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STUDENT RESOURCES

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description

Examines major British texts from the Anglo-Saxon period to the 18th century, emphasizing the ideas and characteristics of the British literary tradition. Involves critical reading and writing. ENG 243 has been designated as a “writing intensive” course according to standards developed by the English department. Prerequisite: ENG 112 or its equivalent. ENG 243 and ENG 244 may be taken out of order. Lecture 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose

ENG 243 develops skills in critical literacy, provides opportunities for self-expression, and promotes understanding of British texts from the Anglo-Saxon period to the 18th century, emphasizing the critical ideas and traditions of the British literary tradition. As a writing intensive course, ENG 243 will provide specific instruction in writing, especially literary analysis, and substantial written and oral feedback on formal writing, with the opportunity to revise at least one formal paper. Upon successful completion of the course, students will have produced at least 12 pages (3000 words) of formal writing, including academic essays and essay exam responses, and at least 12 pages (3000 words) of informal writing, including reading responses or journal entries.

Course Objectives

• Describe, analyze, and interpret themes and features of literary texts from a variety of genres, using appropriate literary terminology
• Demonstrate knowledge of the literary movements covered in the survey, including literary techniques, innovations, major writers, and major texts
• Explain the relationship between literature and the historical and cultural contexts in which it is produced, with particular attention to the shaping of cultural identities as reflected in the literature
• Produce at least 12 pages (a minimum of 3000 words) of formal writing, including academic essays and essay examinations, and at least 12 pages (a minimum of 3000 words) of informal writing, including reading responses or journal entries; academic writing about literature should include clear argumentation and organization, valid textual evidence for support, and correct documentation
• Participate in interactive discussions, peer reviews, and/or one or more formal individual and/or group multi-modal presentations
• Locate and evaluate information retrieved from electronic sources, such as academic databases and web resources
• Use available electronic technologies for creating and submitting texts
• Recognize literary study as a means for intellectual, aesthetic, and personal growth and for engaging meaningful and enduring questions across human cultures
Major Topics to be Included

Students may expect to study the following:

- British literary tradition, including fiction, poetry, drama, and non-fiction, beginning with the Anglo-Saxon period and moving to the 18th century
- Social, political and cultural movements from which the literature emerges
- Issues relevant to the development of English drama and poetry, the development of the English language, the context of political and social texts, and the growth of fiction writing

Prerequisites

**English 112.** Students must successfully pass ENG 112 (or its transfer equivalent) before they can enroll in this course. Students who earned a “D” in ENG 112 are strongly advised to repeat that course before continuing on to 200-level literature courses.

TIMELINE OF BRITISH LITERATURE

Timelines offer a good perspective of how English Literature has developed over time.

Follow the following links for insights into specific periods we’ll cover in this course.

**Timeline of British Literature** by Michael Becksfort
Prezi: This is an overview of British Literature from pre-Christian history to present.
**British Library’s English Timeline**
Specific timelines allow users to see very granular developments in literary history over time.

SAMPLE LITERARY ANALYSIS

Content to be developed.
LEARNING TO WRITE LITERARY ANALYSIS

APPROACHING POETRY

Introduction

This reading is designed to develop the analytical skills you need for a more in-depth study of literary texts. You will learn about rhythm, alliteration, rhyme, poetic inversion, voice and line lengths and endings. You will examine poems that do not rhyme and learn how to compare and contrast poetry.

By the end of this reading you should be able to:

• have an awareness of the role of analysis to inform appreciation and understanding of poetry;
• be able to identify and discuss the main analytical concepts used in analyzing poetry.

What is the point of analyzing poetry? One simple answer is that the more we know about anything the more interesting it becomes: listening to music or looking at paintings with someone who can tell us a little about what we hear or see – or what we’re reading – is one way of increasing our understanding and pleasure. That may mean learning something about the people who produced the writing, music, painting that we are interested in, and why they produced it. But it may also mean understanding why one particular form was chosen rather than another: why, for example, did the poet choose to write a sonnet rather than an ode, a ballad, or a villanelle? To appreciate the appropriateness of one form, we need to be aware of a range of options available to that particular writer at that particular time. In the same way, we also need to pay attention to word choice. Why was this particular word chosen from a whole range of words that might have said much the same? Looking at manuscript drafts can be really enlightening, showing how much effort was expended in order to find the most appropriate or most evocative expression.

Activity 1

Click on William Blake's “Tyger” to read and compare the two versions of the poem. The one on the left is a draft; the other is the final published version.
**Discussion**

The most obvious difference between the two is that stanza 4 of the draft does not survive in the published version, and an entirely new stanza, "When the stars threw down their spears," appears in the finished poem. Significantly, this introduces the idea of "the Lamb," a dramatic contrast to the tiger, as well as the idea of a "he" who made the lamb. One similarity between the draft and final version is that each is made up entirely of unanswered questions. But if you look at the manuscript stanza 5, you can see revisions from "What" to "Where," and the struggle with the third line, where Blake eventually decided that the idea of an arm was redundant, subsumed in the notions of grasping and claspings. The two rhyme words are decided—grasp/clasp—but in which order should they come? 'Clasp' is a less aggressive word than 'grasp'; 'clasp' is not quite as gentle as an embrace, but it is closer to embracing than 'grasp' is — so it must be for deliberate effect that we end up with 'What dread grasp/Dare its deadly terrors clasp?'

It is rare to have manuscript drafts to examine in this way, but I hope that this convinces you of the kind of attention writers pay to word choice. Let us take one more example. Think about this first stanza of Thomas Hardy's 'Neutral Tones' (1867):

> We stood by a pond that winter day,
> And the sun was white, as though chidden of God,
> And a few leaves lay on the starving sod;
> —They had fallen from an ash, and were gray. (Gibson, 1976, p. 12)

Notice that, in the last line, 'oak' or 'elm' would work just as well as far as the rhythm or music of the line is concerned, but 'ash' has extra connotations of grayness, of something burnt out, dead, finished ('ashes to ashes', too, perhaps?), all of which contribute to the mood that Hardy conveys in a way that 'oak' or 'elm' wouldn't.

To return to my original question then, 'what is the point of analyzing poetry?', one answer is that only an analytical approach can help us arrive at an informed appreciation and understanding of the poem. Whether we like a poem or not, we should be able to recognize the craftsmanship that has gone into making it, the ways in which stylistic techniques and devices have worked to create meaning. General readers may be entirely happy to find a poem pleasing, or unsatisfactory, without stopping to ask why. But studying poetry is a different matter and requires some background understanding of what those stylistic techniques might be, as well as an awareness of constraints and conventions within which poets have written throughout different periods of history.

You may write poetry yourself. If so, you probably know only too well how difficult it is to produce something you feel really expresses what you want to convey. Writing an essay presents enough problems – a poem is a different matter, but certainly no easier. Thinking of poetry as a discipline and a craft which, to some extent, can be learned, is another useful way of approaching analysis. After all, how successful are emotional outpourings on paper? Words one might scribble down in the heat of an intense moment may have some validity in conveying that intensity, but in general might they not be more satisfactory if they were later revised? My own feeling is that a remark Wordsworth made 200 years ago has become responsible for a number of misconceptions about what poetry should do. In the Preface to a volume of poems called *Lyrical Ballads* (1802) he wrote that ‘all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings’ (Owens and Johnson, 1998, p.85,11.105–6). The second time he uses the same phrase he says something that I think is often forgotten today: ‘poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity’ (my italics) (ibid., p. 95, II.557–8). Notice the significant time lapse implied there – the idea that, however powerful or spontaneous the emotion, it needs to be carefully considered before you start writing. He goes on:

> The emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation is gradually reproduced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins.

You don't have to agree with Wordsworth about what poetry is or how best to achieve it. (Would you always want a poem to express powerful emotion, for example? I referred to Hardy’s ‘Neutral Tones’ above, where the whole point is that neither of the two characters described feels anything much at all.) But the idea of contemplation is a
useful and important one: it implies distance, perhaps detachment, but above all re-creation, not the thing itself. And if we try to re-create something, we must choose our methods and our words carefully in order to convey what we experienced as closely as possible. A word of warning though: writers do not always aim to express personal experiences; often a persona is created.

The poet Ezra Pound offered this advice to other poets in an essay written in 1913: ‘Use no superfluous word, no adjective, which does not reveal something’ (Gray, 1990, p. 56). And in the 1950s William Carlos Williams advised, ‘cut and cut again whatever you write’. In his opinion, the ‘test of the artist is to be able to revise without showing a seam’ (loc. cit.). That sewing image he uses appeals to me particularly because it stresses the notion of skilled craftsmanship. Pound and Williams were American, writing long after Wordsworth, but, as you can see, like countless other poets they too reflected very seriously on their own poetic practice. I hope this helps convince you that as students we owe it to the poems we read to give them close analytical attention.

Note About Organization

In what follows, section headings like ‘Rhyme’, ‘Rhythm’, ‘Line lengths and line endings’, ‘Alliteration’, and so on, are intended to act as signposts to help you (if terms are unfamiliar, look them up in the glossary at the end). But these headings indicate only the main technique being discussed. While it is something we need to attempt, it is very difficult to try to isolate devices in this way – to separate out, for example, the effects of rhythm from rhyme. This doesn't mean that we shouldn’t look for particular techniques at work in a poem, but we need to be aware that they will be interdependent and the end product effective or not because of the way such elements work together.

As you work through this reading, don’t be discouraged if your response to exercises differs from mine. Remember that I had the advantage of choosing my own examples and that I’ve long been familiar with the poems I’ve used. On a daily basis, we probably read much less poetry than we do prose. This is perhaps one reason why many people say they find poetry difficult — unfamiliarity and lack of practice. But, like anything else, the more effort we put in, the wider the range of experiences we have to draw on. I hope that when you come across an unfamiliar extract in the discussions that follow you might decide to look up the whole poem on your own account, widening your own experience and enjoying it too.

Remember that language changes over the years. I’ve deliberately chosen to discuss poems from different periods, and given dates of first publication. Do keep this in mind, especially as you may find some examples more accessible than others. The idiom and register of a poem written in the eighteenth century will usually be quite different from one written in the twentieth. Different verse forms are popular at different times: while sonnets have been written for centuries, they were especially fashionable in Elizabethan times, for example. Don’t expect to find free verse written much before the twentieth century.

If you are working on a poem, it can be a good idea to print it, maybe even enlarge it, and then write anything you find particularly striking in the margins. Use highlighters or colored pens to underline repetitions and link rhyme words. Patterns may well emerge that will help you understand the way the poem develops. Make the poems your own in this way, and then, if you are the kind of person who doesn’t mind writing in books, you can insert notes in a more restrained way in the margins of your book.

If you prefer to work on your computer, you can do a similar thing by using an annotation tool on your word processor.

Whatever you do, always ask yourself what the effect of a particular technique that you identify is. Noticing an unusual choice of words, a particular rhyme scheme or use of alliteration is an important first step, but you need to take another one. Unless you go on to say why what you have noticed is effective, what it contributes to the rest of the poem, how it endorses or changes things, then you are doing less than half the job. Get into the habit of asking yourself questions, even if you can’t always answer them satisfactorily.
Rhythm

All speech has rhythm because we naturally stress some words or syllables more than others. The rhythm can sometimes be very regular and pronounced, as in a children's nursery rhyme – 'JACK and JILL went UP the HILL' – but even in the most ordinary sentence the important words are given more stress. In poetry, rhythm is extremely important: patterns are deliberately created and repeated for varying effects. The rhythmical pattern of a poem is called its meter, and we can analyze, or ‘scan’ lines of poetry to identify stressed and unstressed syllables. In marking the text to show this, the mark ‘/’ is used to indicate a stressed syllable, and ‘x’ to indicate an unstressed syllable. Each complete unit of stressed and unstressed syllables is called a ‘foot’, which usually has one stressed and one or two unstressed syllables.

The most common foot in English is known as the iamb, which is an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed one (x /). Many words in English are iambic: a simple example is the word ‘forgot’. When we say this, the stresses naturally fall in the sequence:

\[\text{forgot}\]

Iambic rhythm is in fact the basic sound pattern in ordinary English speech. If you say the following line aloud you will hear what I mean:

\[\text{x \ x} / \ x / \ x / \ x / \ x / \ x / \ x / \]

I went across the road and bought a pair of shoes.

The next most common foot is the trochee, a stressed syllable (or ‘beat’, if you like) followed by an unstressed one (/x), as in the word

\[\text{x} / \ x\]

‘mountain’.

Both the iamb and the trochee have two syllables, the iamb being a ‘rising’ rhythm and the trochee a ‘falling’ rhythm. Another two-syllable foot known as the spondee has two equally stressed beats (/ /), as in

\[\text{x} / \ x\]

‘blue spurt’.

Other important feet have three syllables. The most common are the anapest (x x /) and the dactyl (/ x x), which are triple rhythms, rising and falling respectively, as in the words

\[\text{x \ x} / \ / \ / \ / \ x \ x\]

‘unimpressed’ and ‘probably’.

Here are some fairly regular examples of the four main kinds of meter used in poetry. (I have separated the feet by using a vertical slash.) You should say the lines aloud, listening for the stress patterns and noting how the ‘beats’ fall on particular syllables or words.

**Iambic meter**

\[\text{x} / \ x / \ x / \ x / \ x / \ x / \ x / \]

The cur-\[\text{few tolls}\] the knell \[\text{of part-}\] ing day

**Trochaic meter**

\[\text{x} / \ x / \ x / \ x / \]

Tiger \[\text{tiger}\] burning \[\text{bright}\]

**Anapastic meter**
The other technical point that you need to know about is the way the lengths of lines of verse are described. This is done according to the number of feet they contain, and the names given to different lengths of lines are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monometer</th>
<th>a line of one foot</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dimeter</td>
<td>a line of two feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trimeter</td>
<td>a line of three feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetrameter</td>
<td>a line of four feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentameter</td>
<td>a line of five feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexameter</td>
<td>a line of six feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heptameter</td>
<td>a line of seven feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Octameter</td>
<td>a line of eight feet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By far the most widely used of these are the tetrameter and the pentameter. If you look back at the four lines of poetry given as examples above, you can count the feet. You will see that the first one has five feet, so it is an iambic pentameter line; the second one has four feet, so it is a trochaic tetrameter line; the fourth and fifth also have four feet, so are anapestic and dactylic tetrameter lines respectively. Lines do not always have exactly the 'right' number of beats. Sometimes a pentameter line will have an extra 'beat', as in the famous line from Hamlet, 'To be or not to be: that is the question', where the 'tion' of question is an eleventh, unstressed beat. (It is worth asking yourself why Shakespeare wrote the line like this. Why did he not write what would have been a perfectly regular ten-syllable line, such as 'The question is, to be or not to be'?)

Having outlined some of the basic meters of English poetry, it is important to say at once that very few poems would ever conform to a perfectly regular metrical pattern. The effect of that would be very boring indeed: imagine being restricted to using only iambic words, or trying to keep up a regular trochaic rhythm. Poets therefore often include trochaic or anapestic or dactylic words or phrases within what are basically iambic lines, in order to make them more interesting and suggestive, and to retain normal pronunciation. Here is a brief example from Shakespeare to show you what I mean. I have chosen a couple of lines spoken by Rosalind in As You Like It, Act 1, scene 2, and have marked this first version to show you the basic iambic meter:

```
My fa- ther loved Sir Row- land as his soul.
And all the world was of my fa- ther’s mind.
```

If you say the lines out loud in this regular way you can hear that the effect is very unnatural. Here is one way the lines might be scanned to show how the stresses would fall in speech (though there are other ways of scanning them):

```
My father loved Sir Rowland as his soul,
And all the world was of my father’s mind.
```
It must be emphasized that there is no need to feel that you must try to remember all the technical terms I have been introducing here. The purpose has been to help you to become aware of the importance of rhythmic effects in poetry, and it can be just as effective to try to describe these in your own words. The thing to hang on to when writing about the rhythm of a poem is that, as Ezra Pound put it, ‘Rhythm MUST have meaning’: ‘It can’t be merely a careless dash off with no grip and no real hold to the words and sense, a tumty tumty tum ta’ (quoted in Gray, 1990, p. 56). There are occasions, of course, when a tum-ty-ty-tum rhythm may be appropriate, and ‘have meaning’. When Tennyson wrote ‘The Charge of the Light Brigade’, he recreated the sound, pace, and movement of horses thundering along with the emphatic dactyls of ‘Half a league, half a league, half a league onward / Into the valley of death rode the six hundred’. But for a very different example we might take a short two-line poem by Pound himself. This time there is no fixed meter: like much twentieth-century poetry, this poem is in ‘free verse’. Its title is ‘In a Station of the Metro’ (the Metro being the Paris underground railway), and it was written in 1916:

```
/ x x x x x / / x x /
The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
/ / / / / / / / / / /
Petals on a wet, black bough.
```

Here you can see that the rhythm plays a subtle part in conveying the meaning. The poem is comparing the faces of people in a crowded underground to petals that have fallen on to a wet bough. The rhythm not only highlights the key words in each line, but produces much of the emotional feeling of the poem by slowing down the middle words of the first line and the final three words of the second.

For our final example of rhythm I’ve chosen a passage from Alexander Pope’s *An Essay on Criticism* (1711).

---

**Activity 2**

Take a look at this excerpt from *An Essay on Criticism*. Read it aloud if you can. Listen to the rhythm, and identify why the rhythm is appropriate to the meaning.

---

**Discussion**

Pope here uses a basic structure of iambic pentameters with variations, so that the lines sound as if they have a different pace, faster or slower, depending on what is being described. It is not just rhythm that contributes to the effect here: rhyme and alliteration (successive words beginning with the same sound) recreate smooth, rough, slow and swift movement. Rhythm is entirely dependent on word choice, but is also influenced by other interdependent stylistic devices. Pope’s lines enact what they describe simply because of the care that has gone into choosing the right words. It doesn’t matter if you don’t recognise the classical allusions: from the descriptions it is clear that Ajax is a strong man and Camilla is quick and light. If you count the beats of each line, you’ll notice that, in spite of the variety of sound and effect, all have five stresses, except the last, which has six. Strangely enough it is the last and longest line that creates an impression of speed. How is this achieved? Try to hear the lines by reading them again out loud.

There is really only one way, and that is through the words chosen to represent movement: the repeated ‘s’ sounds associated with Camilla trip swiftly off the tip of the tongue, whereas Ajax’s lines demand real physical effort from mouth, lips, and tongue. You will get a much stronger sense of this if you form the words in this way, even if you are unable to say them out loud. In an exam, for instance, silent articulation of a poem will help you grasp many poetic techniques and effects that may otherwise be missed.

This extract from Pope’s *An Essay on Criticism*, like the whole poem, is written in rhyming couplets (lines rhyming in pairs). They confer a formal, regular quality to the verse. The punctuation helps to control the way in which we read: notice that there is a pause at the end of each line, either a comma, a semi-colon, or a full stop. This use of the end-stopped line is characteristic of eighteenth-century heroic couplets (iambic pentameter lines rhyming in pairs), where the aim was to reproduce classical qualities of balance, harmony, and proportion.

Get into the habit of looking at rhyme words. Are any of Pope’s rhymes particularly interesting here? One thing I noticed was what is known as poetic inversion. The rhyme ‘shore’/’roar’ is clearly important to the sound sense of
the verse, but the more natural word order (were this ordinary speech) would be ‘The hoarse rough verse should roar like the torrent’. Had he written this, Pope would have lost the sound qualities of the rhyme ‘shore’/‘roar’. He would have had to find a word such as ‘abhorrent’ to rhyme with ‘torrent’ and the couplet would have had a very different meaning. He would also have lost the rhythm of the line, in spite of the fact that the words are exactly the same.

Before we leave An Essay on Criticism, did you notice that Pope’s subject in this poem is really poetry itself? Like Wordsworth, Pound, and William Carlos Williams, all of whom I’ve quoted earlier, Pope too was concerned with poetry as a craft.

Alliteration

Alliteration is the term used to describe successive words beginning with the same sound – usually, then, with the same letter.

To illustrate this I would like to use a stanza from Arthur Hugh Clough’s poem, ‘Natura naturans’. There is not enough space to quote the whole poem, but to give you some idea of the context of this stanza so that you can more fully appreciate what Clough is doing, it is worth explaining that ‘Natura naturans’ describes the sexual tension between a young man and woman who sit next to each other in a railway carriage. They have not been introduced, and they neither speak nor exchange so much as a glance. The subject matter and its treatment is unusual and also extraordinarily frank for the time of writing (about 1849), but you need to know what is being described in order to appreciate the physicality of the lines I quote.

Activity 3

Read the attached stanza from Arthur Hugh Clough’s poem “Natura Naturans” and consider the following questions:

1. What is the single most striking technique used, and what are the effects?
2. How would you describe the imagery, and what does it contribute to the overall effect?

Discussion

1. Visually the use of alliteration is striking, particularly in the first line and almost equally so in the second. If you took the advice above about paying attention to the physical business of articulating the words too, you should be in a good position to discriminate between the rapidity of the flies and the heavier movement of the bees, and to notice how tactile the language is. The effect is actually to create sensuality in the stanza.

2. Notice that though we begin with flies, bees and rooks, all of which are fairly common flying creatures, we move to the more romantic lark with its ‘wild’ song, and then to the positively exotic gazelle, leopard, and dolphin. From the rather homely English air (flies, bees, birds), we move to foreign locations ‘Libyan dell’ and ‘Indian glade’, and from there to ‘tropic seas’. (Cod in the North Sea would have very different connotations from dolphins in the tropics.) Air, earth, and sea are all invoked to help express the variety
of changing highly charged erotic feelings that the speaker remembers. The images are playful and preposterous, joyfully expressing the familiar poetic subject of sexual attraction and arousal in a way that makes it strange and new. Notice that in each case the image is more effective because the alliteration emphasizes it.

Rhyme

If a poem rhymes, then considering how the rhyme works is always important.

Rhyme schemes can be simple or highly intricate and complex; it will always be worth considering why a particular rhyme pattern was chosen and trying to assess its effects.

Activity 4

Read “Love from the North” (1862) by Christina Rossetti. What is the poem about, and how does the rhyme contribute to the meaning and overall effect?

Discussion

‘Love From the North’ tells a simple story. A woman about to marry one man is whisked away by another, just as she is about to exchange vows. The form of the poem is very simple: the second and fourth lines of each of the eight 4-line stanzas rhyme. More significantly, because the last word of each stanza is ‘nay’, there is only one rhyme sound throughout. There are more internal rhymes relying on the same repeated sound, however, aren’t there? Look at the last lines of stanzas 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8 where ‘say’ ‘nay’; ‘nay’ ‘nay’; ‘say’ ‘nay’; ‘yea’ ‘nay’; and ‘say’ ‘nay’ appear. In the second stanza, ‘gay’ occurs twice in line 2; stanza five and six both have ‘yea’ in line 3. What is the effect of this?

Do you think the effect might be to help over-simplify the story? Clearly the woman has doubts about the man from the south’s devotion: he ‘never dared’ to say no to her. He seems to have no will of his own: he ‘saddens’ when she does, is ‘gay’ when she is, wants only what she does. On her wedding day she thinks: ‘It’s quite too late to think of nay’. But is she any happier with the strong man from the north? Who is he? Has he carried her off against her will? And what exactly do you make of the last stanza? Do the ‘links of love’ imply a chain? This strong-minded woman who imposed her will on the man from the south has ‘neither heart nor power/Nor will nor wish’ to say no to the man from the north. Is that good, or bad? And what do you make of the ‘book and bell’ with which she’s made to stay? Certainly they imply something different from the conventional Christian marriage she was about to embark on in the middle of the poem – witchcraft, perhaps, or magic? And are the words ‘Till now’ particularly significant at the beginning of line 3 in the last stanza? Might they suggest a new resolve to break free?

How important is it to resolve such questions? It is very useful to ask them, but not at all easy to find answers. In fact, that is one of the reasons I like the poem so much. The language is very simple and so is the form – eight quatrains (or four-line stanzas) – and yet the more I think about the poem, the more interesting and ambiguous it seems. In my opinion, that is its strength. After all, do we always know exactly what we want or how we feel about relationships? Even if we do, is it always possible to put such feelings into words? Aren’t feelings often ambivalent rather than straightforward?

It is also worth bearing in mind the fact that the poem is written in ballad form. A ballad tells a story, but it does only recount events – part of the convention is that ballads don’t go into psychological complexities. It is likely that Rossetti chose this ancient oral verse form because she was interested in raising ambiguities. But perhaps the point of the word ‘nay’ chiming throughout ‘Love From the North’ is to indicate the female speaker saying no to both men – the compliant lover and his opposite, the demon lover, alike? After all, ‘nay’ is the sound which gives the poem striking unity and coherence.

Keats’s ‘Eve of St Agnes’ (1820) also tells a tale of lovers, but it isn’t a ballad, even though the rhyme scheme of the first four lines is the same as Rossetti’s quatrains. The stanzas are longer, and the form more complex and
sophisticated. The rhyme pattern is the same throughout all 42 stanzas, the first two of which are reproduced for the following activity:

**Activity 5**

Read the first two stanzas of Keats's “Eve of St Agnes.” How would you describe the rhyme scheme, and does it seem appropriate for the subject matter?

**Discussion**

In comparison to the Rossetti poem the rhyme sounds form complex patterns, don’t they? While ‘was’/’grass’ in the first stanza and ‘man’/’wan’ in the second do not quite produce a full rhyme (depending on your accent), the first and third lines do rhyme in subsequent stanzas. Using a letter of the alphabet to describe each new rhyme sound, we could describe the pattern like this: a b a b c b c c (imagine sustaining that intricate patterning for 42 stanzas). This kind of formula is useful up to a point for showing how often the same sounds recur, and it does show how complicated the interweaving of echoing sounds is. But it says nothing about how the sounds relate to what is being said — and, as I have been arguing all along, it is the relationship between meaning and word choice that is of particular interest. To give a full answer to my own question, I’d really need to consider the function of rhyme throughout the poem. It would not be necessary to describe what happens in each stanza, but picking out particular pertinent examples would help me argue a case. With only the first two stanzas to work with, I could say that, if nothing else, the intricate rhyme pattern seems appropriate not only for the detailed descriptions but also for the medieval, slightly gothic setting of the chapel where the holy man prays.

