delay,
By rule of Knight- hood, I disdaine and spurne:
Backe do I tosse these Treasons to thy head,
With the hell- hated Lye, ore- whelme thy heart,
Which for they yet glance by, and scarcely bruise,
This Sword of mine shall giue them instant way,
Where they shall rest for euer. Trumpets speake.

Alb. Saue him, saue him.

Gon. This is practise Gloster,
By th’ law of Warre, thou wast not bound to answer
An vnknowne opposite: thou art not vanquish’d,
But cozend, and beguild.
Alb. Shut your mouth Dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it: hold Sir,
Thou worse then any name, reade thine owne euill:
No tearing Lady, I perceiue you know it.
Gon. Say if I do, the Lawes are mine not thine,
Who can araigne me for’t? Exit.
Alb. Most monstrous! O, know’st thou this paper?
Bast. Aske me not what I know.
Alb. Go after her, she’s desperate, govern her.

Bast. What you have charg’d me with,

That have I done,

And more, much more, the time will bring it out.

'Tis past, and so am I: But what art thou

That hast this Fortune on me? If thou’rt Noble,

I do forgive thee.

Edg. Let’s exchange charity:

I am no lesse in blood then thou art Edmond,

If more, the more th’ hast wrong’d me.

My name is Edgar and thy Fathers Sonne,

The Gods are just, and of our pleasant vices

Make instruments to plague vs:

The darke and vitious place where thee he got,

Cost him his eyes.

Bast. Th’hast spoken right, ’tis true,

The Wheele is come full circle, I am heere.

Alb. Me thought thy very gate did prophesie

A Royall Noblenesse: I must embrace thee,

Let sorrow split my heart, if euer I

Did hate thee, or thy Father.

Edg. Worthy Prince I know’t.

Alb. Where haue you hid your selfe?

How haue you knowne the miseries of your Father?

Edg. By nursing them my Lord. List a brefe tale,

And when ’tis told, O that my heart would burst.

The bloody proclamation to escape

That follow’d me so neere, (O our liues sweetnesse,

That we the paine of death would hourely dye,

Rather then die at once) taught me to shift

Into a mad- mans rags, t’ assume a semblance

That very Dogges disdain’d: and in this habit

Met I my Father with his bleeding Rings,

Their precious Stones new lost: became his guide,

Led him, begg’d for him, sau’d him from dispaire.

Neuer (O fault) reueld my selfe vnto him,

Vntill some halfe hour past when I was arm’d,

Not sure, though hoping of this good sucesse,

I ask’d his blessing, and from first to last

Told him our pilgrimage. But his flaw’d heart

(Alacke too weake the conflict to support)

Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and greefe,

Burst smilingly.

Bast. This speech of yours hath mou’d me,

And shall perchance do good, but speake you on,

You looke as you had something more to say.
3166  Alb. If there be more, more wofull, hold it in,
3167  For I am almost ready to dissolue,
3168  Hearing of this.
3169  Enter a Gentleman.
3171  Edg. What kinde of helpe?
3172  Alb. Speake man.
3173  Edg. What meanes this bloody Knife?
3174  Gen. 'Tis hot, it smoakes, it came eu en from the heart
3175  of— O she's dead.
3177  Gen. Your Lady Sir, your Lady; and her Sister.
3178  By her is poyson’d: she confesses it.
3179  Bast. I was contracted to them both, all three
3180  Now marry in an instant.
3181  Edg. Here comes Kent.
3182  Enter Kent.
3183  Alb. Produce the bodies, be they aliue or dead;
3184  Gonerill and Regans bodies brought out.
3185  This judgement of the Heauens that makes vs tremble.
3186  Touches vs not with pitty: O, is this he?
3187  The time will not allow the complement
3188  Which very manners vrges.
3189  Kent. I am come
3190  To bid my King and Master aye good night.
3191  Is he not here?
3192  Alb. Great thing of vs forgot,
3193  Speake Edmund, where’s the King? and where’s Cordelia?
3194  Seest thou this object Kent?
3195  Kent. Alacke, why thus?
3196  Bast. Yet Edmund was belou’d:
3197  The one the other poison’d for my sake,
3198  And after slew herselfe.
3199  Alb. Euen so: couer their faces.
3200  Bast. I pant for life: some good I meane to do
3201  Despight of mine owne Nature. Quickly send,
3202  (Be briefe in it) to’th’ Castle, for my Writ
3203  Is on the life of Lear, and on Cordelia:
3204  Nay, send in time.
3205  Alb. Run, run, O run.
3206  Edg. To who my Lord? Who ha’s the Office?
3207  Send thy token of repreeue.
3208  Bast. Well thought on, take my Sword,
3209  Giue it the Captaine.
3210  Edg. Hast thee for thy life.
3211  Bast. He hath Commission from thy Wife and me,
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her owne dispaire,
That she for-did her selfe.

Alb. The Gods defend her, beare him hence awhile.

Enter Lear with Cordelia in his armes.

Lear. Howle, howle, howle: O you are men of stones,
Had I your tongues and eyes, Il’d use them so,
That Heauens vault should crack: she’s gone for euer.
I know when one is dead, and when one liues,
She’s dead as earth: Lend me a Looking- glasse,
If that her breath will mist or staine the stone,
Why then she liues.

Kent. Is this the promis’d end?

Edg. Or image of that horror.

Alb. Fall and cease.

Lear. This feather stirs, she liues: if it be so,
It is a chance which do’s redeeme all sorrowes
That euer I haue felt.

Kent. O my good Master.

Lear. Prythee away.

Edg. ’Tis Noble Kent your Friend.

Lear. A plague vpon you Murderors, Traitors all,
I might haue sau’d her, now she’s gone for euer:
Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little. Ha:
What is’t thou saist? Her voice was euer soft,
Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman.
I kill’d the Slaue that was a hanging thee.

Gent. ’Tis true (my Lords) he did.

Lear. This is a dull sight, are you not Kent?

Kent. If Fortune brag of two, she lou’d and hated,
One of them we behold.

Lear. The same: your Seruant Kent,
Where is your Seruant Caius?

Lear. He’s a good fellow, I can tell you that,
He’le strike and quickly too, he’s dead and rotten.

Kent. No my good Lord, I am the very man.

Lear. Ile see that straight.

Kent. That from your first of difference and decay,
Haue follow’d your sad steps.

Lear. You are welcome hither.

Kent. Nor no man else:
3258 All’s cheerlesse, darke, and deadly,
3259 Your eldest Daughters haue fore-done themselues,
3260 And desperately are dead
3261 Lear. I so I thinke.
3262 Alb. He knowes not what he saies, and vaine is it
3263 That we present vs to him.
3264 Enter a Messenger.
3265 Edg. Very bootlesse.
3266 Mess. Edmund is dead my Lord.
3267 Alb. That’s but a trifle heere:
3268 You Lords and Noble Friends, know our intent,
3269 What comfort to this great decay may come,
3270 Shall be appli’d. For vs we will resigne,
3271 During the life of this old Maiesty
3272 To him our absolute power, you to your rights,
3273 With boote, and such addition as your Honours
3274 Haue more then merited. All Friends shall
3275 Taste the wages of their vertue, and all Foes
3276 The cup of their deseruings: O see, see.
3277 Lear. And my poore Foole is hang’d: no, no, no life?
3278 Why should a Dog, a Horse, a Rat haue life,
3279 And thou no breath at all? Thou’lt come no more,
3280 Neuer, neuer, neuer, neuer, neuer.
3281 Pray you vndo this Button. Thanke you Sir,
3282 Do you see this? Looke on her? Looke her lips,
3283 Looke there, looke there. He dies.
3284 Edg. He faints, my Lord, my Lord.
3285 Kent. Breake heart, I prythee breake.
3286 Edg. Looke vp my Lord.
3287 Kent. Vex not his ghost, O let him passe, he hates him,
3288 That would vpon the wracke of this tough world
3289 Stretch him out longer.
3290 Edg. He is gon indeed.
3291 Kent. The wonder is, he hath endur’d so long,
3292 He but vsurpt his life.
3293 Alb. Beare them from hence, our present businesse
3294 Is generall woe: Friends of my soule, you twaine,
3295 Rule in this Realme, and the gor’d state sustaine.
3296 Kent. I haue a iourney Sir, shortly to go,
3297 My Master calls me, I must not say no.
3298 Edg. The waight of this sad time we must obey,
3299 Speake what we feele, not what we ought to say:
3300 The oldest hath borne most, we that are yong,
3301 Shall neuer see so much, nor liue so long.
3302 Exeunt with a dead March.
FINIS.
3304 THE TRAGDIE OF
    KING LEAR.