**Activity 6**

Read the extract from Tennyson's “Mariana” (1830). Again, this comes from a longer poem, so it would be useful to look it up and read the rest if you have the opportunity.

Read the extract and consider the following questions:

1. Describe the rhyme in the stanza from Tennyson’s ‘Mariana’.
2. What is the first stanza about?

**Discussion**

1. As with the Keats poem, the rhyme scheme here is quite complicated. Using the same diagrammatic formula of a letter for each new rhyme sound, we could describe this as ‘a b a b c d c e f e f. You might notice too that indentations at the beginning of each line emphasise lines that rhyme with each other: usually the indentations are alternate, except for lines 6 and 7, which form a couplet in the middle of the stanza. It is worth telling you too that each of the stanzas ends with a variation of the line ‘I would that I were dead’ (this is known as a refrain) so — as in Christina Rossetti’s ‘Love From the North’ — a dominant sound or series of sounds throughout helps to control the mood of the poem.

2. We may not know who Mariana is, or why she is in the lonely, crumbling grange, but she is obviously waiting for a man who is slow in arriving. The ‘dreary’/’aweary’ and ‘dead’/’said’ rhymes, which, if you read the rest of the poem, you will see are repeated in each stanza, convey her dejection and express the boredom of endless waiting. As with the stanzas from Keats’s ‘Eve of St Agnes’, there is plenty of carefully observed detail — black moss on the flower-plots, rusty nails, a clinking latch on a gate or door — all of which description contributes to the desolation of the scene and Mariana’s mood. Were the moated grange a lively, sociable household, the poem would be very different. Either Mariana would be cheerful, or her suicidal misery would be in sharp contrast to her surroundings. It is always worth considering what settings contribute to the overall mood of a poem.
Poetic Inversion

Poetic inversion, or changing the usual word order of speech, is often linked to the need to maintain a rhythm or to find a rhyme. We noticed Pope's poetic inversion in *An Essay on Criticism* and saw how the rhyme was intimately linked to the rhythm of the verse. The song 'Dancing in the Street', first recorded by Martha and the Vandellas in the 1960s, does violence to word order in the interests of rhyme – 'There'll be dancing in the street/ A chance new folk to meet' – but, because the words are sung to a driving rhythm, we are unlikely to notice how awkward they are. There's a convention that we recognise, however unconsciously, that prevents us from mentally re-writing the line as 'a chance to meet new people'. ('People' rather than 'folk' would be more usual usage for me, but, as with the Pope example, this would mean that the rhythm too would be lost.)

Poems That Don't Rhyme

Are poems that don't rhyme prose? Not necessarily. Virginia Woolf (1882–1941), a novelist rather than a poet, and T.S. Eliot (1888–1965), known particularly for his poetry, both wrote descriptive pieces best described as 'prose poems'. These look like short prose passages since there is no attention to line lengths or layout on the page, as there was, for example, in 'Mariana'. When you study Shakespeare you will come across blank verse. 'Blank' here means 'not rhyming', but the term 'blank verse' is used specifically to describe verse in unrhyming iambic pentameters.

Although iambic pentameters resemble our normal speech patterns, in ordinary life we speak in prose. You'll notice if you look through Shakespeare's plays that blank verse is reserved for kings, nobles, heroes and heroines. They may also speak in prose, as lesser characters do, but commoners don't ever have speeches in blank verse. Shakespeare – and other playwrights like him – used the form to indicate status. It is important to recognise this convention, which would have been understood by his contemporaries – writers, readers, and audiences alike. So choosing to write a poem in blank verse is an important decision: it will elevate the subject. One such example is Milton's epic *Paradise Lost* (1667), a long poem in twelve Books describing Creation, Adam and Eve's temptation, disobedience and expulsion from Paradise. It sets out to justify the ways of God to man, so blank verse is entirely appropriate. This great epic was in Wordsworth's mind when he chose the same form for his autobiographical poem, *The Prelude*.

Activity 7

Read and compare these extracts. One is from Book XIII of *The Prelude*, where Wordsworth is walking up Mount Snowdon; the other is from "The Idiot Boy," one of his *Lyrical Ballads*. What effects are achieved by the different forms?

Discussion

Both poems use iambic meter – an unstressed followed by a stressed syllable. The extract from *The Prelude* uses iambic pentameters, five metrical feet in each line, whereas 'The Idiot Boy' (like the ballad, 'Love From the North') is in tetrameters, only four, establishing a more sing-song rhythm. Other stylistic techniques contribute to the difference in tone too: the language of *The Prelude* is formal (Wordsworth's 'Ascending' rather than 'going up'), whereas 'The Idiot Boy' uses deliberately homely diction, and rhyme. Three simple rhyme words ring out throughout the 92 stanzas of the latter: 'Foy', 'boy' and 'joy' stand at the heart of the poem, expressing the mother's pride in her son. The moon features in each extract. In *The Prelude*, as Wordsworth climbs, the ground lightens, as it does in The Old Testament before a prophet appears. Far from being a meaningless syllable to fill the rhythm of a line, 'Lo' heightens the religious parallel, recalling the biblical 'Lo, I bring you tidings of great joy'; this episode from *The Prelude* describes a moment of spiritual illumination. Wordsworth's intentions in these two poems were quite different, and the techniques reflect that.

Other poems that don't use rhyme are discussed later ('Wherever I Hang'; 'Mona Lisa'; 'Poem'). Notice that they use a variety of rhythms, and because of that none can be described as blank verse.
Voice

Is the speaker in a poem one and the same as the writer? Stop and consider this for a few moments. Can you think of any poems you have read where a writer has created a character, or persona, whose voice we hear when we read?

Wordsworth’s *The Prelude* was written as an autobiographical poem, but there are many instances where it is obvious that poet and persona are different. Charlotte Mew’s poem, ‘The Farmer’s Bride’ (1916) begins like this:

*Three summers since I chose a maid,*
*Too young maybe – but more’s to do*
*At harvest-time than bide and woo.*
*When us was wed she turned afraid*
*Of love and me and all things human;*

(Warner, 1981, pp. 1–2)

Mew invents a male character here, and clearly separates herself as a writer from the voice in her poem. Some of the most well-known created characters – or personae – in poetry are Browning’s dramatic monologues.

Activity 8

Consider the opening lines from three Robert Browning poems. Who do you think is speaking?

Discussion

Well, the first speaker isn’t named, but we can infer that, like Brother Lawrence whom he hates, he’s a monk. The second must be a Duke since he refers to his ‘last Duchess’ and, if we read to the end of the third poem, we discover that the speaker is a man consumed with such jealousy that he strangles his beloved Porphyria with her own hair. Each of the poems is written in the first person (‘my heart’s abhorrence’; ‘That’s my last Duchess’; ‘I listened with heart fit to break’). None of the characters Browning created in these poems bears any resemblance to him: the whole point of a dramatic monologue is the creation of a character who is most definitely not the poet. Charlotte Mew’s poem can be described in the same way.

Line Lengths and Line Endings

Read the following prose extract taken from Walter Pater’s discussion of the *Mona Lisa*, written in 1893, and then complete the activity:

She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave; and has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her; and trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants: and, as Leda, was the mother of Helen of Troy, and, as Saint Anne, the mother of Mary; and all this has been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes, and lives only in the delicacy with which it has moulded the changing lineaments, and tinged the eyelids and the hands.
Activity 9

When W.B. Yeats was asked to edit *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892–1935* (1936), he chose to begin with this passage from Pater, but he set it out quite differently on the page. Before you read his version, write out the extract as a poem yourself. The exercise is designed to make you think about line lengths, where to start a new line and where to end it when there is no rhyme to give you a clue. There is no regular rhythm either, though I'm sure you will discover rhythms in the words, as well as repeated patterns. How can you best bring out these poetic features?

Discussion

Of course, there is no right answer to this exercise, but you should compare your version to Yeats’s, printed below, to see if you made similar decisions.

*She is older than the rocks among which she sits;*
*Like the Vampire,*
*She has been dead many times,*
*And learned the secrets of the grave;*
*And has been a diver in deep seas,*
*And keeps their fallen day about her;*
*And trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants;*
*And, as Leda,*
*Was the mother of Helen of Troy,*
*And, as St Anne,*
*Was the mother of Mary;*
*And all this has been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes,*
*And lives*
*Only in the delicacy*
*With which it has moulded the changing lineaments,*
*And tinged the eyelids and the hands.*

I wonder whether you used upper case letters for the first word of each line, as Yeats did? You may have changed the punctuation, or perhaps have left it out altogether. Like Yeats, you may have used ‘And’ at the beginnings of lines to draw attention to the repetitions: nine of the lines begin in this way, emphasising the way the clauses pile up, defining and redefining the mysterious Mona Lisa. Two lines begin with ‘She’: while there was no choice about the first, beginning the third in the same way focuses attention on her right at the start of the poem. Yeats has used Pater’s punctuation to guide his line endings in all but two places: lines 13 and 14 run on – a stylistic device known as enjambment. The effect is an interesting interaction between eyes and ears. While we may be tempted to read on without pausing to find the sense, the line endings and white space of the page impose pauses on our reading, less than the commas and semi-colons that mark off the other lines, but significant nevertheless.

Yeats’s arrangement of the words makes the structure and movement of Pater’s long sentence clearer than it appears when written as prose. The poem begins with age – she is ‘older than the rocks’ – and refers to ‘Vampire’, death, and ‘grave’ in the first lines. The decision to single out the two words ‘And lives’ in a line by themselves towards the end of the poem sets them in direct opposition to the opening; we have moved from great age and living death to life. The arrangement of lines 8–11 highlights her links with both pagan and Christian religions: the Mona Lisa was the mother of Helen of Troy and the Virgin Mary. The wisdom and knowledge she has acquired is worn lightly, nothing more than ‘the sound of lyres and flutes’, apparent only in the ‘delicacy’ of colour on ‘eyelids and hands’.

The aim of the preceding exercise was to encourage you to think about form and structure even when a poem does not appear to follow a conventional pattern. Because you have now ‘written’ a poem and had the opportunity to compare it with someone else’s version of the same words, you should begin to realise the importance of decisions about where exactly to place a word for maximum effect, and how patterns can emerge which will
control our reading when, for example, successive lines begin with repetitions. It should have made you think
about the importance of the beginnings of lines, as well as line endings. What has been achieved by using a short
line here, a longer one there? How do these decisions relate to what is being said? These are questions that can
usefully be asked of any poem.

Earlier, discussing the extract from Pope’s *An Essay on Criticism*, I asked you to concentrate on the sound
qualities of the poetry. Here, I want you to consider the visual impact of the poem on the page. It is a good thing to
be aware of what a complex task reading is, and to be alive to the visual as well as the aural qualities of the
verse.

### Activity 10

When W.B. Yeats was asked to edit *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892–1935* (1936), he chose to begin
with this passage from Pater, but he set it out quite differently on the page. Before you read his version, write
out the extract as a poem yourself. The exercise is designed to make you think about line lengths, where to
start a new line and where to end it when there is no rhyme to give you a clue. There is no regular rhythm
either, though I’m sure you will discover rhythms in the words, as well as repeated patterns. How can you best
bring out these poetic features?

Further exercise: taking Grace Nichols’s ‘Wherever I Hang’, discussed in *Activity 10*, you could reverse the
process carried out in the previous exercise by writing out the poem as prose. Then, covering up the original,
you could rewrite it as verse and compare your version with the original.

### Comparing and Contrasting

Often you will find that an assignment asks you to ‘compare and contrast’ poems. There’s a very good reason for
this, for often it is only by considering different treatments of similar subjects that we become aware of a range of
possibilities, and begin to understand why particular choices have been made. You will have realised that often in
the previous discussions I’ve used a similar strategy, showing, for example, how we can describe the rhyme
scheme of ‘Love From the North’ as simple once we have looked at the more intricate patterning of Keats’s ‘The
Eve of St Agnes’ or Tennyson’s ‘Mariana’. Anne Brontë’s ‘Home’ and Grace Nichols’s ‘Wherever I Hang’ treat the
subject of exile in quite different ways, and looking at one can sharpen our understanding of what the other does.

### Activity 11

Read the opening lines from these two poems commemorating deaths. What can you explain why they sound
so very different?

### Discussion

If I had to identify one thing, I would say that the first begins more elaborately and with a more formal tone than
the second. ‘Felix Randal’ tends to use language in an unusual way, but you would probably agree that the first
sentence is quite straightforward and sounds colloquial (or informal), as if the speaker has just overheard
someone talking about Randal’s death and wants to confirm his impression. ‘Lycidas’ opens quite differently. It is
not immediately apparent what evergreens have to do with anything (in fact they work to establish an
appropriately melancholy atmosphere or tone), and it isn’t until line 8 that we learn of a death. The word ‘dead’ is
repeated, and the following line tells us that Lycidas was a young man. While ‘Felix Randal’ has an immediacy,
the speaker of ‘Lycidas’ seems to find it hard to get going.

Both poems are elegies – poems written to commemorate death – and both poets are aware of writing within this
convention, although they treat it differently.
Activity 12

What do the titles of the poems used in Activity 13 tell us about each poem, and how might they help us understand the different uses of the elegiac convention?

Discussion

I think it would be apparent to most readers that ‘Felix Randall’ is simply a man’s name, while ‘Lycidas’ is more mysterious. In fact Lycidas is a traditional pastoral name, but unless you know something about the classical pastoral tradition it might mean very little to you. The young man whose death Milton was commemorating was actually called Edward King, but, at the time he was writing, elegies were formal, public and impersonal poems rather than private expressions of grief. ‘Lycidas’ commemorates a member of a prominent family rather than a close friend of the poet’s. Over two hundred years later, Hopkins, while working loosely within the same elegiac convention, adapts it. Felix Randal is an ordinary working man, not a public figure. In the seventeenth century it would have been unlikely that he would have been considered worthy of a poem like this.

If you were making a special study of elegies, there would be a great deal more to say. That’s not the idea here, though. The point is that by comparing and contrasting the tone of the opening lines and the titles, and considering when the poems were written, we have come up with a number of significant differences.

Activity 13

Read this poem by Robert Browning carefully. Who is speaking, and who is being addressed?

Discussion

From the evidence of the poem we know that the speaker once walked across a moor, found an eagle’s feather, and has a high regard for the poet Shelley (1792–1822). The person being addressed is not named, but we discover that he (or she) once met Shelley, and this alone confers status by association. The word ‘you’ (‘your’ in one instance) is repeated in 6 out of the first 8 lines. ‘You’ becomes a rhyme word at the end of the second line, so when we reach the word ‘new’ in line four – one of the two lines in the first stanzas that doesn’t contain ‘you’ – the echo supplies the deficiency. ‘You’ clearly represents an important focus in the first half of the poem, but who exactly is ‘you’?

Thinking about this apparently straightforward question of who is being addressed takes us into an important area of critical debate: for each one of us who has just read the poem has, in one sense, become a person who not only knows who Shelley is (which may not necessarily be the case) but lived when he did, met him, listened to him, and indeed exchanged at least a couple of words with him. Each of us reads the poem as an individual, but the poem itself constructs a reader who is not identical to any of us. We are so used to adopting ‘reading’ roles dictated by texts like this that often we don’t even notice the way in which the text has manipulated us.
Activity 14

Now read the Robert Browning poem again, this time asking yourself if the speaking voice changes in the last two stanzas, and if the person who is being addressed remains the same.

Discussion

If the first half of the poem is characterised by the repetition of ‘you’ and the sense of an audience that pronoun creates, then the second half seems quite different in content and tone. The speaker is trying to find a parallel in his experience to make sense of and explain his feeling of awe; the change of tone is subtle. Whereas someone is undoubtedly being addressed directly in the first stanza, in the third and fourth, readers overhear – as if the speaker is talking to himself.

At first the connection between the man who met Shelley and the memory of finding an eagle’s feather may not be obvious, but there is a point of comparison. As stanza 2 explains, part of the speaker’s sense of wonder stems from the fact that time did not stand still: ‘you were living before that, / And also you are living after’. The moor in stanza 3, like the listener, is anonymous – it has ‘a name of its own … no doubt’ – but where it is or what it is called is unimportant: only one ‘hand’s-breadth’ is memorable, the spot that ‘shines alone’ where the feather was found. The poem is about moments that stand out in our memories while the ordinary daily stuff of life fades. It also acknowledges that we don’t all value the same things.

Activity 15

Take another look at the poem. How would you describe its form?

Discussion

The structure of the poem is perfectly balanced: of the four quatrains, two deal with each memory, so, although the nature of each seems quite different, implicitly the form invites us to compare them. Think about the way in which Browning introduces the eagle feather. How does he convince us that this is a rare find?

To begin with, the third and fourth stanzas make up one complete sentence, with a colon at the end of the third announcing the fourth; this helps to achieve a sense of building up to something important. Then we move from the visual image of a large space of moor to the very circumscribed place where the feather is found, but the reason why this ‘hand’s-breadth’ shines out is delayed for the next two lines ‘For there I picked up on the heather’ – yes? what? – ‘And there I put inside my breast’ – well? – ‘A moulted feather’, ah (and notice the internal rhyme there of ‘feather’ with ‘heather’ which draws attention to and emphasises the harmony of the moment), and then the word ‘feather’ is repeated and expanded: ‘an eagle-feather’ Clearly the feather of no other bird would do, for ultimately the comparison is of eagle to the poet; Browning knows Shelley through his poetry as he knows the eagle through its feather, and that feather presents a striking visual image.

There is an immediacy about the conversational opening of the poem which, I have suggested, deliberately moves into a more contemplative tone, possibly in the second stanza (think about it), but certainly by the third. We have considered some of the poetic techniques that Browning employs to convince us of the rarity of his find in the third and fourth stanzas. You might like to think more analytically about the word sounds, not just the rhyme but, for example, the repeated ‘ae’ sound in ‘breadth’ ‘heather’ ‘breast’ and ‘feather’. What, however, do you make of the tone of the last line? Try saying the last lines of each stanza out loud. Whether you can identify the meter with technical language or not is beside the point. The important thing is that ‘Well, I forget the rest’ sounds deliberately lame. After the intensity of two extraordinary memories, everything else pales into insignificance and, to reiterate this, the rhythm tails off. While the tone throughout is informal, the last remark is deliberately casual.
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References


LITERARY CRITICISM

By reading and discussing literature, we expand our imagination, our sense of what is possible, and our ability to empathize with others. Improve your ability to read critically and interpret texts while gaining appreciation for different literary genres and theories of interpretation. Read samples of literary interpretation. Write a critique of a literary work.

Texts that interpret literary works are usually persuasive texts. Literary critics may conduct a close reading of a literary work, critique a literary work from the stance of a particular literary theory, or debate the soundness of other critics’ interpretations. The work of literary critics is similar to the work of authors writing evaluative texts. For example, the skills required to critique films, interpret laws, or evaluate artistic trends are similar to those skills required by literary critics.

Why Write Literary Criticism?

People have been telling stories and sharing responses to stories since the beginning of time. By reading and discussing literature, we expand our imagination, our sense of what is possible, and our ability to empathize with others. Reading and discussing literature can enhance our ability to write. It can sharpen our critical faculties, enabling us to assess works and better understand why literature can have such a powerful effect on our lives.

“Literary texts” include works of fiction and poetry. In school, English instructors ask students to critique literary texts, or works. Literary criticism refers to a genre of writing whereby an author critiques a literary text, either a work of fiction, a play, or poetry. Alternatively, some works of literary criticism address how a particular theory of interpretation informs a reading of a work or refutes some other critics’ reading of a work.

Diverse Rhetorical Situations

The genre of literary interpretation is more specialized than most of the other genres addressed in this section, as suggested by the table below. People may discuss their reactions to literary works informally (at coffee houses, book clubs, or the gym) but the lion’s share of literary criticism takes place more formally: in college classrooms, professional journals, academic magazines, and Web sites.

Students interpret literary works for English instructors or for students enrolled in English classes. In their interpretations, students may argue for a particular interpretation or they may dispute other critics’ interpretations. Alternatively, students may read a text with a particular literary theory in mind, using the theory to explicate a particular point of view. For example, writers could critique The Story of an Hour by Kate Chopin from a feminist theoretical perspective. Thanks to the Internet, some English classes are now publishing students’ interpretations on Web sites. In turn, some students and English faculty publish their work in academic literary criticism journals.

Over the years, literary critics have argued about the best ways to interpret literature. Accordingly, many “schools” or “theories of criticism” have emerged. As you can imagine—given that they were developed by sophisticated specialists—some of these theoretical approaches are quite sophisticated and abstract.
Below is a summary of some of the more popular literary theories. Because it is a summary, the following tends to oversimplify the theories. In any case, unless you are enrolled in a literary criticism course, you won’t need to learn the particulars of all of these approaches. Instead, your teacher may ask you to take an eclectic approach, pulling interpretative questions from multiple literary theories.

Note: If you are interested in learning more about these theories, review either Skylar Hamilton Burris’ Literary Criticism: An Overview of Approaches or Dino F. Felluga’s Undergraduate Guide to Critical Theory

- **Schools of Literary Criticism**
- **New Criticism:** Focuses on “objectively” evaluating the text, identifying its underlying form. May study, for example, a text’s use of imagery, metaphor, or symbolism. Isn’t concerned with matters outside the text, such as biographical or contextual information. Online Examples: A Formalist Reading of Sandra Cisneros’s “Woman Hollering Creek”, Sound in William Shakespeare’s The Tempest by Skylar Hamilton Burris
- **Reader-Respons:** Criticism Focuses on each reader’s personal reactions to a text, assuming meaning is created by a reader’s or interpretive community’s personal interaction with a text. Assumes no single, correct, universal meaning exists because meaning resides in the minds of readers. Online Examples: Theodore Roethke’s “My Papa’s Waltz” : A Reader’s Response (PDF)
- **Feminism:** Criticism Focuses on understanding ways gender roles are reflected or contradicted by texts, how dominance and submission play out in texts, and how gender roles evolve in texts. Online Example: “The Yellow Wall-Paper”: A Twist on Conventional Symbols, Subverting the French Androcentric Influence by Jane Le Marquand
- **New Historicism** Focuses on understanding texts by viewing texts in the context of other texts. Seeks to understand economic, social, and political influences on texts. Tend to broadly define the term “text,” so, for example, the Catholic Church could be defined as a “text.” May adopt the perspectives of other interpretive communities—particularly reader-response criticism, feminist criticism, and Marxist approaches—to interpret texts. Online Example: Monstrous Acts by Jonathan Lethem
- **Media Criticism** Focuses on writers’ use of multimedia and hypertexts. Online Examples: The Electronic Labyrinth by Christopher Keep, Tim McLaughlin, and Robin Parmar
- **Psychoanalytical Criticism** Focuses on psychological dimensions of the work. Online Examples: A Freudian Approach to Erin McGraw’s “A Thief” by Skylar Hamilton Burris
- **Marxist Criticism** Focuses on ways texts reflect, reinforce, or challenge the effects of class, power relations, and social roles. Online Example: A Reading of Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery” by Peter Kosenko
- **Archetypal Criticism** Focuses on identifying the underlying myths in stories and archetypes, which reflect what the psychologist Carl Jung called the “collective unconsciousness.” Online Example: A Catalogue of Symbols in The Awakening by Kate Chopin
- **Postcolonial Criticism** Focuses on how Western culture’s (mis)representation of third-world countries and peoples in stories, myths, and stereotypical images encourages repression and domination. Online Example: Other Voices
- **Structuralism/Semiotics** Focuses on literature as a system of signs where meaning is constructed in a context, where words are inscribed with meaning by being compared to other words and structures. Online Example: Applied Semiotics [Online journal with many samples]
- **Post-Structuralism/Deconstruction** Focuses, along with Structuralism, on viewing literature as a system of signs, yet rejects the Structuralist view that a critic can identify the inherent meaning of a text, suggesting, instead that literature has no center, no single interpretation, that literary language is inherently ambiguous

Powerful works of literature invoke multiple readings. In other words, we can all read the same story or poem (or watch the same movie or listen to the same song) and come up with different, even conflicting, interpretations about what the work means. Who we are reflects how we read texts. Our experiences inspire us to relate to and sympathize with characters and difficult situations. Have we read similar stories? Have we actually faced some of the same challenges the characters in the story face?

In addition, literary theories have unique ways to develop and substantiate arguments. Some theories draw extensively on the work of other critics, while others concentrate on the reader’s thoughts and feelings. Some theories analyze a work from an historical perspective, while others focus solely on a close reading of a text.

Accordingly, as with other genres, the following key features need to be read as points of departure as opposed to a comprehensive blueprint:
Focus

Examine a subject from a rhetorical perspective. Identify the intended audience, purpose, context, media, voice, tone, and persona. Distinguish between summarizing the literary work and presenting your argument. Many students fall into the trap of spending too much time summarizing the literature being analyzed as opposed to critiquing it. As a result, it would be wise to check with your teacher regarding how much plot summary is expected. As you approach this project, remember to keep your eye on the ball: What, exactly (in one sentence) is the gist of your interpretation?

Development

You can develop your ideas by researching the work of other literary critics. How do other critics evaluate an author’s work? What literary theories do literary critics use to interpret texts or particular moments in history? Reading sample proposals can help you find and adopt an appropriate voice and persona. By reading samples, you can learn how others have prioritized particular criteria.

Below are some of the questions invoked by popular literary theories. Consider these questions as you read a work, perhaps taking notes on your thoughts as you reread. You may focus on using one theory to “read and interpret” text or, more commonly, you may compare the critical concerns of different theories.

New Criticism/Formalism

- Character: How does the character evolve during the story? What is unique or interesting about a character? Is the character a stereotypical action hero, a patriarchal father figure, or Madonna? How does a character interact with other characters?
- Setting: How does the setting enhance tension within the work? Do any elements in the setting foreshadow the conclusion of the piece?
- Plot: What is the conflict? How do scenes lead to a suspenseful resolution? What scenes make the plot unusual, unexpected, suspenseful?
- Point of View: Who is telling the story? Is the narrator omniscient (all knowing) or does the narrator have limited understanding?

Reader-Response Criticism

How does the text make you feel? What memories or experiences come to mind when you read? If you were the central protagonist, would you have behaved differently? Why? What values or ethics do you believe are suggested by the story? As your reading of a text progresses, what surprises you, inspires you?

Feminist Criticism

How does the story re-inscribe or contradict traditional gender roles? For example, are the male characters in “power positions” while the women are “dominated”? Are the men prone to action, decisiveness, and leadership while the female characters are passive, subordinate? Do gender roles create tension within the story? Do characters’ gender roles evolve over the course of the narrative?

New Historicism Cristicism

How does the story reflect the aspirations and conditions of the lower classes or upper classes? Is tension created by juxtaposing privileged, powerful positions to subordinated, dominated positions? What information about the historical context of the story helps explain the character’s motivations? Who benefits from the outcome of the story or from a given character’s motivation?
Media Criticism

How does the medium alter readers’ interactions with the text? Has the reader employed multimedia or hypertext? What traditions from print and page design have shaped the structure of the text? In what ways has the author deviated from traditional, deductively organized linear texts?

Cite from the Work

Literary criticism involves close reading of a literary work, regardless of whether you are arguing about a particular interpretation, comparing stories or poems, or using a theory to interpret literature. Do not summarize the story. The purpose of the document is not to inform the readers, but to argue a particular interpretation. You only need to cite parts of the work that support or relate to your argument and follow the citation format required by your instructor (see Using and Citing Sources).

Below is an example from Sample Essays for English 103: Introduction to Fiction, Professor Matthew Hurt. Note how the writer uses block quotes to highlight key elements and paraphrase and summarizes the original works, using quotation marks where necessary.

...Twain offers a long descriptive passage of Huck and Jim’s life on the raft that seems, at first glance, to celebrate the idyllic freedom symbolized by the river and nature. ... A close reading of this passage, however, shows that the river is not a privileged natural space outside of and uncontaminated by society, but is inextricably linked to the social world on the shore, which itself has positive value for Huck. Instead of seeking to escape society, Huck wants to escape the dull routines of life.

The passage abounds with lyrical descriptions of the river’s natural beauty. For example, Huck’s long description of the sunrise over the river captures the peaceful stillness and the visual beauty of the scene:

The first thing to see, looking away over the water, was a kind of dull line — that was the woods on t’other side — you couldn’t make nothing else out; then a pale place in the sky; then more paleness, spreading around; then the river softened up, away off, and warn’t black any more, but gray; ... sometimes you could hear a sweep screaking; or jumbled up voices, it was so still, and sounds come so far; and by-and-by you could see a streak on the water which you know by the look of the streak that there’s a snag there in the swift current which breaks on it and makes the streak look that way; and you see the mist curl up off of the water, and the east reddens up, and the river, and you make out a log cabin in the edge of the woods, away on the bank on t’other side of the river, ... then the nice breeze springs up, and comes fanning you from over there, so cool and fresh, and sweet to smell, on account of the woods and the flowers; ... and next you’ve got the full day, and everything smiling in the sun, and the song-birds just going at it! (129-130)

Here Huck celebrates the beauty of the natural world coming to life at the beginning of a new day. The “paleness” gradually spreading across the sky makes new objects visible which he describes in loving detail for the reader. The “nice breeze” is “cool and fresh” and “sweet to smell,” and the world seems to be “smiling in the sun” as the song-birds welcome the new day.

However, Huck includes a number of details within this passage that would seem to work against the language of natural beauty. After describing the gradually brightening sky, Huck notes that “you could see little dark spots drifting along, ever so far away — trading scows, and such things; and long black streaks — rafts.” The sun rise reveals not only natural objects (the brightening sky, the “snag,” the “mist”), but also brings into view man-made objects (“trading scows” and “rafts”) that signify human society’s presence in this natural environment. Similarly, Huck speculates that the picturesque “log cabin” on the distant shore is a “woodyard, likely, and piled by them cheats so you can throw a dog through it anywheres.” Here the marker of human society takes on a sinister tone of corruption as Huck describes how unscrupulous wood sellers stack wood loosely to cheat their customers. Finally, although the breeze is “sweet to smell,” Huck assures the reader that this isn’t always the case: “but sometimes not that way, because they’ve left dead fish laying around, gars, and such, and they do get pretty rank.”

These signs of society’s presence on the river are largely negative. The woodyard is “piled by cheats” and the stacked fish pollute the “sweet” smell of the breeze. At this point, the opposition between “good nature” and “bad
society” remains intact. The signs of human presence suggest a corruption of nature’s beauty. In the paragraphs that follow, however, this opposition is subtly reversed. After Huck’s account of the sunrise over the river, he describes how he and Jim watch the steamboats “coughing along up stream.” But when there are no steamboats or rafts to watch, he describes the scene as “solid lonesomeness” (130). No songbirds, no sweet breezes. Without human activities to watch, the scene suddenly becomes empty and “lonesome,” and nothing captures Huck’s attention until more rafts and boats pass by and he can watch them chopping wood or listen to them beating pans in the fog.

Cite Other Critics’ Interpretations of the Work

Criticism written by advanced English majors, graduate students, and literary critics may be more about what other critics have said than about the actual text. Indeed, many critics spend more time reading criticism and arguing about critical approaches than actually reading original works. However, unless you are enrolled in a literary theory course, your instructor probably wants you to focus more on interpreting the work than discussing other critical interpretations. This does not mean, however, that you should write about a literary work “blindly.” Instead, you are wise to find out what other students and critics have said about the work.

Below is a sample passage that illustrates how other critics’ works can inspire an author and guide him or her in constructing a counter argument, support an author’s interpretation, and provide helpful biographical information.

In her critical biography of Shirley Jackson, Lenemaja Friedman notes that when Shirley Jackson’s story “The Lottery” was published in the June 28, 1948 issue of the New Yorker it received a response that “no New Yorker story had ever received”: hundreds of letters poured in that were characterized by “bewilderment, speculation, and old-fashioned abuse.” It is not hard to account for this response: Jackson’s story portrays an “average” New England village with “average” citizens engaged in a deadly rite, the annual selection of a sacrificial victim by means of a public lottery, and does so quite deviously: not until well along in the story do we suspect that the “winner” will be stoned to death by the rest of the villagers.

Organization

The format for literary critiques is fairly standard:

• State your claim(s).
• Forecast your organization.
• Marshal evidence for your claim.
• Reiterate argument and elaborate on its significance.

In English classes, you may be able to assume that your readers are familiar with the work you are critiquing. Perhaps, for example, the entire class is responding to one particular work after some class discussions about it. However, if your instructor asks you to address a broader audience, you may need to provide bibliographical information for the work. In other words, you may need to cite the title, publisher, date, and pages of the work (see Citing Sources ).

Literary critiques are arguments. As such, your instructors expect you to state a claim in your introduction and then provide quotes and paraphrased statements from the text to serve as evidence for your claim. Ideally, your critique will be insightful and interesting. You’ll want to come up with an interpretation that isn’t immediately obvious. Below are some examples of “thesis statements” or “claims” from literary critiques:

• In “The Yellow Wallpaper,” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, the protagonist is oppressed and represents the effect of the oppression of women in society. This effect is created by the use of complex symbols such as the house, the window, and the wall-paper which facilitate her oppression as well as her self expression. [“The Yellow Wall-Paper: A Twist on Conventional Symbols” by Liselle Sant]
• “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Gilman is a sad story of the repression that women face in the days of the late 1800’s as well as being representative of the turmoil that women face today. [Critique of “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Brandi Mahon]
• “The Yellow Wallpaper,” written by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, is a story of a woman, her psychological difficulties and her husband’s so called therapeutic treatment of her ailments during the late 1800s. Gilman does well throughout the story to show with descriptive phrases just how easily and effectively
the man “seemingly” wields his “maleness” to control the woman. But, with further interpretation and insight I believe Gilman succeeds in nothing more than showing the weakness of women, of the day, as active persons in their own as well as society’s decision making processes instead of the strength of men as women dominating machines. “The View from the Inside” by Timothy J. Decker

- In Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain creates a strong opposition between the freedom of Huck and Jim’s life on the raft drifting down the Mississippi River, which represents “nature,” and the confining and restrictive life on the shore, which represents “society.” [“All I wanted was a change”: Positive Images of Nature and Society in Chapter 19 of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn” from Professor Matthew Hurt’s “Sample Essays for English 103: Introduction to Fiction”]
- In Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s short story, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings,” an unexpected visitor comes down from the sky, and seems to test the faith of a community. The villagers have a difficult time figuring out just how the very old man with enormous wings fits into their lives. Because this character does not agree with their conception of what an angel should look like, they try to determine if the aged man could actually be an angel. In trying to prove the origin of their visitor, the villagers lose faith in the possibility of him being an angel because he does not adhere to their ordered world. Marquez keeps the identity of the very old man with enormous wings ambiguous to critique the villagers and, more generally, organized religion for having a lack of faith to believe in miracles that do not comply with their master narrative. [“Prove It: A Critique of the Villagers’ Faith in ‘A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings’” from Sample Essays for English 103: Introduction to Fiction, Professor Matthew Hurt]

Style

Literary criticism is a fairly specialized kind of writing. Instead of writing to a general lay audience, you are writing to members of a literary community who have read a work and who developed opinions about the work—as well as a vocabulary of interpretation.

Following are some common words used by literary critics. More specialized terms can be learned by reading criticism or by referring to a good encyclopedia for criticism or writing, including the Writer's Encyclopedia:

- Protagonist: The protagonist is the major character of the story; typically the character must overcome significant challenges.
- Antagonist: The protagonist’s chief nemesis; in other words, the character whom the protagonist must overcome.
- Symbols: Metaphoric language; see A Catalogue of Symbols in The Awakening by Kate Chopin
- Viewpoint: Stories are told either in the first person or third person point of view. The first person is limited to a single character, although dialog can let you guess at other characters’ intentions. The third person allows readers inside the character’s mind so you know what the character feels and thinks. Viewpoint can be “limited,” where the character knows less than the reader, or “omniscient,” where the reader can hear the thoughts and feelings of all characters. Occasionally writers will use multiple character viewpoint, which takes you from one character’s perspective to another.
- Plot: Plots are a series of scenes, typically moving from a conflict situation to a resolution. To surprise readers, authors will foreshadow “false plants,” which lead readers to anticipate other resolutions. The term “denouement” refers to the unraveling of the plot in the conclusion.
Tips for Reading Poetry

“How to Read a Poem” from Poets.org

Tips for Writing a Literary Analysis

“Literary Analysis Thesis” from Georgia Perimeter College

“How to Write a Literary Analysis Essay” from Bucks County Community College

Sample “Literary Analysis” from W. N. Norton & Company, Inc.
OLD ENGLISH POETRY

DREAM OF THE ROOD: BACKGROUND

The Dream of the Rood is one of the earliest Christian poems in the corpus of Old English literature and an example of the genre of dream poetry. Like most Old English poetry, it is written in alliterative verse. Rood is from the Old English word rod ‘pole’, or more specifically ‘crucifix’. Preserved in the 10th century Vercelli Book, the poem may be considerably older, even one of the oldest works of Old English literature.

Background information

A part of The Dream of the Rood can be found on the 8th century Ruthwell Cross, which was an 18 feet (5.5 m), free standing Anglo-Saxon cross that was perhaps intended as a ‘conversion tool’. At each side of the vine-tracery are carved runes. On the cross there is an excerpt that was written in runes along with scenes of Jesus healing the blind, the Annunciation and the story of Egypt. Although it was torn down and destroyed during a Protestant revolt, it was reconstructed as much as possible after the fear of iconography passed. Fortunately during that time of religious unrest, those words that were in the runes were still protected in the Vercelli Book, so called because the book is kept in the Italian city of Vercelli. The Vercelli Book, which can be dated to the 10th century, includes twenty-three homilies interspersed with six poems: The Dream of the Rood, Andreas, The Fates of the Apostles, Soul and Body, Elene and a poetic, homiletic fragment.

Possible authorship

The author of Dream of the Rood is unknown, but by knowing the approximate date of the Ruthwell Cross, scholars have been able to suggest possible authors. These include the Anglo-Saxon poets Caedmon and Cynewulf.

The Poem

The poem is set up with the narrator having a dream. In this dream or vision he is speaking to the Cross on which Jesus was crucified. The poem itself is divided up into three separate sections: the first part (ll. 1–27), the second part (ll. 28–121) and the third part (ll. 122–156). In section one, the narrator has a vision of the Cross. Initially when the dreamer sees the Cross, he notes how it is covered with gems. He is aware of how wretched he is compared to how glorious the tree is. However, he comes to see that amidst the beautiful stones it is stained with blood. In section two, the Cross shares its account of Jesus’ death. The Crucifixion story is told from the perspective of the Cross. It begins with the enemy coming to cut the tree down and carrying it away. The tree learns that it is not to be the bearer of a criminal, but instead Christ crucified. The Lord and the Cross become one, and they stand together as victors, refusing to fall, taking on insurmountable pain for the sake of mankind. It
is not just Christ, but the Cross as well that is pierced with nails. Adelhied L. J. Thieme remarks, “The cross itself is portrayed as his lord’s retainer whose most outstanding characteristic is that of unwavering loyalty”. The Rood and Christ are one in the portrayal of the Passion—they are both pierced with nails, mocked and tortured. Then, just as with Christ, the Cross is resurrected, and adorned with gold and silver. It is honoured above all trees just as Jesus is honoured above all men. The Cross then charges the visionary to share all that he has seen with others. In section three, the author gives his reflections about this vision. The vision ends, and the man is left with his thoughts. He gives praise to God for what he has seen and is filled with hope for eternal life and his desire to once again be near the glorious Cross.

Additional information on “Dream of the Rood” can be found here.
But holy spirits beheld it there,
Men upon earth, all this glorious creation.
Strange was that victor-tree, and stained with sins was I,
With foulness defiled. I saw the glorious tree
With vesture (Note: Silken cords, or tassels, W.; sailyards, ropes, in Hall and Sweet.) adorned winsomely shine,
Begirt with gold; bright gems had there
Worthily decked the tree of the Lord. (Note: Wealdendes, S.'s emendation for MS. wealdes, 'wood'; so Kl.)
Yet through that gold I might perceive
Old strife of the wretched, that first it gave
Blood on the stronger [right] side. With sorrows was I oppressed,
Afraid for that fair sight; I saw the ready beacon
Change in vesture and hue; at times with moisture covered,
Soiled with course of blood; at times with treasure adorned.
Yet lying there a longer while,
Beheld I sad the Saviour's tree
Until I heard that words it uttered;
The best of woods gan speak these words:
"'Twas long ago (I remember it still)
That I was hewn at end of a grove,
Stripped from off my stem; strong foes laid hold of me there,
Wrought for themselves a show, bade felons raise me up;
Men bore me on their shoulders, till on a mount they set me;
Fiends many fixed me there. Then saw I mankind's Lord
Hasten with mickle might, for He would sty (Note: Sty, 'mount,' common in Middle English.) upon me.
There durst I not 'gainst word of the Lord
Bow down or break, when saw I tremble
The surface of earth; I might then all
My foes have felled, yet fast I stood.

The Hero young begirt (Note: Here and below W. gives the corresponding verses from the Ruthwell Cross. They will also be found in Stopford Brooke's "Early English Literature," p. 337, q.v.) Himself, Almighty God was He,

Strong and stern of mind; He stied on the gallows high,

40

Bold in sight of many, for man He would redeem.
I shook when the Hero clasped me, yet durst not bow to earth,

Fall to surface of earth, but firm I must there stand.
A rood was I upreared; I raised the mighty King,
The Lord of Heaven; I durst not bend me.

45

They drove their dark nails through me; the wounds are seen upon me,
The open gashes of guile; I durst harm none (Note: Gr. changes MS. nænigum to ænigum and others follow; W. as MS.) of them.

They mocked us both together; all moistened with blood was I,
Shed from side of the man, when forth He sent His spirit.

Many have I on that mount endured

50

Of cruel fates; I saw the Lord of Hosts
Strongly outstretched; darkness had then
Covered with clouds the corse of the Lord,
The brilliant brightness; the shadow continued, (Note: Forð-eode, not for-ðeode, 'overcame,' as Sw. W.'s note is an oversight.)

Wan 'neath the welkin. There wept all creation,

55

Bewailed the King's death; Christ was on the cross.
Yet hastening thither they came from afar
To the Son of the King (Note: MS. to þam æðelinge. Sw. follows Ruthwell Cross, æðele to anum.): that all I beheld.

Sorely with sorrows was I oppressed; yet I bowed 'neath the hands of men,
Lowly with mickle might. Took they there Almighty God,

60

Him raised from the heavy torture; the battle-warriors left me
To stand bedrenched with blood; all wounded with darts was I.

There laid they the weary of limb, at head of His corse they stood,

Beheld the Lord of Heaven, and He rested Him there awhile,

Worn from the mickle war. Began they an earth-house to work,

Men in the murderers' (Note: Banan must be taken as gen. pl.; B. reads banana; Sw. thinks it "a mistake for some other [word], possibly beorg," and takes banan as gen. sing. referring to the cross, though he adds, "this is very improbable." Truly so, as the cross is speaking.) sight, carved it of brightest stone,

Placed therein victories’ Lord. Began sad songs to sing

The wretched at eventide; then would they back return

Mourning from the mighty prince; all lonely (Note: Maete werode, lit., 'with a small band,' but it means 'by himself.') rested He there.

Yet weeping (Note: Greotende is Gr.'s emendation for MS. reotende; B. hreotende; K. geotende; Sw. as Gr.) we then a longer while

Stood at our station: the [voice] (Note: Stef n is Kl.'s emendation to fill lacuna. W. prefers it, but does not think it convincing.) arose

Of battle-warriors; the corse grew cold,

Fair house of life. Then one gan fell

Us (Note: Us here must refer to the three crosses, that of Christ and those of the two thieves.) all to earth; 'twas a fearful fate!

One buried us in deep pit, yet of me the thanes of the Lord,

His friends, heard tell; [from earth they raised me], (Note: This half-line is Gr.'s emendation to fill lacuna in MS. Sw. and W. leave it blank.)

And me begirt with gold and silver.

Now thou mayst hear, my dearest man,

That bale of woes (Note: Or, 'of the wicked,' 'of criminals.') have I endured,

Of sorrows sore. Now the time is come,

That me shall honor both far and wide

Men upon earth, and all this mighty creation

Will pray to this beacon. On me God’s Son

Suffered awhile; so glorious now

I tower to Heaven, and I may heal
85

Each one of those who reverence me;

Of old I became the hardest of pains,

Most loathsome to ledes (Note: I have used this Middle English word for sake of the alliteration.) [nations], the way of life,

Right way, I prepared for mortal men. (Note: Sw.'s text ends here. It was translated a few years ago in Poet-Lore as if it were the whole poem.)

Lo! the Lord of Glory honored me then

90

Above the grove, (Note: MS. holmwudu; K. holtwudu, and so Gr. with (?).) the guardian of Heaven,

As He His mother, even Mary herself,

Almighty God before all men

Worthily honored above all women.

Now thee I bid, my dearest man,

95

That thou this sight shalt say to men,

Reveal in words, 'tis the tree of glory,

On which once suffered Almighty God

For the many sins of all mankind,

And also for Adam's misdeeds of old.

100

Death tasted He there; yet the Lord arose

With His mickle might for help to men.

Then stied He to Heaven; again shall come

Upon this mid-earth to seek mankind

At the day of doom the Lord Himself,

105

Almighty God, and His angels with Him;

Then He will judge, who hath right of doom,

Each one of men as here before

In this vain life he hath deserved.

No one may there be free from fear

110
In view of the word that the Judge will speak.
He will ask ‘fore the crowd, where is the man
Who for name of the Lord would bitter death
Be willing to taste, as He did on the tree.
But then they will fear, and few will bethink them
115
What they to Christ may venture to say.
Then need there no one be filled with fear (Note: MS. unforht, but Gr.'s anforht suits the sense better.)
Who bears in his breast the best of beacons;
But through the rood a kingdom shall seek
From earthly way each single soul
120
That with the Lord thinketh to dwell.”
Then I prayed to the tree with joyous heart,
With mickle might, when I was alone
With small attendance (Note: i.e., ‘by myself.’ See on 69.); the thought of my mind
For the journey was ready; I've lived through many
125
Hours of longing. Now 'tis hope of my life
That the victory-tree I am able to seek,
Oftener than all men I alone may
Honor it well; my will to that
Is mickle in mind, and my plea for protection
130
To the rood is directed. I've not many mighty
Of friends on earth; but hence went they forth
From joys of the world, sought glory’s King;
Now live they in Heaven with the Father on high,
In glory dwell, and I hope for myself
135
On every day when the rood of the Lord,
Which here on earth before I viewed,
In this vain life may fetch me away
And bring me then, where bliss is mickle,
Joy in the Heavens, where the folk of the Lord
140
Is set at the feast, where bliss is eternal;
And may He then set me where I may hereafter
In glory dwell, and well with the saints
Of joy partake. May the Lord be my friend,
Who here on earth suffered before
145
On the gallows-tree for the sins of man!
He us redeemed, and gave to us life,
A heavenly home. Hope was renewed,
With blessing and bliss, for the sufferers of burning.
The Son was victorious on that fateful journey,
150
Mighty and happy, (Note: Lit., 'speedy,' 'successful.') when He came with a many, (Note: A company, a crowd; common in Middle English.)
With a band of spirits to the kingdom of God,
The Ruler Almighty, for joy to the angels
And to all the saints, who in Heaven before
In glory dwelt, when their Ruler came,
155
Almighty God, where was His home.
Bede (672/673 – 26 May 735), also referred to as Saint Bede or the Venerable Bede, was an English monk in Northeast England, in the Kingdom of Northumbria. He is well known as an author and scholar, and his most famous work, Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum (The Ecclesiastical History of the English People) gained him the title “The Father of English History”.

In 1899, Bede was made a Doctor of the Church by Pope Leo XIII; he is the only native of Great Britain to achieve this designation. Bede was moreover a skilled linguist and translator, and his work made the Latin and Greek writings of the early Church Fathers much more accessible to his fellow Anglo-Saxons, contributing significantly to English Christianity.

Bede wrote scientific, historical and theological works, reflecting the range of his writings from music and metrics to exegetical Scripture commentaries. He knew patristic literature, as well as Pliny the Elder, Virgil, Lucretius, Ovid, Horace and other classical writers. He knew some Greek. His Latin is generally clear, but his Biblical commentaries are more technical.

Bede’s scriptural commentaries employed the allegorical method of interpretation and his history includes accounts of miracles, which to modern historians has seemed at odds with his critical approach to the materials in his history. Modern studies have shown the important role such concepts played in the world-view of Early Medieval scholars.

Although Bede is mainly studied as a historian now, in his time his works on grammar, chronology, and biblical studies were as important as his historical and hagiographical works. The non-historical works contributed greatly to the Carolingian renaissance. He has been credited with writing a penitential, though his authorship of this work is still very much disputed.

Additional information on Bede’s life, work, and influences can be found here.
Cædmon's Hymn is a short Old English poem originally composed by Cædmon, in honour of God the Creator. It survives in a Latin translation by Bede in his Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum and in vernacular versions written down in several manuscripts of Bede’s Historia.

Now [we] must honour the guardian of heaven,
the might of the architect, and his purpose,
the work of the father of glory
as he, the eternal lord, established the beginning of wonders;
he first created for the children of men
heaven as a roof, the holy creator
Then the guardian of mankind,
the eternal lord, afterwards
appointed the middle earth,
the lands for men, the Lord almighty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old English</th>
<th>Latin (Bede)</th>
<th>Modern English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nu scylun hergan hefaenricaes uard</td>
<td>Nunc laudare debemus auctorem regni caelestis,</td>
<td>Now [we] must honour the guardian of heaven,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metudaes maecti end his modgidanc</td>
<td>potentiam creatoris, et consilium illius</td>
<td>the might of the architect, and his purpose,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uerc uuldurfadur swe he</td>
<td>facta Patris gloriae: quomodo ille,cum sit</td>
<td>the work of the father of glory (Note: This is the traditional translation of these lines, in agreement with Bede’s Latin version. An alternative translation of the eorðanand aelda texts, however, understands weorc as the subject: “Now the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uundra gihwaes</td>
<td>aeternus Deus, omnium</td>
<td>works of the father of glory must honour the guardian of heaven, the might of the architect, and his mind’s purpose.”) as he, the eternal lord, established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eci dryctin or astelidæ</td>
<td>miraculorum auctor exstítit;</td>
<td>the beginning of wonders;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he aerist scop aelda barnum</td>
<td>qui primo filiis hominum</td>
<td>he first created for the children of men (Note: This is the reading of the West-Saxon ylda and Northumbrian aelda recensions. The West-Saxon eordan, Northumbrian eordu, and with some corruption, the West-Saxon eordæ recensions would be translated “for the children of earth”.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heben til hrofe haleg scepen.</td>
<td>cælum pro culmine tecti</td>
<td>heaven as a roof, the holy creator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tha middungeard mon cynæs uard</td>
<td>dehinc terram custos humani generis</td>
<td>Then the guardian of mankind, the eternal lord, afterwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eci dryctin æfter tiadæfirum foldu frea allmectig</td>
<td>generis creavit. omnipotens</td>
<td>appointed the middle earth, the lands for men, (Note: The Northumbrian eordu and West-Saxon ylda and eordæ recensions would be translated “for men among the lands” at this point,) the Lord almighty.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**THE WANDERER: BACKGROUND**

*The Wanderer* is an Old English poem preserved only in an anthology known as the Exeter Book, a manuscript dating from the late 10th century. It counts 115 lines of alliterative verse. As is often the case in Anglo-Saxon verse, the composer and compiler are anonymous, and within the manuscript the poem is untitled.

The metre of the poem is of four-stress lines, divided between the second and third stresses by a caesura. Each caesura is indicated in the manuscript by a subtle increase in character spacing and with full stops, but modern print editions render them in a more obvious fashion. Like most Old English poetry, it is written in alliterative metre.

*The Wanderer* conveys the meditations of a solitary exile on his past happiness as a member of his lord’s band of retainers, his present hardships and the values of forbearance and faith in the heavenly Lord. The warrior is identified as *eardstapa* (line 6a), usually translated as “wanderer” (from *eard* meaning ‘earth’ or ‘land’, and *steppan*, meaning ‘to step’), who roams the cold seas and walks “paths of exile” (*wraectalastas*). He remembers the days when, as a young man, he served his lord, feasted together with comrades, and received precious gifts from...
the lord. Yet fate (wyrd) turned against him when he lost his lord, kinsmen and comrades in battle—they were defending their homeland against an attack—and he was driven into exile. Some readings of the poem see the wanderer as progressing through three phases; first as the anhoga (solitary man) who dwells on the deaths of other warriors and the funeral of his lord, then as the modcearig man (man troubled in mind) who meditates on past hardships and on the fact that mass killings have been innumerable in history, and finally as the snottor on mode (man wise in mind) who has come to understand that life is full of hardships and impermanence and suffering and everything is governed by God. Other readings accept the general statement that the exile does come to understand human history, his own included, in philosophical terms, but would point out that the poem has elements in common with “The Battle of Maldon,” another poem about an Anglo-Saxon defeat.

However, the speaker reflects upon life while spending years in exile, and to some extent has gone beyond his personal sorrow. In this respect, the poem is a “wisdom poem.” The degeneration of “earthly glory” is presented as inevitable in the poem, contrasting with the theme of salvation through faith in God.

Additional information on “Dream of the Rood” can be found here.

Please visit the Anglo-Saxons.net web page for “The Wanderer,” where you will find the original Old English version of the poem next to a modern translation.

Remember that the modern English is a translation and so we cannot analyze it in the same way we might analyze a modern poem because we cannot analyze the poet’s own words. However, we can use the translation to gain a basic understanding of the poem’s main ideas.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Background and Interpretation

“A Brief History of Old English” by Michael D.C. Drout, from the ebook King Alfred’s Grammar

“Bede” from The World According to Bede

Background and interpretation of “The Wanderer” can be found on “The Wanderer” page of Dr. Arnold Sanders’s faculty web page at Goucher College. (His notes include links to many other things that pertain to his course; you should ignore those because they do not apply to our class.)

Original Versions

“The Dream of the Rood” in Old English, from University of Oxford, along with additional information

“Bede’s Story of Caedmon” from Beowulf in Cyberspace, along with additional information

Audio Files

“The Dream of the Rood” read by Micael D. C. Drout from Wheaton College

Multiple versions of “Cædmon’s Hymn” by Michael D. C. Drout from Wheaton College


Read along with the original version of the poem while you listen. Professor Michael Drout of Wheaton College is a medieval scholar, and his reading of the poem reflects his understanding of the poet’s emotions.

Prof. Drout can read the original, so his oral performance gives us additional insight into the poem as well as allowing us to hear the way the words would have sounded when performed aloud, as this poem would have been.
BEOWULF

BEOWULF: BACKGROUND

*Beowulf* is an Old English epic poem consisting of 3182 alliterative long lines. It is possibly the oldest surviving long poem in Old English and is commonly cited as one of the most important works of Old English literature. It was written in England some time between the 8th and the early 11th century. The author was an anonymous Anglo-Saxon poet, referred to by scholars as the “*Beowulf* poet.”

The poem is set in Scandinavia. Beowulf, a hero of the Geats, comes to the aid of Hroðgar, the king of the Danes, whose mead hall in Heorot has been under attack by a monster known as Grendel. After Beowulf slays him, Grendel’s mother attacks the hall and is then also defeated. Victorious, Beowulf goes home to Geatland (Götaland in modern Sweden) and later becomes king of the Geats. After a period of fifty years has passed, Beowulf defeats a dragon, but is fatally wounded in the battle. After his death, his attendants bury him in a tumulus, a burial mound, in Geatland.

The full poem survives in the manuscript known as the Nowell Codex, located in the British Library. It has no title in the original manuscript, but has become known by the name of the story’s protagonist. In 1731, the manuscript was badly damaged by a fire that swept through Ashburnham House in London that had a collection of medieval manuscripts assembled by Sir Robert Bruce Cotton.

Additional information on *Beowulf* can be found here.

**BEOWULF PRELUDE**

LO, praise of the prowess of people-kings of spear-armed Danes, in days long sped, we have heard, and what honor the athelings won! Oft Scyld the Scefing from squadroned foes,
from many a tribe, the mead-bench tore,
awing the earls. Since erst he lay
friendless, a foundling, fate repaid him:
for he waxed under welkin, in wealth he throve,
till before him the folk, both far and near,
who hause by the whale-path, heard his mandate,
gave him gifts: a good king he!
To him an heir was afterward born,
a son in his halls, whom heaven sent
to favor the folk, feeling their woe
that erst they had lacked an earl for leader
so long a while; the Lord endowed him,
the Wielder of Wonder, with world's renown.
Famed was this Beowulf (Note: Not, of course, Beowulf the Great, hero of the epic.) far flew the boast of him,
son of Scyld, in the Scandian lands.
So becomes it a youth to quit him well
with his father's friends, by fee and gift,
that to aid him, aged, in after days,
come warriors willing, should war draw nigh,
liegemen loyal: by lauded deeds
shall an earl have honor in every clan.

Forth he fared at the fated moment,
sturdy Scyld to the shelter of God.
Then they bore him over to ocean's billow.
loving clansmen, as late he charged them,
while wielded words the winsome Scyld,
the leader beloved who long had ruled….
In the roadstead rocked a ring-dight vessel,
ice-flecked, outbound, atheling's barge:
there laid they down their darling lord
on the breast of the boat, the breaker-of-rings,
(Note: Kenning for king or chieftain of a comitatus: he breaks off
gold from the spiral rings -- often worn on the arm -- and so rewards his followers.)
by the mast the mighty one. Many a treasure
fetched from far was freighted with him.
No ship have I known so nobly dight
with weapons of war and weeds of battle,
with breastplate and blade: on his bosom lay
a heaped hoard that hence should go
far o'er the flood with him floating away.
No less these loaded the lordly gifts,
thanes' huge treasure, than those had done
who in former time forth had sent him
sole on the seas, a suckling child.
High o'er his head they hoist the standard,
a gold-wove banner; let billows take him,
gave him to ocean. Grave were their spirits,
mournful their mood. No man is able
to say in sooth, no son of the halls,
no hero 'neath heaven, — who harbored that freight!
Now Beowulf bode in the burg of the Scyldings,
leader beloved, and long he ruled
in fame with all folk, since his father had gone
away from the world, till awoke an heir,
haughty Healfdene, who held through life,
sage and sturdy, the Scyldings glad.
Then, one after one, there woke to him,
to the chieftain of clansmen, children four:
Heorogar, then Hrothgar, then Halga brave;
and I heard that — was — ’s queen,
the Heathoscylfing’s helpmate dear.
To Hrothgar was given such glory of war,
such honor of combat, that all his kin
obeyed him gladly till great grew his band
of youthful comrades. It came in his mind
to bid his henchmen a hall uprear,
a master mead-house, mightier far
than ever was seen by the sons of earth,
and within it, then, to old and young
he would all allot that the Lord had sent him,
save only the land and the lives of his men.
Wide, I heard, was the work commanded,
for many a tribe this mid-earth round,
to fashion the folkstead. It fell, as he ordered,
in rapid achievement that ready it stood there,
of halls the noblest: Heorot (Note: That is, “The Hart,” or “Stag,” so called from decorations in the gables that resembled the antlers of a deer. This hall has been carefully described in a pamphlet by Heyne. The building was rectangular, with opposite doors -- mainly west and east -- and a hearth in the middle of th single room. A row of pillars down each side, at some distance from the walls, made a space which was raised a little above the main floor, and was furnished with two rows of seats. On one side, usually south, was the high-seat midway between the doors. Opposite this, on the other raised space, was another seat of honor. At the banquet soon to be described, Hrothgar sat in the south or chief high-seat, and Beowulf opposite to him. The scene for a flying (see below, v.499) was thus very effectively set. Planks on trestles -- the “board” of later English literature -- formed the tables just in front of the long rows of seats, and were taken away after banquets, when the retainers were ready to stretch themselves out for sleep on the benches.) he named it
whose message had might in many a land.
Not reckless of promise, the rings he dealt,
treasure at banquet: there towered the hall,
high, gabled wide, the hot surge waiting
of furious flame. (Note: Fire was the usual end of these halls. See v. 781 below. One thinks of the splendid scene at the end of the Nibelungen, of the Nialssaga, of Saxo’s story of Amlethus, and many a less famous instance.) Nor far was that day
when father and son-in-law stood in feud
for warfare and hatred that woke again. (Note: It is to be supposed that all hearers of this poem knew how Hrothgar’s hall was burnt, -- perhaps in the unsuccessful attack made on him by his son-in-law Ingeld.)
With envy and anger an evil spirit
endured the dole in his dark abode,
that he heard each day the din of revel
high in the hall: there harps rang out,
clear song of the singer. He sang who knew (Note: A skilled minstrel. The Danes are heathens, as one is told presently; but this lay of beginnings is taken from Genesis.)
tales of the early time of man,
how the Almighty made the earth,
fairest fields enfolded by water,
set, triumphant, sun and moon
for a light to lighten the land-dwellers,
and braided bright the breast of earth
with limbs and leaves, made life for all
of mortal beings that breathe and move.
So lived the clansmen in cheer and revel
a winsome life, till one began
to fashion evils, that field of hell.
Grendel this monster grim was called,
march-riever (Note: A disturber of the border, one who sallies from his haunt in the fen and roams over the
country near by. This probably pagan nuisance is now furnished with biblical credentials as a fiend or devil in
good standing, so that all Christian Englishmen might read about him. “Grendel” may mean one who grinds and
 crushes.) mighty, in moorland living,
in fen and fastness; fief of the giants
the hapless wight a while had kept
since the Creator his exile doomed.
On kin of Cain was the killing avenged
by sovran God for slaughtered Abel.
Ill fared his feud, (Note: Cain’s.) and far was he driven,
for the slaughter’s sake, from sight of men.
Of Cain awoke all that woful breed,
Etins (Note: Giants.) and elves and evil-spirits,
as well as the giants that warred with God
weary while: but their wage was paid them!

II

WENT he forth to find at fall of night
that haughty house, and heed wherever
the Ring-Danes, outrevelled, to rest had gone.
Found within it the atheling band
asleep after feasting and fearless of sorrow,
of human hardship. Unhallowed wight,
grim and greedy, he grasped betimes,
wrathful, reckless, from resting-places,
three of the thanes, and thence he rushed
fain of his fell spoil, faring homeward,
laden with slaughter, his lair to seek.
Then at the dawning, as day was breaking,
the might of Grendel to men was known;
then after wassail was wail uplifted,
loud moan in the morn. The mighty chief,
atheling excellent, unblithe sat,
labored in woe for the loss of his thanes,
when once had been traced the trail of the fiend,
spirit accurst: too cruel that sorrow,
too long, too loathsome. Not late the respite;
with night returning, anew began
ruthless murder; he recked no whit,
firm in his guilt, of the feud and crime.
They were easy to find who elsewhere sought
in room remote their rest at night,
bed in the bowers, (Note: The smaller buildings within the main enclosure but separate from the hall.) when that
bale was shown,
was seen in sooth, with surest token, —
the hall-thane’s (Note: Grendel.) hate. Such held themselves
far and fast who the fiend outran!
Thus ruled unrighteous and raged his fill
one against all; until empty stood
that lordly building, and long it bode so.
Twelve years' tide the trouble he bore,
sovan of Scyldings, sorrows in plenty,
boundless cares. There came unhiden
tidings true to the tribes of men,
in sorrowful songs, how ceaselessly Grendel
harassed Hrothgar, what hate he bore him,
what murder and massacre, many a year,
feud unfading, — refused consent
to deal with any of Daneland's earls,
make pact of peace, or compound for gold:
still less did the wise men ween to get
great fee for the feud from his fiendish hands.
But the evil one ambushed old and young
death-shadow dark, and dogged them still,
lured, or lurked in the livelong night
of misty moorlands: men may say not
where the haunts of these Hell-Runes (Note: "Sorcerers-of-hell.") be.
Such heaping of horrors the hater of men,
lonely roamer, wrought unceasing,
harassings heavy. O'er Heorot he lorded,
gold-bright hall, in gloomy nights;
and ne'er could the prince (Note: Hrothgar, who is the "Scyldings'-friend" of 170.) approach his throne,
— 'twas judgment of God, — or have joy in his hall.
Sore was the sorrow to Scyldings'-friend,
heart-rending misery. Many nobles
sat assembled, and searched out counsel
how it were best for bold-hearted men
against harassing terror to try their hand.
Whiles they vowed in their heathen fanes
altar-offerings, asked with words (Note: That is, in formal or prescribed phrase.)
that the slayer-of-souls would succor give them
for the pain of their people. Their practice this,
their heathen hope; 'twas Hell they thought of
in mood of their mind. Almighty they knew not,
Doomsman of Deeds and dreadful Lord,
nor Heaven's-Helmet heeded they ever,
Wielder-of-Wonder. — Woe for that man
who in harm and hatred hales his soul
to fiery embraces; — nor favor nor change
awaits he ever. But well for him
that after death-day may draw to his Lord,
and friendship find in the Father's arms!

III

THUS seethed unceasing the son of Healfdene
with the woe of these days; not wisest men
assuaged his sorrow; too sore the anguish,
loathly and long, that lay on his folk,
most baneful of burdens and bales of the night.

This heard in his home Hygelac's thane,
great among Geats, of Grendel's doings.
He was the mightiest man of valor
in that same day of this our life,
stalwart and stately. A stout wave-walker
he bade make ready. Yon battle-king, said he,
far o'er the swan-road he fain would seek,
the noble monarch who needed men!
The prince's journey by prudent folk
was little blamed, though they loved him dear;
they whetted the hero, and hailed good omens.
And now the bold one from bands of Geats
comrades chose, the keenest of warriors
e'er he could find; with fourteen men
the sea-wood (Note: Ship.) he sought, and, sailor proved,
led them on to the land's confines.
Time had now flown; (Note: That is, since Beowulf selected his ship and led his men to the harbor.) afloat was the ship,
boat under bluff. On board they climbed,
warriors ready; waves were churning
sea with sand; the sailors bore
on the breast of the bark their bright array,
their mail and weapons: the men pushed off,
on its willing way, the well-braced craft.
Then moved o'er the waters by might of the wind
that bark like a bird with breast of foam,
till in season due, on the second day,
the curved prow such course had run
that sailors now could see the land,
sea-cliffs shining, steep high hills,
headlands broad. Their haven was found,
their journey ended. Up then quickly
the Weders’ (Note: One of the auxiliary names of the Geats.) clansmen climbed ashore,
anchored their sea-wood, with armor clashing
and gear of battle: God they thanked
or passing in peace o'er the paths of the sea.
Now saw from the cliff a Scylding clansman,
a warden that watched the water-side,
how they bore o'er the gangway glittering shields,
war-gear in readiness; wonder seized him
to know what manner of men they were.
Straight to the strand his steed he rode,
Hrothgar's henchman; with hand of might
he shook his spear, and spake in parley.
"Who are ye, then, ye armed men,
mailed folk, that yon mighty vessel
have urged thus over the ocean ways,
here o'er the waters? A warden I,
sentinel set o'er the sea-march here,
lest any foe to the folk of Danes
with harrying fleet should harm the land.
No aliens ever at ease thus bore them,
linden-wielders: (Note: Or: Not thus openly ever came warriors hither; yet...) yet word-of-leave
clearly ye lack from clansmen here,
my folk's agreement. — A greater ne'er saw I
of warriors in world than is one of you, —
yon hero in harness! No henchman he
worthied by weapons, if witness his features,
his peerless presence! I pray you, though, tell
your folk and home, lest hence ye fare
suspect to wander your way as spies
in Danish land. Now, dwellers afar,
ocean-travellers, take from me
simple advice: the sooner the better
I hear of the country whence ye came."

IV
To him the stateliest spake in answer;
the warriors’ leader his word-hoard unlocked: —
“We are by kin of the clan of Geats,
and Hygelac’s own hearth-fellows we.
To folk afar was my father known,
noble atheling, Ecgtheow named.
Full of winters, he fared away
aged from earth; he is honored still
through width of the world by wise men all.
To thy lord and liege in loyal mood
we hasten hither, to Healfdene’s son,
people-protector: be pleased to advise us!
To that mighty-one come we on mickle errand,
to the lord of the Danes; nor deem I right
that aught be hidden. We hear — thou knowest
if sooth it is — the saying of men,
that amid the Scyldings a scathing monster,
dark ill-doer, in dusky nights
shows terrific his rage unmatched,
hatred and murder. To Hrothgar I
in greatness of soul would succor bring,
so the Wise-and-Brave (Note: Hrothgar.) may worst his foes, —
if ever the end of ills is fated,
of cruel contest, if cure shall follow,
and the boiling care-waves cooler grow;
else ever afterward anguish-days
he shall suffer in sorrow while stands in place
high on its hill that house unpeered!”

Astride his steed, the strand-ward answered,
clanzman unquailing: “The keen-souled thane
must be skilled to sever and sunder duly
words and works, if he well intends.
I gather, this band is graciously bent
to the Scyldings’ master. March, then, bearing
weapons and weeds the way I show you.
I will bid my men your boat meanwhile
to guard for fear lest foemen come, —
your new-tarred ship by shore of ocean
faithfully watching till once again
it waft o’er the waters those well-loved thanes,
— winding-neck’d wood, — to Weders’ bounds,
heroes such as the hest of fate
shall succor and save from the shock of war.”

They bent them to march, — the boat lay still,
fettered by cable and fast at anchor,
broad-bosomed ship. — Then shone the boars (Note: Beowulf’s helmet has several boar-images on it; he is the
“man of war”; and the boar-helmet guards him as typical representative of the marching party as a whole. The
boar was sacred to Freyr, who was the favorite god of the Germanic tribes about the North Sea and the Baltic.
Rude representations of warriors show the boar on the helmet quite as large as the helmet itself.)
over the cheek-guard; chased with gold,
keen and gleaming, guard it kept
o’er the man of war, as marched along
heroes in haste, till the hall they saw,
broad of gable and bright with gold:
that was the fairest, ’mid folk of earth,
of houses ’neath heaven, where Hrothgar lived,
and the gleam of it lightened o’er lands afar.
The sturdy shieldsman showed that bright
burg-of-the-boldest; bade them go
straightway thither; his steed then turned,
hardy hero, and hailed them thus: —
"'Tis time that I fare from you. Father Almighty
in grace and mercy guard you well,
safe in your seekings. Seaward I go,
'gainst hostile warriors hold my watch."

V

STONE-BRIGHT the street: (Note: Either merely paved, the strata via of the Romans, or else thought of as a sort of mosaic, an extravagant touch like the reckless waste of gold on the walls and roofs of a hall.) it showed the way to the crowd of clansmen. Corselets glistened
hand-forged, hard; on their harness bright
the steel ring sang, as they strode along
in mail of battle, and marched to the hall.
There, weary of ocean, the wall along
they set their bucklers, their broad shields, down,
and bowed them to bench: the breastplates clanged,
war-gear of men; their weapons stacked,
spears of the seafarers stood together,
gray-tipped ash: that iron band
was worthily weaponed! — A warrior proud
asked of the heroes their home and kin.
"Whence, now, bear ye burnished shields,
harness gray and helmets grim,
spears in multitude? Messenger, I,
Hrothgar’s herald! Heroes so many
ne’er met I as strangers of mood so strong.
'Tis plain that for prowess, not plunged into exile,
for high-hearted valor, Hrothgar ye seek!"
Him the sturdy-in-war bespake with words,
proud earl of the Weders answer made,
hardy ’neath helmet: — “Hygelac’s, we,
fellows at board; I am Beowulf named.
I am seeking to say to the son of Healfdene
this mission of mine, to thy master-lord,
the doughty prince, if he deign at all
grace that we greet him, the good one, now.”
Wulfgar spake, the Wendles’ chieftain,
whose might of mind to many was known,
his courage and counsel: “The king of Danes,
the Scyldings’ friend, I fain will tell,
the Breaker-of-Rings, as the boon thou askest,
the famed prince, of thy faring hither,
and, swiftly after, such answer bring
as the doughty monarch may deign to give.”
Hied then in haste to where Hrothgar sat
white-haired and old, his earls about him,
till the stout thane stood at the shoulder there
of the Danish king: good courtier he!
Wulfgar spake to his winsome lord: —
"Hither have fared to thee far-come men
o’er the paths of ocean, people of Geatland;
and the stateliest there by his sturdy band
is Beowulf named. This boon they seek,
that they, my master, may with thee
have speech at will: nor spurn their prayer
to give them hearing, gracious Hrothgar!
In weeds of the warrior worthy they,
methinks, of our liking; their leader most surely,
a hero that hither his henchmen has led."
BEOWULF SECTIONS 6-10

VI

HROTHGAR answered, helmet of Scyldings: —
“Tis true, before my youthful days;
his eldest son was Ecgtheow named,
to whom, at home, gave Hrethel the Geat
his only daughter. Their offspring bold
fares hither to seek the steadfast friend.
And seamen, too, have said me this, —
who carried my gifts to the Geatish court,
thither for thanks, — he has thirty men’s
heft of grasp in the gripe of his hand,
the bold-in-battle. Blessed God
out of his mercy this man hath sent
to Danes of the West, as I ween indeed,
against horror of Grendel. I hope to give
the good youth gold for his gallant thought.
Be thou in haste, and bid them hither,
clan of kinsmen, to come before me;
and add this word, — they are welcome guests
to folk of the Danes.”

[To the door of the hall
Wulfgar went] and the word declared: —
“To you this message my master sends,
East-Danes’ king, that your kin he knows,
hardy heroes, and hails you all
welcome hither o'er waves of the sea!
Ye may wend your way in war-attire,
and under helmets Hrothgar greet;
but let here the battle-shields bide your parley,
and wooden war-shafts wait its end.”

Uprose the mighty one, ringed with his men,
brave band of thanes: some bode without,
battle-gear guarding, as bade the chief.
Then hied that troop where the herald led them,
under Heorot’s roof: [the hero strode,]
hardy 'neath helm, till the hearth he neared.
Beowulf spake, — his breastplate gleamed,
war-net woven by wit of the smith: —
“Thou Hrothgar, hail! Hygelac's I,
kinsman and follower. Fame a plenty
have I gained in youth! These Grendel-deeds
I heard in my home-land heralded clear.
Seafarers say how stands this hall,
of buildings best, for your band of thanes
empty and idle, when evening sun
in the harbor of heaven is hidden away.
So my vassals advised me well, —
brave and wise, the best of men, —
O sovran Hrothgar, to seek thee here,
for my nerve and my might they knew full well.
Themselves had seen me from slaughter come
blood-flecked from foes, where five I bound,
and that wild brood worsted. I' the waves I slew
nicors (Note: The nicor, says Bugge, is a hippopotamus; a walrus, says Ten Brink. But that water-goblin who
covers the space from Old Nick of jest to the Neckan and Nix of poetry and tale, is all one needs, and Nicor is a
good name for him,) by night, in need and peril
avenging the Weders, (Note: His own people, the Geats.) whose woe they sought, —
crushing the grim ones. Grendel now,
monster cruel, be mine to quell
in single battle! So, from thee,
thou sovran of the Shining-Danes,
Scyldings' bulwark, a boon I seek, —
and, Friend-of-the-folk, refuse it not,
O Warriors' shield, now I've wandered far, —
that I alone with my liegemen here,
this hardy band, may Heorot purge!
More I hear, that the monster dire,
in his wanton mood, of weapons recks not;
hence shall I scorn — so Hygelac stay,
king of my kindred, kind to me! —
brand or buckler to bear in the fight,
gold-colored targe: but with gripe alone
must I front the fiend and fight for life,
foe against foe. Then faith be his
in the doom of the Lord whom death shall take.
Fain, I ween, if the fight he win,
in this hall of gold my Geatish band
will he fearless eat, — as oft before, —
my noblest thanes. Nor need'st thou then
to hide my head; (Note: That is, cover it as with a face-cloth. "There will be no need of funeral rites.") for his shall I be,
dyed in gore, if death must take me;
and my blood-covered body he'll bear as prey,
ruthless devour it, the roamer-lonely,
with my life-blood redden his lair in the fen:
no further for me need'st food prepare!
To Hygelac send, if Hild (Note: Personification of Battle.) should take me,
best of war-weeds, warding my breast,
armor excellent, heirloom of Hrethel
and work of Wayland. (Note: The Germanic Vulcan.) Fares Wyrd (Note: This mighty power, whom the Christian poet can still revere, has here the general force of "Destiny.") as she must."

VII

HROTHGAR spake, the Scyldings' helmet: —
"For fight defensive, Friend my Beowulf,
to succor and save, thou hast sought us here.
Thy father's combat (Note: There is no irrelevance here. Hrothgar sees in Beowulf's mission a heritage of duty, a
return of the good offices which the Danish king rendered to Beowulf's father in time of dire need.) a feud
enkinkled
when Heatholaf with hand he slew
among the Wyflings; his Weder kin
for horror of fighting feared to hold him.
Fleeing, he sought our South-Dane folk,
over surge of ocean the Honor-Scyldings,
when first I was ruling the folk of Danes,
wielded, youthful, this widespread realm,
this hoard-hold of heroes. Heorogar was dead,
my elder brother, had breathed his last,
Healfdene's bairn: he was better than I!
Straightway the feud with fee (Note: Money, for wergild, or man-price.) I settled,
to the Wylfings sent, o'er watery ridges,
treasures olden: oaths he (Note: Ecgtheow, Beowulf's sire.) swore me.
Sore is my soul to say to any
of the race of man what ruth for me
in Heorot Grendel with hate hath wrought,
what sudden harryings. Hall-folk fail me,
my warriors wane; for Wyrd hath swept them
into Grendel's grasp. But God is able
this deadly foe from his deeds to turn!
Boasted full oft, as my beer they drank,
earls o'er the ale-cup, armed men,
that they would bide in the beer-hall here,
Grendel's attack with terror of blades.
Then was this mead-house at morning tide
dyed with gore, when the daylight broke,
all the boards of the benches blood-besprinkled,
gory the hall: I had heroes the less,
doughty dear-ones that death had reft.
— But sit to the banquet, unbind thy words,
hardy hero, as heart shall prompt thee."

Gathered together, the Geatish men
in the banquet-hall on bench assigned,
sturdy-spirited, sat them down,
hardy-hearted. A henchman attended,
carried the carven cup in hand,
served the clear mead. Oft minstrels sang
blithe in Heorot. Heroes revelled,
no dearth of warriors, Weder and Dane.

VIII

UNFERTH spake, the son of Ecglaf,
who sat at the feet of the Scyldings' lord,
unbound the battle-runes. (Note: "Began the fight.") — Beowulf's quest,
sturdy seafarer's, sorely galled him;
ever he envied that other men
should more achieve in middle-earth
of fame under heaven than he himself. —
"Art thou that Beowulf, Breca's rival,
who emulous swim on the open sea,
when for pride the pair of you proved the floods,
and wantonly dared in waters deep
to risk your lives? No living man,
or lief or loath, from your labor dire
could you dissuade, from swimming the main.
Ocean-tides with your arms ye covered,
with strenuous hands the sea-streets measured,
swam o'er the waters. Winter's storm
rolled the rough waves. In realm of sea
a sennight strove ye. In swimming he topped thee,
had more of main! Him at morning-tide
billows bore to the Battling Reamas,
whence he hied to his home so dear
beloved of his liegemen, to land of Brondings,
fastness fair, where his folk he ruled,
town and treasure. In triumph o'er thee
Beanstan's bairn (Note: Breca.) his boast achieved.
So ween I for thee a worse adventure
— though in buffet of battle thou brave hast been,
in struggle grim, — if Grendel's approach
thou darst await through the watch of night!"

Beowulf spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: —
"What a deal hast uttered, dear my Unferth,
drunken with beer, of Breca now,
told of his triumph! Truth I claim it,
that I had more of might in the sea
than any man else, more ocean-endurance.
We twain had talked, in time of youth,
and made our boast, — we were merely boys,
stripings still, — to stake our lives
far at sea: and so we performed it.
Naked swords, as we swam along,
we held in hand, with hope to guard us
against the whales. Not a whit from me
could he float afar o'er the flood of waves,
haste o'er the billows; nor him I abandoned.
Together we twain on the tides abode
five nights full till the flood divided us,
churning waves and chilliest weather,
darkling night, and the northern wind
ruthless rushed on us: rough was the surge.
Now the wrath of the sea-fish rose apace;
yet me 'gainst the monsters my mailed coat,
hard and hand-linked, help afforded, —
battle-sark braided my breast to ward,
garnished with gold. There grasped me firm
and haled me to bottom the hated foe,
with grimmest gripe. 'Twas granted me, though,
to pierce the monster with point of sword,
with blade of battle: huge beast of the sea
was whelmed by the hurly through hand of mine.

IX

ME thus often the evil monsters
thronging threatened. With thrust of my sword,
the darling, I dealt them due return!
Nowise had they bliss from their booty then
to devour their victim, vengeful creatures,
seated to banquet at bottom of sea;
but at break of day, by my brand sore hurt,
on the edge of ocean up they lay,
put to sleep by the sword. And since, by them
on the fathomless sea-ways sailor-folk
are never molested. — Light from east,
came bright God's beacon; the billows sank,
so that I saw the sea-cliffs high,
windy walls. For Wyrd oft saveth
earl undoomed if he doughty be!
And so it came that I killed with my sword
nine of the nicors. Of night-fought battles
ne'er heard I a harder 'neath heaven's dome, nor
adrift on the deep a more desolate man!
Yet I came unharmed from that hostile clutch,
though spent with swimming. The sea upbore me,
flood of the tide, on Finnish land,
the welling waters. No wise of thee
have I heard men tell such terror of falchions, bitter battle. Breca ne’er yet, not one of you pair, in the play of war such daring deed has done at all with bloody brand, — I boast not of it! — though thou wast the bane (Note: Murder.) of thy brethren dear, thy closest kin, whence curse of hell awaits thee, well as thy wit may serve! For I say in sooth, thou son of Ecglaf, never had Grendel these grim deeds wrought, monster dire, on thy master dear, in Heorot such havoc, if heart of thine were as battle-bold as thy boast is loud! But he has found no feud will happen; from sword-clash dread of your Danish clan he vaunts him safe, from the Victor-Scyldings. He forces pledges, favors none of the land of Danes, but lustily murders, fights and feasts, nor feud he dreads from Spear-Dane men. But speedily now shall I prove him the prowess and pride of the Geats, shall bid him battle. Blithe to mead go he that listeth, when light of dawn this morrow morning o’er men of earth, ether-robbed sun from the south shall beam!” Joyous then was the Jewel-giver, hoar-haired, war-brave; help awaited the Bright-Danes’ prince, from Beowulf hearing, folk’s good shepherd, such firm resolve. Then was laughter of liegemen loud resounding with winsome words. Came Wealhtheow forth, queen of Hrothgar, heedful of courtesy, gold-decked, greeting the guests in hall; and the high-born lady handed the cup first to the East-Danes’ heir and warden, bade him be blithe at the beer-carouse, the land’s beloved one. Lustily took he banquet and beaker, battle-famed king.

Through the hall then went the Helmings’ Lady, to younger and older everywhere carried the cup, till come the moment when the ring-graced queen, the royal-hearted, to Beowulf bore the beaker of mead. She greeted the Geats’ lord, God she thanked, in wisdom’s words, that her will was granted, that at last on a hero her hope could lean for comfort in terrors. The cup he took, hardy-in-war, from Wealhtheow’s hand, and answer uttered the eager-for-combat. Beowulf spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: — “This was my thought, when my thanes and I bent to the ocean and entered our boat, that I would work the will of your people fully, or fighting fall in death, in fiend’s gripe fast. I am firm to do an earl’s brave deed, or end the days of this life of mine in the mead-hall here,” Well these words to the woman seemed, Beowulf’s battle-boast. — Bright with gold
the stately dame by her spouse sat down. 
Again, as erst, began in hall 
wARRIORS' wassail and words of power, 
the proud-band's revel, till presently 
the son of Healfdene hastened to seek 
rest for the night; he knew there waited 
fight for the fiend in that festal hall, 
when the sheen of the sun they saw no more, 
and dusk of night sank darkling nigh, 
and shadowy shapes came striding on, 
wAN UNDER WELKIN. The warriors rose. 
Man to man, he made harangue, 
Hrothgar to Beowulf, bade him hail, 
let him wield the wine hall: a word he added: — 
"Never to any man erst I trusted, 
since I could heave up hand and shield, 
this noble Dane-Hall, till now to thee. 
Have now and hold this house unpeered; 
remember thy glory; thy might declare; 
watch for the foe! No wish shall fail thee 
if thou bidest the battle with bold-won life."

X

THEN Hrothgar went with his hero-train, 
defence-of-Scyldings, forth from hall; 
fain would the war-lord Wealhtheow seek, 
couch of his queen. The King-of-Glory 
against this Grendel a guard had set, 
so heroes heard, a hall-defender, 
who warded the monarch and watched for the monster. 
In truth, the Geats' prince gladly trusted 
his mettle, his might, the mercy of God! 
Cast off then his corselet of iron, 
helmet from head; to his henchman gave, — 
choicest of weapons, — the well-chased sword, 
bidding him guard the gear of battle. 
Spake then his Vaunt the valiant man, 
Beowulf Geat, ere the bed be sought: — 
"Of force in fight no feebler I count me, 
in grim war-deeds, than Grendel deems him. 
Not with the sword, then, to sleep of death 
his life will I give, though it lie in my power. 
No skill is his to strike against me, 
my shield to hew though he Hardy be, 
bold in battle; we both, this night, 
shall spurn the sword, if he seek me here, 
unweaponed, for war. Let wisest God, 
sacred Lord, on which side soever 
doem decree as he deemeth right."

Reclined then the chieftain, and cheek-pillows held 
the head of the earl, while all about him 
seamen hardy on hall-beds sank. 
None of them thought that thence their steps 
to the folk and fastness that fostered them, 
to the land they loved, would lead them back! 
Full well they wist that on warriors many 
battle-death seized, in the banquet-hall, 
of Danish clan. But comfort and help, 
war-weal weaving, to Weder folk
the Master gave, that, by might of one,
over their enemy all prevailed,
by single strength. In sooth 'tis told
that highest God o'er human kind
hath wielded ever! — Thro' wan night striding,
came the walker-in-shadow. Warriors slept
whose hest was to guard the gabled hall, —
all save one. 'Twas widely known
that against God's will the ghostly ravager
him (Note: Beowulf, -- the "one.")) could not hurl to haunts of darkness;
wakeful, ready, with warrior's wrath,
bold he bided the battle's issue.

BEOWULF SECTIONS 11-15

XI

THEN from the moorland, by misty crags,
with God's wrath laden, Grendel came.
The monster was minded of mankind now
sundry to seize in the stately house.
Under welkin he walked, till the wine-palace there,
gold-hall of men, he gladly discerned,
flashling with fretwork. Not first time, this,
that he the home of Hrothgar sought, —
yet ne'er in his life-day, late or early,
such hardy heroes, such hall-thanes, found!
To the house the warrior walked apace,
parted from peace; (Note: That is, he was a "lost soul," doomed to hell.) the portal opended,
though with forged bolts fast, when his fists had
struck it,
and baleful he burst in his blatant rage,
the house's mouth. All hastily, then,
o'er fair-paved floor the fiend trod on,
ireful he strode; there streamed from his eyes
fearful flashes, like flame to see.

He spied in hall the hero-band,
kin and clansmen clustered asleep,
hardy liegemen. Then laughed his heart;
for the monster was minded, ere morn should dawn,
savage, to sever the soul of each,
life from body, since lusty banquet
waited his will! But Wyrd forbade him
to seize any more of men on earth
after that evening. Eagerly watched
Hygelac's kinsman his cursed foe,
how he would fare in fell attack.
Not that the monster was minded to pause!
Straightway he seized a sleeping warrior
for the first, and tore him fiercely asunder,
the bone-frame bit, drank blood in streams,
swallowed him piecemeal: swiftly thus
the lifeless corse was clear devoured,
e’en feet and hands. Then farther he hied;
for the hardy hero with hand he grasped,
felt for the foe with fiendish claw,
for the hero reclining, — who clutchèd it boldly,
prompt to answer, propped on his arm.
Soon then saw that shepherd-of-evils
that never he met in this middle-world,
in the ways of earth, another wight
with heavier hand-gripe; at heart he fearèd,
sorrowèd in soul, — none the sooner escaped!
Fain would he flee, his fastness seek,
the den of devils: no doings now
such as oft he had done in days of old!
Then bethought him the hardy Hygelac-thane
of his boast at evening: up he bounded,
grasped firm his foe, whose fingers cracked.
The fiend made off, but the earl close followed.
The monster meant — if he might at all —
to fling himself free, and far away
fly to the fens, — knew his fingers' power
in the gripe of the grim one. Gruesome march
to Heorot this monster of harm had made!
Din filled the room; the Danes were bereft,
castle-dwellers and clansmen all,
earls, of their ale. Angry were both
those savage hall-guards: the house resounded.
Wonder it was the wine-hall firm
in the strain of their struggle stood, to earth
the fair house fell not; too fast it was
within and without by its iron bands
craftily clamped; though there crashed from sill
many a mead-bench — men have told me —
gay with gold, where the grim foes wrestled.
So well had weened the wisest Scyldings
that not ever at all might any man
that bone-decked, brave house break asunder,
crush by craft, — unless clasp of fire
in smoke engulfed it. — Again uprose
din redoubled. Danes of the North
with fear and frenzy were filled, each one,
who from the wall that wailing heard,
God’s foe sounding his grisly song,
cry of the conquered, clamorous pain
from captive of hell. Too closely held him
he who of men in might was strongest
in that same day of this our life.

XII

NOT in any wise would the earls'-defence (Note: Kenning for Beowulf.)
suffer that slaughterous stranger to live,
useless deeming his days and years
to men on earth. Now many an earl
of Beowulf brandished blade ancestral,
fain the life of their lord to shield,
their praised prince, if power were theirs;
never they knew, — as they neared the foe,
hardy-hearted heroes of war,
aiming their swords on every side
the accursed to kill, — no keenest blade,
no fairest of falchions fashioned on earth,
could harm or hurt that hideous fiend!
He was safe, by his spells, from sword of battle,
from edge of iron. Yet his end and parting
on that same day of this our life
woful should be, and his wandering soul
far off flit to the fiends’ domain.

Soon he found, who in former days,
harmful in heart and hated of God,
on many a man such murder wrought,
that the frame of his body failed him now.
For him the keen-souled kinsman of Hygelac
held in hand; hateful alive
was each to other. The outlaw dire
took mortal hurt; a mighty wound
showed on his shoulder, and sinews cracked,
and the bone-frame burst. To Beowulf now
the glory was given, and Grendel thence
death-sick his den in the dark moor sought,
noisome abode: he knew too well
that here was the last of life, an end
of his days on earth. — To all the Danes
by that bloody battle the boon had come.

From ravage had rescued the roving stranger
Hrothgar’s hall; the hardy and wise one
had purged it anew. His night-work pleased him,
his deed and its honor. To Eastern Danes
had the valiant Geat his vaunt made good,
all their sorrow and ills assuaged,
their bale of battle borne so long,
and all the dole they erst endured
pain a-plenty. — ‘Twas proof of this,
when the hardy-in-fight a hand laid down,
arm and shoulder, — all, indeed,
of Grendel’s gripe, — ‘neath the gabled roof.

XIII

MANY at morning, as men have told me,
warriors gathered the gift-hall round,
folk-leaders faring from far and near,
o’er wide-stretched ways, the wonder to view,
trace of the traitor. Not troublous seemed
the enemy’s end to any man
who saw by the gait of the graceless foe
how the weary-hearted, away from thence,
baffled in battle and banned, his steps
death-marked dragged to the devils’ mere.
Bloody the billows were boiling there,
turbid the tide of tumbling waves
horribly seething, with sword-blood hot,
by that doomed one dyed, who in den of the moor
laid forlorn his life adown,
his heathen soul, and hell received it.
Home then rode the hoary clansmen
from that merry journey, and many a youth,
on horses white, the hardy warriors,
back from the mere. Then Beowulf’s glory
eager they echoed, and all averred
that from sea to sea, or south or north,
there was no other in earth's domain,
under vault of heaven, more valiant found,
of warriors none more worthy to rule!
(On their lord beloved they laid no slight,
gracious Hrothgar: a good king he!)
From time to time, the tried-in-battle
their gray steeds set to gallop amain,
and ran a race when the road seemed fair.
From time to time, a thane of the king,
who had made many vaunts, and was mindful of verses,
stored with sagas and songs of old,
bound word to word in well-knit rime,
welded his lay; this warrior soon
of Beowulf’s quest right cleverly sang,
and artfully added an excellent tale,
in well-ranged words, of the warlike deeds
he had heard in saga of Sigemund.
Strange the story: he said it all, —
the Waelsing’s wanderings wide, his struggles,
which never were told to tribes of men,
the feuds and the frauds, save to Fitela only,
when of these doings he deigned to speak,
uncle to nephew; as ever the twain
stood side by side in stress of war,
and multitude of the monster kind
they had felled with their swords. Of Sigemund grew,
when he passed from life, no little praise;
for the doughty-in-combat a dragon killed
that herded the hoard: (Note: “Guarded the treasure.”) under hoary rock
the atheling dared the deed alone
fearful quest, nor was Fitela there.
Yet so it befell, his falchion pierced
that wondrous worm, — on the wall it struck,
best blade; the dragon died in its blood.
Thus had the dread-one by daring achieved
over the ring-hoard to rule at will,
himself to pleasure; a sea-boat he loaded,
and bore on its bosom the beaming gold,
son of Waels; the worm was consumed.
He had of all heroes the highest renown
among races of men, this refuge-of-warriors,
for deeds of daring that decked his name
since the hand and heart of Heremod
grew slack in battle. He, swiftly banished
to mingle with monsters at mercy of foes,
to death was betrayed; for torrents of sorrow
had lamed him too long; a load of care
to earls and athelings all he proved.
Oft indeed, in earlier days,
for the warrior’s wayfaring wise men mourned,
who had hoped of him help from harm and bale,
and had thought their sovran’s son would thrive,
follow his father, his folk protect,
the hoard and the stronghold, heroes’ land,
home of Scyldings. — But here, thanes said,
the kinsman of Hygelac kinder seemed
to all: the other (Note: Sc. Heremod.) was urged to crime!
And afresh to the race, (Note: The singer has sung his lays, and the epic resumes its story. The time-relations are
not altogether good in this long passage which describes the rejoicings of “the day after”; but the present shift from the riders on the road to the folk at the hall is not very violent, and is of a piece with the general style.) the fallow roads
by swift steeds measured! The morning sun
was climbing higher. Clansmen hastened
to the high-built hall, those hardy-minded,
the wonder to witness. Warden of treasure,
crowned with glory, the king himself,
with stately band from the bride-bower strode;
and with him the queen and her crowd of maidens
measured the path to the mead-house fair.

XIV

HROTHGAR spake, — to the hall he went,
stood by the steps, the steep roof saw,
garnished with gold, and Grendel's hand: —
“For the sight I see to the Sovran Ruler
be speedy thanks! A throng of sorrows
I have borne from Grendel; but God still works
wonder on wonder, the Warden-of-Glory.
It was but now that I never more
for woes that weighed on me waited help
long as I lived, when, laved in blood,
stood sword-gore-stained this stateliest house, —
widespread woe for wise men all,
who had no hope to hinder ever
foes infernal and fiendish sprites
from havoc in hall. This hero now,
by the Wielder's might, a work has done
that not all of us erst could ever do
by wile and wisdom. Lo, well can she say
whoso of women this warrior bore
among sons of men, if still she liveth,
that the God of the ages was good to her
in the birth of her bairn. Now, Beowulf, thee,
of heroes best, I shall heartily love
as mine own, my son; preserve thou ever
this kinship new: thou shalt never lack
wealth of the world that I wield as mine!
Full oft for less have I largess showered,
my precious hoard, on a punier man,
less stout in struggle. Thyself hast now
fulfilled such deeds, that thy fame shall endure
through all the ages. As ever he did,
well may the Wielder reward thee still!"
Beowulf spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: —
“This work of war most willingly
we have fought, this fight, and fearlessly dared
force of the foe. Fain, too, were I
hadst thou but seen himself, what time
the fiend in his trappings tottered to fall!
Swiftly, I thought, in strongest gripe
on his bed of death to bind him down,
that he in the hent of this hand of mine
should breathe his last: but he broke away.
Him I might not — the Maker willed not —
hinder from flight, and firm enough hold
the life-destroyer: too sturdy was he,
the ruthless, in running! For rescue, however,
he left behind him his hand in pledge, arm and shoulder; nor aught of help could the cursed one thus procure at all. None the longer liveth he, loathsome fiend, sunk in his sins, but sorrow holds him tightly grasped in gripe of anguish, in baleful bonds, where bide he must, evil outlaw, such awful doom as the Mighty Maker shall mete him out."

More silent seemed the son of Ecglaf (Note: Unferth, Beowulf’s sometime opponent in the flyting.) in boastful speech of his battle-deeds, since athelings all, through the earl’s great prowess, beheld that hand, on the high roof gazing, foeman’s fingers, — the forepart of each of the sturdy nails to steel was likest, — heathen’s “hand-spear,” hostile warrior’s claw uncanny. ’Twas clear, they said, that him no blade of the brave could touch, how keen soever, or cut away that battle-hand bloody from baneful foe.

XV

THERE was hurry and hest in Heorot now for hands to bedeck it, and dense was the throng of men and women the wine-hall to cleanse, the guest-room to garnish. Gold-gay shone the hangings that were wove on the wall, and wonders many to delight each mortal that looks upon them. Though braced within by iron bands, that building bright was broken sorely; (Note: There is no horrible inconsistency here such as the critics strive and cry about. In spite of the ruin that Grendel and Beowulf had made within the hall, the framework and roof held firm, and swift repairs made the interior habitable. Tapestries were hung on the walls, and willing hands prepared the banquet.) rent were its hinges; the roof alone held safe and sound, when, seared with crime, the fiendish foe his flight essayed, of life despairing. — No light thing that, the flight for safety, — essay it who will! Forced of fate, he shall find his way to the refuge ready for race of man, for soul-possessors, and sons of earth; and there his body on bed of death shall rest after revel. Arrived was the hour when to hall proceeded Healfdene’s son: the king himself would sit to banquet. Ne’er heard I of host in haughtier throng more graciously gathered round giver-of-rings! Bowed then to bench those bearers-of-glory, fain of the feasting. Featly received many a mead-cup the mighty-in-spirit, kinsmen who sat in the sumptuous hall, Hrothgar and Hrothulf. Heorot now was filled with friends; the folk of Scyldings ne’er yet had tried the traitor’s deed. To Beowulf gave the bairn of Healfdene a gold-wove banner, guerdon of triumph, broidered battle-flag, breastplate and helmet; and a splendid sword was seen of many
borne to the brave one. Beowulf took
cup in hall: (Note: From its formal use in other places, this phrase, to take cup in hall, or “on the floor,” would
seem to mean that Beowulf stood up to receive his gifts, drink to the donor, and say thanks.) for such costly gifts
he suffered no shame in that soldier throng.
For I heard of few heroes, in heartier mood,
with four such gifts, so fashioned with gold,
on the ale-bench honoring others thus!
O’er the roof of the helmet high, a ridge,
wound with wires, kept ward o’er the head,
lest the relict-of-files (Note: Kenning for sword.) should fierce invade,
sharp in the strife, when that shielded hero
should go to grapple against his foes.
Then the earls’-defence (Note: Hrothgar. He is also the “refuge of the friends of Ing,” below. Ing belongs to
myth.) on the floor (Note: Horses are frequently led or ridden into the hall where folk sit at banquet: so in
Chaucer’s Squire’s tale, in the ballad of King Estmere, and in the romances.) bade lead
coursers eight, with carven head-gear,
adown the hall: one horse was decked
with a saddle all shining and set in jewels;
’twas the battle-seat of the best of kings,
when to play of swords the son of Healfdene
was fain to fare. Ne’er failed his valor
in the crush of combat when corpses fell.
To Beowulf over them both then gave
the refuge-of-Ingwines right and power,
o’er war-steeds and weapons: wished him joy of them.
Manfully thus the mighty prince,
hoard-guard for heroes, that hard fight repaid
with steeds and treasures contemned by none
who is willing to say the sooth aright.

BEOWULF SECTIONS 16-20

XVI

AND the lord of earls, to each that came
with Beowulf over the briny ways,
an heirloom there at the ale-bench gave,
precious gift; and the price (Note: Man-price, wergild.) bade pay
in gold for him whom Grendel erst
murdered, — and fain of them more had killed,
had not wisest God their Wyrd averted,
and the man’s (Note: Beowulf’s.) brave mood. The Maker then
ruled human kind, as here and now.
Therefore is insight always best,
and forethought of mind. How much awaits him
of lief and of loath, who long time here,
through days of warfare this world endures!

Then song and music mingled sounds
in the presence of Healfdene’s head-of-armies (Note: Hrothgar.)
and harping was heard with the hero-lay
as Hrothgar’s singer the hall-joy woke
along the mead-seats, making his song
of that sudden raid on the sons of Finn. (Note: There is no need to assume a gap in the Ms. As before about
Sigemund and Heremod, so now, though at greater length, about Finn and his feud, a lay is chanted or recited;
and the epic poet, counting on his readers' familiarity with the story, -- a fragment of it still exists, -- simply gives
the headings.)
Healfdene's hero, Hnaef the Scylding,
was fated to fall in the Frisian slaughter. (Note: The exact story to which this episode refers in summary is not to
be determined, but the following account of it is reasonable and has good support among scholars. Finn, a Frisian
chieftain, who nevertheless has a "castle" outside the Frisian border, marries Hildeburh, a Danish princess; and
her brother, Hnaef, with many other Danes, pays Finn a visit. Relations between the two peoples have been
strained before. Something starts the old feud anew; and the visitors are attacked in their quarters. Hnaef is killed;
so is a son of Hildeburh. Many fall on both sides. Peace is patched up; a stately funeral is held; and the surviving
visitors become in a way vassals or liegemen of Finn, going back with him to Frisia. So matters rest a while.
Hengest is now leader of the Danes; but he is set upon revenge for his former lord, Hnaef. Probably he is killed in
feud; but his clansmen, Guthlaf and Oslaf, gather at their home a force of sturdy Danes, come back to Frisia,
storm Finn's stronghold, kill him, and carry back their kinswoman Hildeburh.)
Hildeburh needed not hold in value
her enemies' honor! (Note: The "enemies" must be the Frisians.) Innocent both
were the loved ones she lost at the linden-play,
bairn and brother, they bowed to fate,
stricken by spears; 'twas a sorrowful woman!
None doubted why the daughter of Hoc
bewailed her doom when dawning came,
and under the sky she saw them lying,
kinsmen murdered, where most she had kenned
of the sweets of the world! By war were swept, too,
Finn's own liegemen, and few were left;
in the parleying-place (Note: Battlefield. -- Hengest is the "prince's thane," companion of Hnaef. "Folcwald's son"
is Finn.) he could ply no longer
weapon, nor war could he wage on Hengest,
and rescue his remnant by right of arms
from the prince's thane. A pact he offered:
another dwelling the Danes should have,
hall and high-seat, and half the power
should fall to them in Frisian land;
and at the fee-gifts, Folcwald's son
day by day the Danes should honor,
the folk of Hengest favor with rings,
even as truly, with treasure and jewels,
with fretted gold, as his Frisian kin
he meant to honor in ale-hall there.
Pact of peace they plighted further
on both sides firmly. Finn to Hengest
with oath, upon honor, openly promised
that woful remnant, with wise-men's aid,
nobly to govern, so none of the guests
by word or work should warp the treaty, (Note: That is, Finn would govern in all honor the few Danish warriors
who were left, provided, of course, that none of them tried to renew the quarrel or avenge Hnaef their fallen lord.
If, again, one of Finn's Frisians began a quarrel, he should die by the sword.)
or with malice of mind bemoan themselves
as forced to follow their fee-giver's slayer,
lordless men, as their lot ordained.
Should Frisian, moreover, with foeman's taunt,
that murderous hatred to mind recall,
then edge of the sword must seal his doom.

Oaths were given, and ancient gold
heaped from hoard. — The hardy Scylding,
battle-thane best, (Note: Hnaef,) on his balefire lay.
All on the pyre were plain to see
the gory sark, the gilded swine-crest,
boar of hard iron, and athelings many
slain by the sword: at the slaughter they fell.
It was Hildeburh’s hest, at Hnaef’s own pyre
the bairn of her body on brands to lay,
his bones to burn, on the balefire placed,
at his uncle’s side. In sorrowful dirges
bewept them the woman: great wailing ascended.
Then wound up to welkin the wildest of death-fires,
roared o’er the hillock. (Note: The high place chosen for the funeral: see description of Beowulf’s funeral-pile at
the end of the poem.) heads all were melted,
gashes burst, and blood gushed out
from bites (Note: Wounds.) of the body. Balefire devoured,
greediest spirit, those spared not by war
out of either folk: their flower was gone.

XVII

THEN hastened those heroes their home to see,
friendless, to find the Frisian land,
houses and high burg. Hengest still
through the death-dyed winter dwelt with Finn,
holding pact, yet of home he minded,
though powerless his ring-decked prow to drive
over the waters, now waves rolled fierce
lashed by the winds, or winter locked them
in icy fetters. Then fared another
year to men’s dwellings, as yet they do,
the sunbright skies, that their season ever
duly await. Far off winter was driven;
fair lay earth’s breast; and fain was the rover,
the guest, to depart, though more gladly he pondered
on wreaking his vengeance than roaming the deep,
and how to hasten the hot encounter
where sons of the Frisians were sure to be.
So he escaped not the common doom,
when Hun with “Lafing,” the light-of-battle,
best of blades, his bosom pierced:
its edge was famed with the Frisian earls.
On fierce-heart Finn there fell likewise,
on himself at home, the horrid sword-death;
for Guthlaf and Oslaf of grim attack
had sorrowing told, from sea-ways landed,
mourning their woes. (Note: That is, these two Danes, escaping home, had told the story of the attack on Hnaef,
the slaying of Hengest, and all the Danish woes. Collecting a force, they return to Frisia and kill Finn in his
home.) Finn’s wavering spirit
bode not in breast. The burg was reddened
with blood of foemen, and Finn was slain,
king amid clansmen; the queen was taken.
To their ship the Scylding warriors bore
all the chattels the chieftain owned,
whatever they found in Finn’s domain
of gems and jewels. The gentle wife
o’er paths of the deep to the Danes they bore,
led to her land.
The lay was finished,
the gleeman’s song. Then glad rose the revel;
bench-joy brightened. Bearers draw
from their “wonder-vats” wine. Comes Wealtheow forth,
under gold-crown goes where the good pair sit,
uncle and nephew, true each to the other one, 
kindred in amity. Unferth the spokesman 
at the Scylding lord’s feet sat: men had faith in his spirit, 
his keenness of courage, though kinsmen had found him 
unsure at the sword-play. The Scylding queen spoke:
“Quaff of this cup, my king and lord, 
breaker of rings, and blithe be thou, 
gold-friend of men; to the Geats here speak 
such words of mildness as man should use. 
Be glad with thy Geats; of those gifts be mindful, 
or near or far, which now thou hast.

Men say to me, as son thou wishest 
yon hero to hold. Thy Heorot purged, 
jewel-hall brightest, enjoy while thou canst, 
with many a largess; and leave to thy kin 
folk and realm when forth thou goest 
to greet thy doom. For gracious I deem 
my Hrothulf, (Note: Nephew to Hrothgar, with whom he subsequently quarrels, and elder cousin to the two young 
sons of Hrothgar and Wealhtheow, -- their natural guardian in the event of the king’s death. There is something 
finely feminine in this speech of Wealhtheow’s, apart from its somewhat irregular and irrelevant sequence of 
topics. Both she and her lord probably distrust Hrothulf; but she bids the king to be of good cheer, and, turning to 
the suspect, heaps affectionate assurances on his probity. “My own Hrothulf” will surely not forget these favors 
and benefits of the past, but will repay them to the orphaned boy.) willing to hold and rule 
nobly our youths, if thou yield up first, 
prince of Scyldings, thy part in the world. 
I ween with good he will well requite 
offspring of ours, when all he minds 
that for him we did in his helpless days 
of gift and grace to gain him honor!”

Then she turned to the seat where her sons were placed, 
Hrethric and Hrothmund, with heroes’ bairns, 
young men together: the Geat, too, sat there, 
Beowulf brave, the brothers between.

XVIII

A CUP she gave him, with kindly greeting 
and winsome words. Of wounden gold, 
she offered, to honor him, arm-jewels twain, 
corselet and rings, and of collars the noblest 
that ever I knew the earth around. 
Ne’er heard I so mighty, ‘neath heaven’s dome, 
a hoard-gem of heroes, since Hama bore 
to his bright-built burg the Brisings’ necklace, 
jewel and gem casket. — Jealousy fled he, 
Eormenric’s hate: chose help eternal. 
Hygelac Geat, grandson of Swerting, 
on the last of his raids this ring bore with him, 
under his banner the booty defending, 
the war-spoil warding; but Wyrd o’erwhelmed him 
what time, in his daring, dangers he sought, 
feud with Frisians. Fairest of gems 
he bore with him over the beaker-of-waves, 
sovran strong: under shield he died. 
Fell the corpse of the king into keeping of Franks, 
gear of the breast, and that gorgeous ring; 
weaker warriors won the spoil, 
after gripe of battle, from Geatland’s lord, 
and held the death-field. 
Din rose in hall.
Wealhtheow spake amid warriors, and said: —

“This jewel enjoy in thy jocund youth,
Beowulf lov’d, these battle-weeds wear,
a royal treasure, and richly thrive!
Preserve thy strength, and these striplings here
counsel in kindness: requital be mine.
Hast done such deeds, that for days to come
thou art famed among folk both far and near,
so wide as washeth the wave of Ocean
his windy walls. Through the ways of life
prosper, O prince! I pray for thee
rich possessions. To son of mine
be helpful in deed and uphold his joys!
Here every earl to the other is true,
mild of mood, to the master loyal!
Thanes are friendly, the throng obedient,
liegemen are revelling: list and obey!”

Went then to her place. — That was proudest of feasts;
flowed wine for the warriors. Wyrd they knew not,
destiny dire, and the doom to be seen
by many an earl when eve should come,
and Hrothgar homeward hasten away,
royal, to rest. The room was guarded
by an army of earls, as erst was done.
They bared the bench-boards; abroad they spread
beds and bolsters. — One beer-carouser
in danger of doom lay down in the hall. —

At their heads they set their shields of war,
bucklers bright; on the bench were there
over each atheling, easy to see,
the high battle-helmet, the haughty spear,
the corselet of rings. ’Twas their custom so
ever to be for battle prepared,
at home, or harrying, which it were,
even as oft as evil threatened
their sovran king. — They were clansmen good.

XIX

THEN sank they to sleep. With sorrow one bought
his rest of the evening, — as ofttime had happened
when Grendel guarded that golden hall,
evil wrought, till his end drew nigh,
slaughter for sins. ’Twas seen and told
how an avenger survived the fiend,
as was learned afar. The livelong time
after that grim fight, Grendel’s mother,
monster of women, mourned her woe.
She was doomed to dwell in the dreary waters,
cold sea-courses, since Cain cut down
with edge of the sword his only brother,
his father’s offspring: outlawed he fled,
marked with murder, from men’s delights
warded the wilds. — There woke from him
such fate-sent ghosts as Grendel, who,
war-wolf horrid, at Heorot found
a warrior watching and waiting the fray,
with whom the grisly one grappled amain.
But the man remembered his mighty power,
the glorious gift that God had sent him,
in his Maker's mercy put his trust
for comfort and help: so he conquered the foe,
felld the fiend, who fled abject,
reft of joy, to the realms of death,
mankind's foe. And his mother now,
gloomy and grim, would go that quest
of sorrow, the death of her son to avenge.
To Heorot came she, where helmeted Danes
slept in the hall. Too soon came back
old ills of the earls, when in she burst,
the mother of Grendel. Less grim, though, that terror,
e'en as terror of woman in war is less,
might of maid, than of men in arms
when, hammer-forged, the falchion hard,
sword gore-stained, through swine of the helm,
crested, with keen blade carves amain.
Then was in hall the hard-edge drawn,
the swords on the settles, (Note: They had laid their arms on the benches near where they slept,) and shields a-
many
firm held in hand: nor helmet minded
nor harness of mail, whom that horror seized.
Haste was hers; she would hie afar
and save her life when the liegemen saw her.
Yet a single atheling up she seized
fast and firm, as she fled to the moor.
He was for Hrothgar of heroes the dearest,
of trusty vassals betwixt the seas,
whom she killed on his couch, a clansman famous,
in battle brave. — Nor was Beowulf there;
another house had been held apart,
after giving of gold, for the Geat renowned. —
Uproar filled Heorot; the hand all had viewed,
blood-flecked, she bore with her; bale was returned,
dole in the dwellings: 'twas dire exchange
where Dane and Geat were doomed to give
the lives of loved ones. Long-tried king,
the hoary hero, at heart was sad
when he knew his noble no more lived,
and dead indeed was his dearest thane.
To his bower was Beowulf brought in haste,
dauntless victor. As daylight broke,
along with his earls the atheling lord,
with his clansmen, came where the king abode
waiting to see if the Wielder-of-All
would turn this tale of trouble and woe.
Strode o'er floor the famed-in-strife,
with his hand-companions, — the hall resounded, —
wishing to greet the wise old king,
Ingwines' lord; he asked if the night
had passed in peace to the prince's mind.

XX

HROTHGAR spake, helmet-of-Scyldings: —
"Ask not of pleasure! Pain is renewed
to Danish folk. Dead is Aeschere,
of Yrmenlaf the elder brother,
my sage adviser and stay in council,
shoulder-comrade in stress of fight
when warriors clashed and we warded our heads,
hewed the helm-boars; hero famed
should be every earl as Aeschere was!
But here in Heorot a hand hath slain him
of wandering death-sprite. I wot not whither,
(Note: He surmises presently where she is.)
proud of the prey, her path she took,
fain of her fill. The feud she avenged
that yesternight, unyieldingly,
Grendel in grimmest grasp thou killedst, —
seeing how long these liegemen mine
he ruined and ravaged. Reft of life,
in arms he fell. Now another comes,
keen and cruel, her kin to avenge,
farin far in feud of blood:
so that many a thane shall think, who e’er
sorrows in soul for that sharer of rings,
this is hardest of heart-bales. The hand lies low
that once was willing each wish to please.
Land-dwellers here (Note: The connection is not difficult. The words of mourning, of acute grief, are said; and
according to Germanic sequence of thought, inexorable here, the next and only topic is revenge. But is it
possible? Hrothgar leads up to his appeal and promise with a skillful and often effective description of the horrors
which surround the monster’s home and await the attempt of an avenging foe.) and liegemen mine,
who house by those parts, I have heard relate
that such a pair they have sometimes seen,
march-stalkers mighty the moorland haunting,
wandering spirits: one of them seemed,
so far as my folk could fairly judge,
of womankind; and one, accursed,
in man’s guise trod the misery-track
of exile, though huger than human bulk.
Grendel in days long gone they named him,
folk of the land; his father they knew not,
nor any brood that was born to him
of treacherous spirits. Untrod is their home;
by wolf-cliffs haunt they and windy headlands,
tenways fearful, where flows the stream
from mountains gliding to gloom of the rocks,
underground flood. Not far is it hence
in measure of miles that the mere expands,
and o’er it the frost-bound forest hanging,
sturdily rooted, shadows the wave.
By night is a wonder weird to see,
fire on the waters. So wise lived none
of the sons of men, to search those depths!
Nay, though the heath-rover, harried by dogs,
the horn-proud hart, this holt should seek,
long distance driven, his dear life first
on the brink he yields ere he brave the plunge
to hide his head: ’tis no happy place!
Thence the welter of waters washes up
wan to welkin when winds bestir
evil storms, and air grows dusk,
and the heavens weep. Now is help once more
with thee alone! The land thou knowst not,
place of fear, where thou findest out
that sin-flecked being. Seek if thou dare!
I will reward thee, for waging this fight,
with ancient treasure, as erst I did,
with winding gold, if thou winnest back."
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that yesternight, unyieldingly,
Grendel in grimmest grasp thou killedst, —
seeing how long these liegemen mine
he ruined and ravaged. Reft of life,
in arms he fell. Now another comes,
keen and cruel, her kin to avenge,
faring far in feud of blood:
so that many a thane shall think, who e’er
sorrows in soul for that sharer of rings,
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who house by those parts, I have heard relate
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of womankind; and one, accursed,
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by wolf-cliffs haunt they and windy headlands,
fenways fearful, where flows the stream
from mountains gliding to gloom of the rocks,
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and o’er it the frost-bound forest hanging,
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long distance driven, his dear life first 
on the brink he yields ere he brave the plunge 
to hide his head: 'tis no happy place!
Thence the welter of waters washes up 
wan to welkin when winds bestir 
evil storms, and air grows dusk, 
and the heavens weep. Now is help once more 
with thee alone! The land thou knowst not, 
place of fear, where thou findest out 
that sin-flecked being. Seek if thou dare!
I will reward thee, for waging this fight, 
with ancient treasure, as erst I did, 
with winding gold, if thou winnest back."

XXI

BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow:
“Sorrow not, sage! It beseems us better 
friends to avenge than fruitlessly mourn them. 
Each of us all must his end abide 
in the ways of the world; so win who may 
glory ere death! When his days are told, 
that is the warrior’s worthiest doom. 
Rise, O realm-warder! Ride we anon, 
and mark the trail of the mother of Grendel.
No harbor shall hide her — heed my promise! — 
enfolding of field or forested mountain 
or floor of the flood, let her flee where she will! 
But thou this day endure in patience, 
as I ween thou wilt, thy woes each one.”
Leaped up the graybeard: God he thanked, 
mighty Lord, for the man’s brave words.
For Hrothgar soon a horse was saddled 
wave-maned steed. The sovran wise 
stately rode on; his shield-armed men 
followed in force. The footprints led 
along the woodland, widely seen, 
a path o’er the plain, where she passed, and trod 
the murky moor; of men-at-arms 
she bore the bravest and best one, dead, 
him who with Hrothgar the homestead ruled. 
On then went the atheling-born 
o’er stone-cliffs steep and strait defiles, 
narrow passes and unknown ways, 
headlands sheer, and the haunts of the Nicors. 
Foremost he (Note: Hrothgar is probably meant.) fared, a few at his side 
of the wiser men, the ways to scan, 
till he found in a flash the forested hill 
hanging over the hoary rock, 
a woful wood: the waves below 
were dyed in blood. The Danish men 
had sorrow of soul, and for Scyldings all, 
for many a hero, ’twas hard to bear, 
il for earls, when Aeschere’s head 
they found by the flood on the foreland there.
Waves were welling, the warriors saw, hot with blood; but the horn sang oft battle-song bold. The band sat down, and watched on the water worm-like things, sea-dragons strange that sounded the deep, and nicors that lay on the ledge of the ness — such as oft essay at hour of morn on the road-of-sails their ruthless quest, — and sea-snakes and monsters. These started away, swollen and savage that song to hear, that war-horn’s blast. The warden of Geats, with bolt from bow, then balked of life, of wave-work, one monster, amid its heart went the keen war-shaft; in water it seemed less doughty in swimming whom death had seized. Swift on the billows, with boar-spears well hooked and barbed, it was hard beset, done to death and dragged on the headland, wave-roamer wondrous. Warriors viewed the grisly guest.

Then girt him Beowulf in martial mail, nor mourned for his life. His breastplate broad and bright of hues, woven by hand, should the waters try; well could it ward the warrior’s body that battle should break on his breast in vain nor harm his heart by the hand of a foe.

And the helmet white that his head protected was destined to dare the deeps of the flood, through wave-whirl win: ‘twas wound with chains, decked with gold, as in days of yore the weapon-smith worked it wondrously, with swine-forms set it, that swords nowise, brandished in battle, could bite that helm. Nor was that the meanest of mighty helps which Hrothgar’s orator offered at need: “Hrunting” they named the hilted sword, of old-time heirlooms easily first; iron was its edge, all etched with poison, with battle-blood hardened, nor blenched it at fight in hero’s hand who held it ever, on paths of peril prepared to go to folkstead (Note: Meeting place.) of foes. Not first time this it was destined to do a daring task. For he bore not in mind, the bairn of Ecglaf sturdy and strong, that speech he had made, drunk with wine, now this weapon he lent to a stouter swordsman. Himself, though, durst not under welter of waters wager his life as loyal liegeman. So lost he his glory, honor of earls. With the other not so, who girded him now for the grim encounter.

XXII

BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: — “Have mind, thou honored offspring of Healfdene gold-friend of men, now I go on this quest, sovran wise, what once was said: if in thy cause it came that I
should lose my life, thou wouldst loyal bide
to me, though fallen, in father’s place!
Be guardian, thou, to this group of my thanes,
my warrior-friends, if War should seize me;
and the goodly gifts thou gavest me,
Hrothgar beloved, to Hygelac send!
Geatland’s king may ken by the gold,
Hrethel’s son see, when he stares at the treasure,
that I got me a friend for goodness famed,
and joyed while I could in my jewel-bestower.
And let Unferth wield this wondrous sword,
earl far-honored, this heirloom precious,
hard of edge: with Hrunting I
seek doom of glory, or Death shall take me.”

After these words the Weder-Geat lord
boldly hastened, biding never
answer at all: the ocean floods
closed o’er the hero. Long while of the day
fled ere he felt the floor of the sea.

Soon found the fiend who the flood-domain
sword-hungry held these hundred winters,
greedy and grim, that some guest from above,
some man, was raiding her monster-realm.
She grasped out for him with grisly claws,
and the warrior seized; yet scathed she not
his body hale; the breastplate hindered,
as she strove to shatter the sark of war,
the linked harness, with loathsome hand.
Then bore this brine-wolf, when bottom she touched,
the lord of rings to the lair she haunted
whiles vainly he strove, though his valor held,
weapon to wield against wondrous monsters
that sore beset him; sea-beasts many
tried with fierce tusks to tear his mail,
and swarmed on the stranger. But soon he marked
he was now in some hall, he knew not which,
where water never could work him harm,
nor through the roof could reach him ever
fangs of the flood. Firelight he saw,
beams of a blaze that brightly shone.
Then the warrior was ware of that wolf-of-the-deep,
mere-wife monstrous. For mighty stroke
he swung his blade, and the blow withheld not.
Then sang on her head that seemly blade
its war-song wild. But the warrior found
the light-of-battle (Note: Kenning for “sword.” Hrunting is bewitched, laid under a spell of uselessness, along with
all other swords.) was loath to bite,
to harm the heart: its hard edge failed
the noble at need, yet had known of old
strife hand to hand, and had helmets cloven,
doomed men’s fighting-gear. First time, this,
for the gleaming blade that its glory fell.
Firm still stood, nor failed in valor,
heedful of high deeds, Hygelac’s kinsman;
flung away fretted sword, fealty jewelled,
the angry earl; on earth it lay
steel-edged and stiff. His strength he trusted,
hand-gripe of might. So man shall do
whenever in war he weens to earn him
lasting fame, nor fears for his life!
Seized then by shoulder, shrank not from combat,
the Geatish war-prince Grendel's mother.
Flung then the fierce one, filled with wrath,
his deadly foe, that she fell to ground.
Swift on her part she paid him back
with grisly grasp, and grappled with him.
Spent with struggle, stumbled the warrior,
fiercest of fighting-men, fell adown.
On the hall-guest she hurled herself, hent her short sword,
broad and brown-edged, (Note: This brown of swords, evidently meaning burnished, bright, continues to be a
favorite adjective in the popular ballads.) the bairn to avenge,
the sole-born son. — On his shoulder lay
braided breast-mail, barring death,
withstanding entrance of edge or blade.
Life would have ended for Ecgtheow's son,
under wide earth for that earl of Geats,
had his armor of war not aided him,
battle-net hard, and holy God
wielded the victory, wisest Maker.
The Lord of Heaven allowed his cause;
and easily rose the earl erect.

XXIII

'MID the battle-gear saw he a blade triumphant,
old-sword of Eotens, with edge of proof,
warriors' heirloom, weapon unmatched,
— save only 'twas more than other men
to bandy-of-battle could bear at all —
as the giants had wrought it, ready and keen.
Seized then its chain-hilt the Scyldings' chieftain,
bold and battle-grim, brandished the sword,
reckless of life, and so wrathfully smote
that it gripped her neck and grasped her hard,
her bone-rings breaking: the blade pierced through
that fated-one's flesh: to floor she sank.
Bloody the blade: he was blithe of his deed.
Then blazed forth light. 'Twas bright within
as when from the sky there shines unclouded
heaven's candle. The hall he scanned.
By the wall then went he; his weapon raised
high by its hilts the Hygelac-thane,
angry and eager. That edge was not useless
to the warrior now. He wished with speed
Grendel to guerdon for grim raids many,
for the war he waged on Western-Danes
oftener far than an only time,
when of Hrothgar's hearth-companions
he slew in slumber, in sleep devoured,
fifteen men of the folk of Danes,
and as many others outward bore,
his horrible prey. Well paid for that
the wrathful prince! For now prone he saw
Grendel stretched there, spent with war,
spoiled of life, so scathed had left him
Heorot's battle. The body sprang far
when after death it endured the blow,
sword-stroke savage, that severed its head.
Soon, (Note: After the killing of the monster and Grendel's decapitation.) then, saw the sage companions
who waited with Hrothgar, watching the flood,
that the tossing waters turbid grew,
blood-stained the mere. Old men together,
hoary-haired, of the hero spake;
the warrior would not, they weened, again,
proud of conquest, come to seek
their mighty master. To many it seemed
the wolf-of-the-waves had won his life.
The ninth hour came. The noble Scyldings
left the headland; homeward went
the gold-friend of men. (Note: Hrothgar.) But the guests sat on,
stared at the surges, sick in heart,
and wished, yet weened not, their winsome lord
again to see.

Now that sword began,
from blood of the fight, in battle-droppings, (Note: The blade slowly dissolves in blood-stained drops like icicles.)
war-blade, to wane: ’twas a wondrous thing
that all of it melted as ice is wont
when frosty fetters the Father loosens,
unwinds the wave-bonds, wielding all
seasons and times: the true God he!
Nor took from that dwelling the duke of the Geats
save only the head and that hilt withal
blazoned with jewels: the blade had melted,
burned was the bright sword, her blood was so hot,
so poisoned the hell-sprite who perished within there.
Soon he was swimming who safe saw in combat
downfall of demons: up-dove through the flood.
The clashing waters were cleansed now,
waste of waves, where the wandering fiend
her life-days left and this lapsing world.
Swam then to strand the sailors'-refuge,
sturdy-in-spirit, of sea-booty glad,
of burden brave he bore with him.
Went then to greet him, and God they thanked,
the thane-band choice of their chieftain blithe,
that safe and sound they could see him again.
Soon from the hardy one helmet and armor
deftly they doffed: now drowsed the mere,
water ’neath welkin, with war-blood stained.
Forth they fared by the footpaths thence,
merry at heart the highways measured,
well-known roads. Courageous men
carried the head from the cliff by the sea,
an arduous task for all the band,
the firm in fight, since four were needed
on the shaft-of-slaughter (Note: Spear.) strenuously
to bear to the gold-hall Grendel's head.
So presently to the palace there
foemen fearless, fourteen Geats,
marching came. Their master-of-clan
mighty amid them the meadow-ways trod.
Strode then within the sovran thane
fearless in fight, of fame renowned,
hardy hero, Hrothgar to greet.
And next by the hair into hall was borne
Grendel's head, where the henchmen were drinking,
an awe to clan and queen alike,
a monster of marvel: the men looked on.
BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: —

"Lo, now, this sea-booty, son of Healfdene,
Lord of Scyldings, we've lustily brought thee,
sign of glory; thou seest it here.
Not lightly did I with my life escape!
In war under water this work I essayed
with endless effort; and even so
my strength had been lost had the Lord not shielded me.
Not a whit could I with Hrunting do
in work of war, though the weapon is good;
yet a sword the Sovran of Men vouchsafed me
to spy on the wall there, in splendor hanging,
old, gigantic, — how oft He guides
the friendless wight! — and I fought with that brand,
felling in fight, since fate was with me,
the house's wardens. That war-sword then
all burned, bright blade, when the blood gushed o'er it,
battle-sweat hot; but the hilt I brought back
from my foes. So avenged I their fiendish deeds
death-fall of Danes, as was due and right.
And this is my hest, that in Heorot now
safe thou canst sleep with thy soldier band,
and every thane of all thy folk
both old and young; no evil fear,
Scyldings' lord, from that side again,
aught ill for thy earls, as erst thou must!"

Then the golden hilt, for that gray-haired leader,
hoary hero, in hand was laid,
giant-wrought, old. So owned and enjoyed it
after downfall of devils, the Danish lord,
wonder-smiths' work, since the world was rid
of that grim-souled fiend, the foe of God,
murder-marked, and his mother as well.
Now it passed into power of the people's king,
best of all that the oceans bound
who have scattered their gold o'er Scandia's isle.
Hrothgar spake — the hilt he viewed,
heirloom old, where was etched the rise
of that far-off fight when the floods o'erwhelmed,
raging waves, the race of giants
(fearful their fate!), a folk estranged
from God Eternal: whence guerdon due
in that waste of waters the Wielder paid them.
So on the guard of shining gold
in runic staves it was rightly said
for whom the serpent-traced sword was wrought,
best of blades, in bygone days,
and the hilt well wound. — The wise-one spake,
son of Healfdene; silent were all: —
"Lo, so may he say who sooth and right
follows 'mid folk, of far times mindful,
a land-warden old, (Note: That is, "whoever has as wide authority as I have and can remember so far back so many instances of heroism, may well say, as I say, that no better hero ever lived than Beowulf.") that this earl belongs
to the better breed! So, borne aloft,
thy fame must fly, O friend my Beowulf,
far and wide o'er folksteads many. Firmly thou
shall all maintain,
mighty strength with mood of wisdom. Love of mine will I assure thee,
as, awhile ago, I promised; thou shalt prove a stay in future,
in far-off years, to folk of thine, to the heroes a help. Was not Heremod thus
to offspring of Ecgwela, Honor-Scyldings, nor grew for their grace, but for grisly slaughter, for doom of death to the Danishmen.

He slew, wrath-swollen, his shoulder-comrades, companions at board! So he passed alone, chieftain haughty, from human cheer. Though him the Maker with might endowed, delights of power, and uplifted high above all men, yet blood-fierce his mind, his breast-hoard, grew, no bracelets gave he to Danes as was due; he endured all joyless strain of struggle and stress of woe, long feud with his folk. Here find thy lesson! Of virtue advise thee! This verse I have said for thee, wise from lapsed winters. Wondrous seems how to sons of men Almighty God in the strength of His spirit sends wisdom, estate, high station: He swayeth all things. Whiles He letteth right lustily fare the heart of the hero of high-born race, — in seat ancestral assigns him bliss, his folk's sure fortress in fee to hold, puts in his power great parts of the earth, empire so ample, that end of it this wanter-of-wisdom weeneth none. So he waxes in wealth, nowise can harm him illness or age; no evil cares shadow his spirit; no sword-hate threatens from ever an enemy: all the world wends at his will, no worse he knoweth, till all within him obstinate pride waxes and wakes while the warden slumbers, the spirit's sentry; sleep is too fast which masters his might, and the murderer nears, stealthily shooting the shafts from his bow!

XXV

"UNDER harness his heart then is hit indeed by sharpest shafts; and no shelter avails from foul behest of the hellish fiend. (Note: That is, he is now undefended by conscience from the temptations (shafts) of the devil,)

Him seems too little what long he possessed. Greedy and grim, no golden rings he gives for his pride; the promised future forgets he and spurns, with all God has sent him, Wonder-Wielder, of wealth and fame. Yet in the end it ever comes that the frame of the body fragile yields, fated falls; and there follows another who joyously the jewels divides, the royal riches, nor recks of his forebear. Ban, then, such baleful thoughts, Beowulf dearest, best of men, and the better part choose,
profit eternal; and temper thy pride,
warrior famous! The flower of thy might
lasts now a while: but ere long it shall be
that sickness or sword thy strength shall minish,
or fang of fire, or flooding billow,
or bite of blade, or brandished spear,
or odious age; or the eyes' clear beam
wax dull and darken: Death even thee
in haste shall o'erwhelm, thou hero of war!

So the Ring-Danes these half-years a hundred I ruled,
wielded 'neath welkin, and warded them bravely
from mighty-ones many o'er middle-earth,
from spear and sword, till it seemed for me
no foe could be found under fold of the sky.
Lo, sudden the shift! To me seated secure
came grief for joy when Grendel began
to harry my home, the hellish foe;
for those ruthless raids, unresting I suffered
heart-sorrow heavy. Heaven be thanked,
Lord Eternal, for life extended
that I on this head all hewn and bloody,
after long evil, with eyes may gaze!
— Go to the bench now! Be glad at banquet,
warrior worthy! A wealth of treasure
at dawn of day, be dealt between us!"
Glad was the Geats' lord, going betimes
to seek his seat, as the Sage commanded.
Afresh, as before, for the famed-in-battle,
for the band of the hall, was a banquet dight
nobly anew. The Night-Helm darkened
dusk o'er the drinkers.
The doughty ones rose:
for the hoary-headed would hasten to rest,
aged Scylding; and eager the Geat,
shield-fighter sturdy, for sleeping yearned.
Him wander-weary, warrior-guest
from far, a hall-thane heralded forth,
who by custom courtly cared for all
needs of a thane as in those old days
warrior-wanderers wont to have.
So slumbered the stout-heart. Stately the hall
rose gabled and gilt where the guest slept on
till a raven black the rapture-of-heaven (Note: Kenning for the sun. -- This is a strange role for the raven. He is the warrior's bird of battle, exults in slaughter and carnage; his joy here is a compliment to the sunrise.)
blithe-heart boded. Bright came flying
shine after shadow. The swordsmen hastened,
athelings all were eager homeward
forth to fare; and far from thence
the great-hearted guest would guide his keel.
Bade then the hardy-one Hrunting be brought
to the son of Ecglaf, the sword bade him take,
excellent iron, and uttered his thanks for it,
quoth that he counted it keen in battle,
"war-friend" winsome: with words he slandered not
edge of the blade: 'twas a big-hearted man!
Now eager for parting and armed at point
warriors waited, while went to his host
that Darling of Danes. The doughty atheling
to high-seat hastened and Hrothgar greeted.
BEOWULF SECTIONS 26-30

XXVI

BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: —
"Lo, we seafarers say our will,
far-come men, that we fain would seek Hygelac now. We here have found
hosts to our heart: thou hast harbored us well.
If ever on earth I am able to win me
more of thy love, O lord of men,
aught anew, than I now have done,
for work of war I am willing still!
If it come to me ever across the seas
that neighbor foemen annoy and fright thee, —
as they that hate thee erewhile have used, —
thousands then of thanes I shall bring,
heroes to help thee. Of Hygelac I know,
ward of his folk, that, though few his years,
the lord of the Geats will give me aid
by word and by work, that well I may serve thee,
wielding the war-wood to win thy triumph
and lending thee might when thou lackest men.
If thy Hrethric should come to court of Geats, a sovran’s son, he will surely there
find his friends. A far-off land
each man should visit who vaunts him brave.”
Him then answering, Hrothgar spake: —
“These words of thine the wisest God
sent to thy soul! No sager counsel
from so young in years e’er yet have I heard.
Thou art strong of main and in mind art wary,
art wise in words! I ween indeed
if ever it hap that Hrethel’s heir
by spear be seized, by sword-grim battle,
by illness or iron, thine elder and lord,
people’s leader, — and life be thine, —
no seemlier man will the Sea-Geats find
at all to choose for their chief and king,
for hoard-guard of heroes, if hold thou wilt
thy kinsman’s kingdom! Thy keen mind pleases me
the longer the better, Beowulf loved!

Thou hast brought it about that both our peoples,
sons of the Geat and Spear-Dane folk,
shall have mutual peace, and from murderous strife,
such as once they waged, from war refrain.
Long as I rule this realm so wide,
let our hoards be common, let heroes with gold
each other greet o’er the gannet’s-bath,
and the ringed-prow bear o’er rolling waves
tokens of love. I trow my landfolk
towards friend and foe are firmly joined,
and honor they keep in the olden way.
To him in the hall, then, Healfdene’s son
gave treasures twelve, and the trust-of-earls
bade him fare with the gifts to his folk beloved,
hale to his home, and in haste return.
Then kissed the king of kin renowned,
Scyldings’ chieftain, that choicest thane,
and fell on his neck. Fast flowed the tears
of the hoary-headed. Heavy with winters,
he had chances twain, but he clung to this, (Note: That is, he might or might not see Beowulf again. Old as he
was, the latter chance was likely; but he clung to the former, hoping to see his young friend again “and exchange
brave words in the hall.”) —
that each should look on the other again,
and hear him in hall. Was this hero so dear to him.
his breast’s wild billows he banned in vain;
safe in his soul a secret longing,
locked in his mind, for that loved man
burned in his blood. Then Beowulf strode,
glad of his gold-gifts, the grass-plot o’er,
warrior blithe. The wave-roamer bode
riding at anchor, its owner awaiting.
As they hastened onward, Hrothgar’s gift
they lauded at length. — ’Twas a lord unpeered,
every way blameless, till age had broken
— it spareth no mortal — his splendid might.

XXVII

CAME now to ocean the ever-courageous
hardy henchmen, their harness bearing,
woven war-sarks. The warden marked,
trusty as ever, the earl’s return.
From the height of the hill no hostile words
reached the guests as he rode to greet them;
but “Welcome!” he called to that Weder clan
as the sheen-mailed spoilers to ship marched on.
Then on the strand, with steeds and treasure
and armor their roomy and ring-dight ship
was heavily laden: high its mast
rose over Hrothgar’s hoarded gems.
A sword to the boat-guard Beowulf gave,
mounted with gold; on the mead-bench since
he was better esteemed, that blade possessing,
heirloom old. — Their ocean-keel boarding,
they drove through the deep, and Daneland left.
A sea-cloth was set, a sail with ropes,
firm to the mast; the flood-timbers moaned; (Note: With the speed of the boat.)
nor did wind over billows that wave-swimmer blow
across from her course. The craft sped on,
foam-necked it floated forth o’er the waves,
keel firm-bound over briny currents,
till they got them sight of the Geatish cliffs,
home-known headlands. High the boat,
stirred by winds, on the strand updrove.
Helpful at haven the harbor-guard stood,
who long already for loved companions
by the water had waited and watched afar.
He bound to the beach the broad-bosomed ship
with anchor-bands, lest ocean-billows
that trusty timber should tear away.
Then Beowulf bade them bear the treasure,
gold and jewels; no journey far
was it thence to go to the giver of rings,
Hygelac Hrethling: at home he dwelt
by the sea-wall close, himself and clan.
Haughty that house, a hero the king,
high the hall, and Hygd (Note: Queen to Hygelac. She is praised by contrast with the antitype, Thryth, just as Beowulf was praised by contrast with Heremod.) right young,
wise and wary, though winters few
in those fortress walls she had found a home,
Haereth’s daughter. Nor humble her ways,
nor grudged she gifts to the Geatish men,
of precious treasure. Not Thryth’s pride showed she,
folk-queen famed, or that fell deceit.
Was none so daring that durst make bold
(save her lord alone) of the liegemen dear
that lady full in the face to look,
but forged fetters he found his lot,
bonds of death! And brief the respite;
soon as they seized him, his sword-doom was spoken,
and the burnished blade a baleful murder
proclaimed and closed. No queenly way
for woman to practise, though peerless she,
that the weaver-of-peace (Note: Kenning for “wife.”) from warrior dear
by wrath and lying his life should reave!
But Hemming’s kinsman hindered this. —
For over their ale men also told
that of these folk-horrors fewer she wrought,
onslaughts of evil, after she went,
gold-decked bride, to the brave young prince,
atheling haughty, and Offa’s hall
o’er the fallow flood at her father’s bidding
safely sought, where since she prospered,
royal, throned, rich in goods,
ain of the fair life fate had sent her,
and leal in love to the lord of warriors.
He, of all heroes I heard of ever
from sea to sea, of the sons of earth,
most excellent seemed. Hence Offa was praised
for his fighting and feeing by far-off men,
the spear-bold warrior; wisely he ruled
over his empire. Eomer woke to him,
help of heroes, Hemming’s kinsman,
Grandson of Garmund, grim in war.

XXVIII

HASTENED the hardy one, henchmen with him,
sandy strand of the sea to tread
and widespread ways. The world’s great candle,
sun shone from south. They strode along
with sturdy steps to the spot they knew
where the battle-king young, his burg within,
slayer of Ongentheow, shared the rings,
shelter-of-heroes. To Hygelac
Beowulf’s coming was quickly told, —
that there in the court the clansmen’s refuge,
the shield-companion sound and alive,
hale from the hero-play homeward strode.
With haste in the hall, by highest order,
room for the rovers was readily made.
By his sovran he sat, come safe from battle,
kinsman by kinsman. His kindly lord
he first had greeted in gracious form,
with manly words. The mead dispensing,
came through the high hall Haereth’s daughter,
winsome to warriors, wine-cup bore
to the hands of the heroes. Hygelac then
his comrade fairly with question plied
in the lofty hall, sore longing to know
what manner of sojourn the Sea-Geats made.
“What came of thy quest, my kinsman Beowulf,
when thy yearnings suddenly swept thee yonder
battle to seek o’er the briny sea,
combat in Heorot? Hrothgar couldst thou
aid at all, the honored chief,
in his wide-known woes? With waves of care
my sad heart seethed; I sore mistrusted
my loved one’s venture: long I begged thee
by no means to seek that slaughtering monster,
but suffer the South-Danes to settle their feud
themselves with Grendel. Now God be thanked
that safe and sound I can see thee now!”

Beowulf spake, the bairn of Ecgtheow: —
“‘Tis known and unhidden, Hygelac Lord,
to many men, that meeting of ours,
struggle grim between Grendel and me,
which we fought on the field where full too many
sorrows he wrought for the Scylding-Victors,
evil unending. These all I avenged.
No boast can be from breed of Grendel,
any on earth, for that uproar at dawn,
from the longest-lived of the loathsome race
in fleshly fold! — But first I went
Hrothgar to greet in the hall of gifts,
where Healfdene’s kinsman high-renowned,
soon as my purpose was plain to him,
assigned me a seat by his son and heir.
The liegemen were lusty; my life-days never
such merry men over mead in hall
have I heard under heaven! The high-born queen,
people’s peace-bringer, passed through the hall,
cheered the young clansmen, clasps of gold,
er e she sought her seat, to sundry gave.
Oft to the heroes Hrothgar’s daughter,
to earls in turn, the ale-cup tendered, —
she whom I heard these hall-companions
Freawaru name, when fretted gold
she proffered the warriors. Promised is she,
gold-decked maid, to the glad son of Froda.
Sage this seems to the Scylding’s-friend,
k ingdom’s-keeper: he counts it wise
the woman to wed so and ward off feud,
store of slaughter. But seldom ever
when men are slain, does the murder-spear sink
but briefest while, though the bride be fair! (Note: Beowulf gives his uncle the king not mere gossip of his journey,
but a statesmanlike forecast of the outcome of certain policies at the Danish court. Talk of interpolation here is
absurd. As both Beowulf and Hygelac know, -- and the folk for whom the Beowulf was put together also knew, --
Froda was king of the Heathobards (probably the Langobards, once near neighbors of Angle and Saxon tribes on the continent), and had fallen in fight with the Danes. Hrothgar will set aside this feud by giving his daughter as “peace-weaver” and wife to the young king Ingeld, son of the slain Froda. But Beowulf, on general principles and from his observation of the particular case, foretells trouble. Note:

“Nor haply will like it the Heathobard lord, and as little each of his liegemen all, when a thane of the Danes, in that doughty throng, goes with the lady along their hall, and on him the old-time heirlooms glisten hard and ring-decked, Heathobard’s treasure, weapons that once they wielded fair until they lost at the linden-play (Note: Play of shields, battle. A Danish warrior cuts down Froda in the fight, and takes his sword and armor, leaving them to a son. This son is selected to accompany his mistress, the young princess Freawaru, to her new home when she is Ingeld’s queen. Needlessly he wears the sword of Froda in hall. An old warrior points it out to Ingeld, and eggs him on to vengeance. At his instigation the Dane is killed; but the murderer, afraid of results, and knowing the land, escapes. So the old feud must break out again.) liegeman leal and their lives as well.

Then, over the ale, on this heirloom gazing, some ash-wielder old who has all in mind that spear-death of men, (Note: That is, their disastrous battle and the slaying of their king.) — he is stern of mood, heavy at heart, — in the hero young tests the temper and tries the soul and war-hate wakens, with words like these: — Canst thou not, comrade, ken that sword which to the fray thy father carried in his final feud, ’neath the fighting-mask, dearest of blades, when the Danish slew him and wielded the war-place on Withergild’s fall, after havoc of heroes, those hardy Scyldings? Now, the son of a certain slaughtering Dane, proud of his treasure, paces this hall, joys in the killing, and carries the jewel (Note: The sword.) that rightfully ought to be owned by thee!.. Thus he urges and eggs him all the time with keenest words, till occasion offers that Freawaru’s thane, for his father’s deed, after bite of brand in his blood must slumber, losing his life; but that liegeman flies living away, for the land he kens. And thus be broken on both their sides oaths of the earls, when Ingeld’s breast wells with war-hate, and wife-love now after the care-billows cooler grows.

“So (Note: Beowulf returns to his forecast. Things might well go somewhat as follows, he says; sketches a little tragic story; and with this prophecy by illustration returns to the tale of his adventure.) I hold not high the Heathobards’ faith due to the Danes, or their during love and pact of peace. — But I pass from that, turning to Grendel, O giver-of-treasure, and saying in full how the fight resulted, hand-fray of heroes. When heaven’s jewel had fled o’er far fields, that fierce sprite came, night-foe savage, to seek us out where safe and sound we sentried the hall. To Hondscio then was that harassing deadly, his fall there was fated. He first was slain, girded warrior. Grendel on him turned murderous mouth, on our mighty kinsman, and all of the brave man’s body devoured.
Yet none the earlier, empty-handed,  
would the bloody-toothed murderer, mindful of bale,  
outward go from the gold-decked hall:  
but me he attacked in his terror of might,  
with greedy hand grasped me. A glove hung by him (Note: Not an actual glove, but a sort of bag.)  
wide and wondrous, wound with bands;  
and in artful wise it all was wrought,  
by devilish craft, of dragon-skins.  
Me therein, an innocent man,  
the fiendish foe was fain to thrust  
with many another. He might not so,  
when I all angrily upright stood.  
'Twere long to relate how that land-destroyer  
I paid in kind for his cruel deeds;  
yet there, my prince, this people of thine  
got fame by my fighting. He fled away,  
and a little space his life preserved;  
but there staid behind him his stronger hand  
left in Heorot; heartsick thence  
on the floor of the ocean that outcast fell.  
Me for this struggle the Scyldings'-friend  
paid in plenty with plates of gold,  
with many a treasure, when morn had come  
and we all at the banquet-board sat down.  
Then was song and glee. The gray-haired Scylding,  
much tested, told of the times of yore.  
Whiles the hero his harp bestirred,  
wood-of-delight; now lays he chanted  
of sooth and sadness, or said aright  
legends of wonder, the wide-hearted king;  
or for years of his youth he would yearn at times,  
for strength of old struggles, now stricken with age,  
hoary hero: his heart surged full  
when, wise with winters, he wailed their flight.  
Thus in the hall the whole of that day  
at ease we feasted, till fell o' er earth  
another night. Anon full ready  
in greed of vengeance, Grendel's mother  
set forth all doleful. Dead was her son  
through war-hate of Weders; now, woman monstrous  
with fury fell a foeman she slew,  
avenged her offspring. From Aeschere old,  
loyal councillors, life was gone;  
nor might they e'en, when morning broke,  
those Danish people, their death-done comrade  
burn with brands, on balefire lay  
the man they mourned. Under mountain stream  
she had carried the corpse with cruel hands.  
For Hrothgar that was the heaviest sorrow  
of all that had laden the lord of his folk.  
The leader then, by thy life, besought me  
(sad was his soul) in the sea-waves' coil  
to play the hero and hazard my being  
for glory of prowess: my guerdon he pledged.  
I then in the waters — 'tis widely known —  
that sea-floor-guardian savage found.  
Hand-to-hand there a while we struggled;  
billows welled blood; in the briny hall  
her head I hewed with a hardy blade  
from Grendel's mother, — and gained my life,
though not without danger. My doom was not yet.
Then the haven-of-heroes, Healfdene's son,
gave me in guerdon great gifts of price.

XXIX

“So held this king to the customs old,
that I wanted for nought in the wage I gained,
the meed of my might; he made me gifts,
Healfdene's heir, for my own disposal.
Now to thee, my prince, I proffer them all,
gladly give them. Thy grace alone
can find me favor. Few indeed
have I of kinsmen, save, Hygelac, thee!”
Then he bade them bear him the boar-head standard,
the battle-helm high, and breastplate gray,
the splendid sword; then spake in form: —
“Me this war-gear the wise old prince,
Hrothgar, gave, and his hest he added,
that its story be straightway said to thee. —
A while it was held by Heorogar king,
for long time lord of the land of Scyldings;
yet not to his son the sovran left it,
to daring Heoroweard, — dear as he was to him,
his harness of battle. — Well hold thou it all!”
And I heard that soon passed o’er the path of this treasure,
all apple-fallow, four good steeds,
each like the others, arms and horses
he gave to the king. So should kinsmen be,
not weave one another the net of wiles,
or with deep-hid treachery death contrive
for neighbor and comrade. His nephew was ever
by hardy Hygelac held full dear,
and each kept watch o’er the other’s weal.
I heard, too, the necklace to Hygd he presented,
wonder-wrought treasure, which Wealththeow gave him
sovran’s daughter: three steeds he added,
slender and saddle-gay. Since such gift
the gem gleamed bright on the breast of the queen.
Thus showed his strain the son of Ecgtheow
as a man remarked for mighty deeds
and acts of honor. At ale he slew not
comrade or kin; nor cruel his mood,
though of sons of earth his strength was greatest,
a glorious gift that God had sent
the splendid leader. Long was he spurned,
and worthless by Geatish warriors held;
him at mead the master-of-clans
failed full oft to favor at all.
Slack and shiftless the strong men deemed him,
profitless prince; but payment came,
to the warrior honored, for all his woes. —
Then the bulwark-of-earls (Note: Hygelac.) bade bring within,
hardy chieftain, Hrethel’s heirloom
garnished with gold: no Geat e’er knew
in shape of a sword a statelier prize.
The brand he laid in Beowulf’s lap;
and of hides assigned him seven thousand, (Note: This is generally assumed to mean hides, though the text simply says “seven thousand.” A hide in England meant about 120 acres, though “the size of the acre varied.”) with house and high-seat. They held in common
land alike by their line of birth,
inheritance, home: but higher the king
because of his rule o'er the realm itself.

Now further it fell with the flight of years,
with harryings horrid, that Hygelac perished, (Note: On the historical raid into Frankish territory between 512 and 520 A.D. The subsequent course of events, as gathered from hints of this epic, is partly told in Scandinavian legend.)
and Heordred, too, by hewing of swords
under the shield-wall slaughtered lay,
when him at the van of his victor-folk
sought hardy heroes, Heatho-Scيثings,
in arms o'erwhelming Hereric's nephew.
Then Beowulf came as king this broad
realm to wield; and he ruled it well
fifty winters, (Note: The chronology of this epic, as scholars have worked it out, would make Beowulf well over ninety years of age when he fights the dragon. But the fifty years of his reign need not be taken as historical fact.) a wise old prince,
warding his land, until One began
in the dark of night, a Dragon, to rage.
In the grave on the hill a hoard it guarded,
in the stone-barrow steep. A strait path reached it,
unknown to mortals. Some man, however,
came by chance that cave within
to the heathen hoard. (Note: The text is here hopelessly illegible, and only the general drift of the meaning can be rescued. For one thing, we have the old myth of a dragon who guards hidden treasure. But with this runs the story of some noble, last of his race, who hides all his wealth within this barrow and there chants his farewell to life's glories. After his death the dragon takes possession of the hoard and watches over it. A condemned or banished man, desperate, hides in the barrow, discovers the treasure, and while the dragon sleeps, makes off with a golden beaker or the like, and carries it for propitiation to his master. The dragon discovers the loss and exacts fearful penalty from the people round about.) In hand he took
a golden goblet, nor gave he it back,
stole with it away, while the watcher slept,
by thievish wiles: for the warden's wrath
prince and people must pay betimes!

XXX

THAT way he went with no will of his own,
in danger of life, to the dragon's hoard,
but for pressure of peril, some prince's thane.
He fled in fear the fatal scourge,
seeking shelter, a sinful man,
and entered in. At the awful sight
tottered that guest, and terror seized him;
yet the wretched fugitive rallied anon
from fright and fear ere he fled away,
and took the cup from that treasure-hoard.
Of such besides there was store enough,
heirlooms old, the earth below,
which some earl forgotten, in ancient years,
left the last of his lofty race,
heedfully there had hidden away,
dearest treasure. For death of yore
had hurried all hence; and he alone
left to live, the last of the clan,
weeping his friends, yet wished to bide
warding the treasure, his one delight,
though brief his respite. The barrow, new-ready,
to strand and sea-waves stood anear,
hard by the headland, hidden and closed;
there laid within it his lordly heirlooms
and heaped hoard of heavy gold
that warden of rings. Few words he spake:
"Now hold thou, earth, since heroes may not,
what earls have owned! Lo, erst from thee
brave men brought it! But battle-death seized
and cruel killing my clansmen all,
robbed them of life and a liegeman’s joys.
None have I left to lift the sword,
or to cleanse the carven cup of price,
beaker bright. My brave are gone.
And the helmet hard, all haughty with gold,
shall part from its plating. Polishers sleep
who could brighten and burnish the battle-mask;
and those weeds of war that were wont to brave
over bicker of shields the bite of steel
rust with their bearer. The ringed mail
fares not far with famous chieftain,
at side of hero! No harp’s delight,
no glee-wood’s gladness! No good hawk now
flies through the hall! Nor horses fleet
stamp in the burgstead! Battle and death
the flower of my race have reft away."
Mournful of mood, thus he moaned his woe,
alone, for them all, and unblithe wept
by day and by night, till death’s fell wave
o’erwhelmed his heart. His hoard-of-bliss
that old ill-doer open found,
who, blazing at twilight the barrows haunteth,
naked foe-dragon flying by night
folded in fire: the folk of earth
dread him sore. ’Tis his doom to seek
hoard in the graves, and heathen gold
to watch, many-wintered: nor wins he thereby!
Powerful this plague-of-the-people thus
held the house of the hoard in earth
three hundred winters; till One aroused
wrath in his breast, to the ruler bearing
that costly cup, and the king implored
for bond of peace. So the barrow was plundered,
borne off was booty. His boon was granted
that wretched man; and his ruler saw
first time what was fashioned in far-off days.
When the dragon awoke, new woe was kindled.
O’er the stone he snuffed. The stark-heart found
footprint of foe who so far had gone
in his hidden craft by the creature’s head. —
So may the undoomed easily flee
evils and exile, if only he gain
the grace of The Wielder! — That warden of gold
o’er the ground went seeking, greedy to find
the man who wrought him such wrong in sleep.
Savage and burning, the barrow he circled
all without; nor was any there,
none in the waste…. Yet war he desired,
was eager for battle. The barrow he entered,
sought the cup, and discovered soon
that some one of mortals had searched his treasure,
his lordly gold. The guardian waited
ill-enduring till evening came;
boiling with wrath was the barrow's keeper,  
and fain with flame the foe to pay  
for the dear cup's loss. — Now day was fled  
as the worm had wished. By its wall no more  
was it glad to bide, but burning flew  
folded in flame: a fearful beginning  
for sons of the soil; and soon it came,  
in the doom of their lord, to a dreadful end.

Then the baleful fiend its fire belched out,  
and bright homes burned. The blaze stood high  
all landsfolk frighting. No living thing  
would that loathly one leave as aloft it flew.  
Wide was the dragon's warring seen,  
its fiendish fury far and near,  
as the grim destroyer those Geatish people  
hated and hounded. To hidden lair,  
to its hoard it hastened at hint of dawn.  
Folk of the land it had lapped in flame,  
with bale and brand. In its barrow it trusted,  
its battling and bulwarks: that boast was vain!

To Beowulf then the bale was told  
quickly and truly: the king's own home,  
of buildings the best, in brand-waves melted,  
that gift-throne of Geats. To the good old man  
sad in heart, "twas heaviest sorrow.  
The sage assumed that his sovran God  
he had angered, breaking ancient law,  
and embittered the Lord. His breast within  
with black thoughts welled, as his wont was never.  
The folk's own fastness that fiery dragon  
with flame had destroyed, and the stronghold all  
washed by waves; but the warlike king,  
prince of the Weders, plotted vengeance.  
Warriors'-bulwark, he bade them work  
all of iron — the earl's commander —  
a war-shield wondrous: well he knew  
that forest-wood against fire were worthless,  
linden could aid not. — Atheling brave,  
he was fated to finish this fleeting life, (Note: Literally "loan-days," days loaned to man.)  
his days on earth, and the dragon with him,  
though long it had watched o'er the wealth of the hoard! —  
Shame he reckoned it, sharer-of-rings,  
to follow the flyer-afar with a host,  
a broad-flung band; nor the battle feared he,  
nor deemed he dreadful the dragon's warring,  
its vigor and valor: ventures desperate
he had passed a-plenty, and perils of war,  
contest-crash, since, conqueror proud,  
Hrothgar's hall he had wholly purged,  
and in grapple had killed the kin of Grendel,  
loathsome breed! Not least was that  
of hand-to-hand fights where Hygelac fell,  
when the ruler of Geats in rush of battle,  
lord of his folk, in the Frisian land,  
son of Hrethel, by sword-draughts died,  
by brands down-beaten. Thence Beowulf fled  
through strength of himself and his swimming power,  
though alone, and his arms were laden with thirty  
coats of mail, when he came to the sea!  

Nor yet might Hetwaras (Note: Chattuarii, a tribe that dwelt along the Rhine, and took part in repelling the raid of  
(Hygelac) Chocilaicus.) haughtily boast  
their craft of contest, who carried against him  
shields to the fight: but few escaped  
from strife with the hero to seek their homes!  
Then swam over ocean Ecgtheow's son  
lonely and sorrowful, seeking his land,  
where Hygd made him offer of hoard and realm,  
rings and royal-seat, reckoning naught  
the strength of her son to save their kingdom  
from hostile hordes, after Hygelac's death.  
No sooner for this could the stricken ones  
in any wise move that atheling's mind  
over young Heardred's head as lord  
and ruler of all the realm to be:  
yet the hero upheld him with helpful words,  
aided in honor, till, older grown,  
he wielded the Weder-Geats. — Wandering exiles  
sought him o'er seas, the sons of Ohtere,  
who had spurned the sway of the Scylfings'-helmet,  
the bravest and best that broke the rings,  
in Swedish land, of the sea-kings' line,  
haughty hero. (Note: Onla, son of Ongentheow, who pursues his two nephews Eanmund and Eadgils to  
Heardred's court, where they have taken refuge after their unsuccessful rebellion. In the fighting Heardred is  
killed.) Hence Heardred's end.  
For shelter he gave them, sword-death came,  
the blade's fell blow, to bairn of Hygelac;  
but the son of Ongentheow sought again  
house and home when Heardred fell,  
leaving Beowulf lord of Geats  
and gift-seat's master. — A good king he!

XXXII

THE fall of his lord he was fain to requite  
in after days; and to Eadgils he proved  
friend to the friendless, and forces sent  
over the sea to the son of Ohtere,  
weapons and warriors: well repaid he  
those care-paths cold when the king he slew. (Note: That is, Beowulf supports Eadgils against Onela, who is slain  
by Eadgils in revenge for the "care-paths" of exile into which Onela forced him.)  
Thus safe through struggles the son of Ecgtheow  
had passed a plenty, through perils dire,  
with daring deeds, till this day was come  
that doomed him now with the dragon to strive.  
With comrades eleven the lord of Geats  
swollen in rage went seeking the dragon.
He had heard whence all the harm arose
and the killing of clansmen; that cup of price
on the lap of the lord had been laid by the finder.
In the throng was this one thirteenth man,
starter of all the strife and ill,
care-laden captive; cringing thence
forced and reluctant, he led them on
till he came in ken of that cavern-hall,
the barrow delved near billowy surges,
flood of ocean. Within 'twas full
of wire-gold and jewels; a jealous warden,
warrior trusty, the treasures held,
lurked in his lair. Not light the task
of entrance for any of earth-born men!
Sat on the headland the hero king,
spake words of hail to his hearth-companions,
gold-friend of Geats. All gloomy his soul,
wavering, death-bound. Wyrd full nigh
stood ready to greet the gray-haired man,
to seize his soul-hoard, sunder apart
life and body. Not long would be
the warrior's spirit enwound with flesh.
Beowulf spake, the bairn of Ecgtheow: —
"Through store of struggles I strove in youth,
mighty feuds; I mind them all.
I was seven years old when the sovran of rings,
friend-of-his-folk, from my father took me,
had me, and held me, Hrethel the king,
with food and fee, faithful in kinship.
Ne'er, while I lived there, he loathlier found me,
bairn in the burg, than his birthright sons,
Herebeald and Haethcyn and Hygelac mine.
For the eldest of these, by unmeet chance,
by kinsman's deed, was the death-bed strewn,
when Haethcyn killed him with horny bow,
his own dear liege laid low with an arrow,
missed the mark and his mate shot down,
one brother the other, with bloody shaft.
A feeless fight, (Note: That is, the king could claim no wergild, or man-price, from one son for the killing of the other.) and a fearful sin,
horror to Hrethel; yet, hard as it was,
unavenged must the atheling die!
Too awful it is for an aged man
to bide and bear, that his bairn so young
rides on the gallows. A rime he makes,
sorrow-song for his son there hanging
as rapture of ravens; no rescue now
can come from the old, disabled man!
Still is he minded, as morning breaks,
of the heir gone elsewhere; (Note: Usual euphemism for death.) another he hopes not
he will bide to see his burg within
as ward for his wealth, now the one has found
doom of death that the deed incurred.
Forlorn he looks on the lodge of his son,
wine-hall waste and wind-swept chambers
reft of revel. The rider sleepeth,
the hero, far-hidden; (Note: Sc. in the grave.) no harp resounds,
in the courts no wassail, as once was heard.
"THEN he goes to his chamber, a grief-song chants alone for his lost. Too large all seems, homestead and house. So the helmet-of-Weders hid in his heart for Herebeald waves of woe. No way could he take to avenge on the slayer slaughter so foul; nor e'en could he harass that hero at all with loathing deed, though he loved him not. And so for the sorrow his soul endured, men's gladness he gave up and God's light chose. Lands and cities he left his sons (as the wealthy do) when he went from earth. There was strife and struggle 'twixt Swede and Geat o'er the width of waters; war arose, hard battle-horror, when Hrethel died, and Ongentheow's offspring grew strife-keen, bold, nor brooked o'er the seas pact of peace, but pushed their hosts to harass in hatred by Hreosnabeorh. Men of my folk for that feud had vengeance, for woful war ('tis widely known), though one of them bought it with blood of his heart, a bargain hard: for Haethcyn proved fatal that fray, for the first-of-Geats. At morn, I heard, was the murderer killed by kinsman for kinsman, (Note: Eofor for Wulf. -- The immediate provocation for Eofor in killing "the hoary Scylding," Ongentheow, is that the latter has just struck Wulf down; but the king, Haethcyn, is also avenged by the blow. See the detailed description below.) with clash of sword, when Ongentheow met Eofor there. Wide split the war-helm: wan he fell, hoary Scylding; the hand that smote him of feud was mindful, nor flinched from the death-blow. — "For all that he (Note: Hygelac:) gave me, my gleaming sword repaid him at war, — such power I wielded, — for lordly treasure: with land he entrusted me, homestead and house. He had no need from Swedish realm, or from Spear-Dane folk, or from men of the Gifths, to get him help, — some warrior worse for wage to buy! Ever I fought in the front of all, sole to the fore; and so shall I fight while I bide in life and this blade shall last that early and late hath loyal proved since for my doughtiness Daeghrefn fell, slain by my hand, the Hugas' champion. Nor fared he thence to the Frisian king with the booty back, and breast-adornments; but, slain in struggle, that standard-bearer fell, atheling brave. Not with blade was he slain, but his bones were broken by brawny gripe, his heart-waves stilled. — The sword-edge now, hard blade and my hand, for the hoard shall strive."

Beowulf spake, and a battle-vow made his last of all: "I have lived through many wars in my youth; now once again, old folk-defender, feud will I seek, do doughty deeds, if the dark destroyer forth from his cavern come to fight me!"

Then hailed he the helmeted heroes all, for the last time greeting his liegemen dear,
comrades of war: “I should carry no weapon, no sword to the serpent, if sure I knew how, with such enemy, else my vows I could gain as I did in Grendel’s day. But fire in this fight I must fear me now, and poisonous breath; so I bring with me breastplate and board. (Note: Shield.) From the barrow’s keeper no footbreadth flee I. One fight shall end our war by the wall, as Wyrd allots, all mankind’s master. My mood is bold but forbears to boast o’er this battling-flyer. — Now abide by the barrow, ye breastplate-mailed, ye heroes in harness, which of us twain better from battle-rush bear his wounds. Wait ye the finish. The fight is not yours, nor meet for any but me alone to measure might with this monster here and play the hero. Hardily I shall win that wealth, or war shall seize, cruel killing, your king and lord!”

Up stood then with shield the sturdy champion, stayed by the strength of his single manhood, and hardy ‘neath helmet his harness bore under cleft of the cliffs: no coward’s path! Soon spied by the wall that warrior chief, survivor of many a victory-field where foemen fought with furious clashings, an arch of stone; and within, a stream that broke from the barrow. The brooklet’s wave was hot with fire. The hoard that way he never could hope unharmed to near, or endure those deeps, (Note: The hollow passage.) for the dragon’s flame. Then let from his breast, for he burst with rage, the Weder-Geat prince a word outgo; stormed the stark-heart; stern went ringing and clear his cry ’neath the cliff-rocks gray. The hoard-guard heard a human voice; his rage was enkindled. No respite now for pact of peace! The poison-breath of that foul worm first came forth from the cave, hot reek-of-fight: the rocks resounded. Stout by the stone-way his shield he raised, lord of the Geats, against the loathed-one; while with courage keen that coiled foe came seeking strife. The sturdy king had drawn his sword, not dull of edge, heirloom old; and each of the two felt fear of his foe, though fierce their mood. Stoutly stood with his shield high-raised the warrior king, as the worm now coiled together amain: the mailed-one waited. Now, spire by spire, fast sped and glided that blazing serpent. The shield protected, soul and body a shorter while for the hero-king than his heart desired, could his will have wielded the welcome respite but once in his life! But Wyrd denied it, and victory’s honors. — His arm he lifted lord of the Geats, the grim foe smote with atheling’s heirloom. Its edge was turned
brown blade, on the bone, and bit more feebly
than its noble master had need of then
in his baleful stress. — Then the barrow’s keeper
waxed full wild for that weighty blow,
cast deadly flames; wide drove and far
those vicious fires. No victor’s glory
the Geats’ lord boasted; his brand had failed,
naked in battle, as never it should,
excellent iron! — ’Twas no easy path
that Ecgtheow’s honored heir must tread
over the plain to the place of the foe;
for against his will he must win a home
elsewhere far, as must all men, leaving
this lapsing life! — Not long it was
ere those champions grimly closed again.
The hoard-guard was heartened; high heaved his breast
once more; and by peril was pressed again,
enfolded in flames, the folk-commander!
Nor yet about him his band of comrades,
sons of athelings, armed stood
with warlike front: to the woods they bent them,
their lives to save. But the soul of one
with care was cumbered. Kinship true
can never be marred in a noble mind!

XXXIV

WIGLAF his name was, Weohstan’s son,
linden-thane loved, the lord of Scylfings,
Aelfhere’s kinsman. His king he now saw
with heat under helmet hard oppressed.
He minded the prizes his prince had given him,
wealthy seat of the Waegmunding line,
and folk-rights that his father owned
Not long he lingered. The linden yellow,
his shield, he seized; the old sword he drew: —
as heirloom of Eanmund earth-dwellers knew it,
who was slain by the sword-edge, son of Ohtere,
friendless exile, erst in fray
killed by Weohstan, who won for his kin
brown-bright helmet, breastplate ringed,
old sword of Eotens, Onela’s gift,
weeds of war of the warrior-thane,
battle-gear brave: though a brother’s child
had been felled, the feud was unfelt by Onela. (Note: That is, although Eanmund was brother’s son to Onela, the
slaying of the former by Weohstan is not felt as cause of feud, and is rewarded by gift of the slain man’s
weapons.)
For winters this war-gear Weohstan kept,
breastplate and board, till his bairn had grown
earlship to earn as the old sire did:
then he gave him, mid Geats, the gear of battle,
portion huge, when he passed from life,
fared aged forth. For the first time now
with his leader-lord the liegeman young
was bidden to share the shock of battle.
Neither softened his soul, nor the sire’s bequest
weakened in war. (Note: Both Wiglaf and the sword did their duty. -- The following is one of the classic passages
for illustrating the comitatus as the most conspicuous Germanic institution, and its underlying sense of duty,
based partly on the idea of loyalty and partly on the practical basis of benefits received and repaid.) So the worm
found out

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when once in fight the foes had met!
Wiglaf spake, — and his words were sage;
sad in spirit, he said to his comrades: —
"I remember the time, when mead we took,
what promise we made to this prince of ours
in the banquet-hall, to our breaker-of-rings,
for gear of combat to give him requital,
for hard-sword and helmet, if hap should bring
stress of this sort! Himself who chose us
from all his army to aid him now,
urged us to glory, and gave these treasures,
because he counted us keen with the spear
and hard 'neath helm, though this hero-work
our leader hoped unhelped and alone
to finish for us, — folk-defender
who hath got him glory greater than all men
for daring deeds! Now the day is come
that our noble master has need of the might
of warriors stout. Let us stride along
the hero to help while the heat is about him
glowing and grim! For God is my witness
I am far more fain the fire should seize
along with my lord these limbs of mine! (Note: Sc. “than to bide safely here,” -- a common figure of incomplete comparison.)
Unsuiting it seems our shields to bear
homeward hence, save here we essay
to fell the foe and defend the life
of the Weders’ lord. I wot 'twere shame
on the law of our land if alone the king
out of Geatish warriors woe endured
and sank in the struggle! My sword and helmet,
breastplate and board, for us both shall serve!"
Through slaughter-reek strode he to succor his chieftain,
his battle-helm bore, and brief words spake: —
"Beowulf dearest, do all bravely,
as in youthful days of yore thou vowedst
that while life should last thou wouldst let no wise
thy glory droop! Now, great in deeds,
atheling steadfast, with all thy strength
shield thy life! I will stand to help thee."
At the words the worm came once again,
murderous monster mad with rage,
with fire-billows flaming, its foes to seek,
the hated men. In heat-waves burned
that board (Note: Wiglaf’s wooden shield.) to the boss, and the breastplate failed
to shelter at all the spear-thane young.
Yet quickly under his kinsman's shield
went eager the earl, since his own was now
all burned by the blaze. The bold king again
had mind of his glory: with might his glaive
was driven into the dragon’s head, —
blow nerved by hate. But Naegling (Note: Gering would translate “kinsman of the nail,” as both are made of iron.) was shivered,
broken in battle was Beowulf’s sword,
old and gray. 'Twas granted him not
that ever the edge of iron at all
could help him at strife: too strong was his hand,
so the tale is told, and he tried too far
with strength of stroke all swords he wielded,
though sturdy their steel: they steaded him nought.
Then for the third time thought on its feud
that folk-destroyer, fire-dread dragon,
and rushed on the hero, where room allowed,
battle-grim, burning; its bitter teeth
closed on his neck, and covered him
with waves of blood from his breast that welled.

XXXV

'TWAS now, men say, in his sovran's need
that the earl made known his noble strain,
craft and keenness and courage enduring.
Heedless of harm, though his hand was burned,
hardy-hearted, he helped his kinsman.
A little lower the loathsome beast
he smote with sword; his steel drove in
bright and burnished; that blaze began
to lose and lessen. At last the king
wielded his wits again, war-knife drew,
a biting blade by his breastplate hanging,
and the Weders'-helm smote that worm asunder,
felled the foe, flung forth its life.
So had they killed it, kinsmen both,
athelings twain: thus an earl should be
in danger's day! — Of deeds of valor
this conqueror's-hour of the king was last,
of his work in the world. The wound began,
which that dragon-of-earth had erst inflicted,
to swell and smart; and soon he found
in his breast was boiling, baleful and deep,
pain of poison. The prince walked on,
wise in his thought, to the wall of rock;
then sat, and stared at the structure of giants,
where arch of stone and steadfast column
upheld forever that hall in earth.
Yet here must the hand of the henchman peerless
lave with water his winsome lord,
the king and conqueror covered with blood,
with struggle spent, and unspan his helmet.
Beowulf spake in spite of his hurt,
his mortal wound; full well he knew
his portion now was past and gone
of earthly bliss, and all had fled
of his file of days, and death was near:
"I would fain bestow on son of mine
this gear of war, were given me now
that any heir should after me come
of my proper blood. This people I ruled
fifty winters. No folk-king was there,
one at all, of the neighboring clans
who war would wage me with 'warriors'-friends' (Note: That is, swords.)
and threat me with horrors. At home I bided
what fate might come, and I cared for mine own;
feuds I sought not, nor falsely swore
ever on oath. For all these things,
though fatally wounded, fain am I!!
From the Ruler-of-Man no wrath shall seize me,
when life from my frame must flee away,
for killing of kinsmen! Now quickly go
and gaze on that hoard 'neath the hoary rock,
Wiglaf loved, now the worm lies low,  
sleeps, heart-sore, of his spoil bereaved.  
And fare in haste. I would fain behold  
the gorgeous heirlooms, golden store,  
have joy in the jewels and gems, lay down  
softlier for sight of this splendid hoard  
my life and the lordship I long have held.”

XXXVI

I HAVE heard that swiftly the son of Weohstan  
at wish and word of his wounded king, —  
war-sick warrior, — woven mail-coat,  
battle-sark, bore 'neath the barrow's roof.  
Then the clansman keen, of conquest proud,  
passing the seat, (Note: Where Beowulf lay,) saw store of jewels  
and glistening gold the ground along;  
by the wall were marvels, and many a vessel  
in the den of the dragon, the dawn-flier old:  
unburnished bowls of bygone men  
reft of richness; rusty helms  
of the olden age; and arm-rings many  
wondrously woven. — Such wealth of gold,  
booty from barrow, can burden with pride  
each human wight: let him hide it who will! —  
His glance too fell on a gold-wove banner  
high o'er the hoard, of handiwork noblest,  
brilliantly brodered; so bright its gleam,  
all the earth-floor he easily saw  
and viewed all these vessels. No vestige now  
was seen of the serpent: the sword had ta'en him.  
Then, I heard, the hill of its hoard was reft,  
old work of giants, by one alone;  
he burdened his bosom with beakers and plate  
at his own good will, and the ensign took,  
brightest of beacons. — The blade of his lord  
— its edge was iron — had injured deep  
one that guarded the golden hoard  
many a year and its murder-fire  
spread hot round the barrow in horror-billows  
at midnight hour, till it met its doom.  
Hasted the herald, the hoard so spurred him  
his track to retrace; he was troubled by doubt,  
high-souled hero, if haply he'd find  
alive, where he left him, the lord of Weders,  
weakening fast by the wall of the cave.  
So he carried the load. His lord and king  
he found all bleeding, famous chief  
at the lapse of life. The liegeman again  
plashed him with water, till point of word
broke through the breast-hoard. Beowulf spake, sage and sad, as he stared at the gold. —
“For the gold and treasure, to God my thanks, to the Wielder-of-Wonders, with words I say, for what I behold, to Heaven’s Lord, for the grace that I give such gifts to my folk or ever the day of my death be run! Now I’ve bartered here for booty of treasure the last of my life, so look ye well to the needs of my land! No longer I tarry. A barrow bid ye the battle-fanned raise for my ashes. ’Twill shine by the shore of the flood, to folk of mine memorial fair on Hrones Headland high uplifted, that ocean-wanderers oft may hail Beowulf’s Barrow, as back from far they drive their keels o’er the darkling wave.” From his neck he unclasped the collar of gold, valorous king, to his vassal gave it with bright-gold helmet, breastplate, and ring, to the youthful thane: bade him use them in joy. “Thou art end and remnant of all our race the Waegmunding name. For Wyrd hath swept them, all my line, to the land of doom, earls in their glory: I after them go.” This word was the last which the wise old man harbored in heart ere hot death-waves of balefire he chose. From his bosom fled his soul to seek the saints’ reward.

XXXVII

IT was heavy hap for that hero young on his lord beloved to look and find him lying on earth with life at end, sorrowful sight. But the slayer too, awful earth-dragon, empty of breath, lay felled in fight, nor, fain of its treasure, could the writhing monster rule it more. For edges of iron had ended its days, hard and battle-sharp, hammers’ leaving; (Note: What had been left or made by the hammer; well-forged.) and that flier-afar had fallen to ground hushed by its hurt, its hoard all near, no longer lusty aloft to whirl at midnight, making its merriment seen, proud of its prizes: prone it sank by the handiwork of the hero-king. Forsooth among folk but few achieve, — though sturdy and strong, as stories tell me, and never so daring in deed of valor, — the perilous breath of a poison-foe to brave, and to rush on the ring-board hall, whenever his watch the warden keeps bold in the barrow. Beowulf paid the price of death for that precious hoard; and each of the foes had found the end of this fleeting life. Befell erelong that the laggards in war the wood had left, trothbreakers, cowards, ten together,
fearing before to flourish a spear
in the sore distress of their sovran lord.
Now in their shame their shields they carried,
armor of fight, where the old man lay;
and they gazed on Wiglaf. Wearied he sat
at his sovran’s shoulder, shieldsman good,
to wake him with water. (Note: Trying to revive him.) Nowise it availed.
Though well he wished it, in world no more
could he barrier life for that leader-of-battles
nor baffle the will of all-wielding God.
Doom of the Lord was law o’er the deeds
of every man, as it is to-day.
Grim was the answer, easy to get,
from the youth for those that had yielded to fear!
Wiglaf spake, the son of Weohstan, —
mournful he looked on those men unloved: —
“Who sooth will speak, can say indeed
that the ruler who gave you golden rings
and the harness of war in which ye stand
— for he at ale-bench often-times
bestowed on hall-folk helm and breastplate,
lord to liegemen, the likeliest gear
which near of far he could find to give, —
threw away and wasted these weeds of battle,
on men who failed when the foemen came!
Not at all could the king of his comrades-in-arms
venture to vaunt, though the Victory-Wielder,
God, gave him grace that he got revenge
sole with his sword in stress and need.
To rescue his life, ’twas little that I
could serve him in struggle; yet shift I made
(hopeless it seemed) to help my kinsman.
Its strength ever waned, when with weapon I struck
that fatal foe, and the fire less strongly
flowed from its head. — Too few the heroes
in throe of contest that thronged to our king!
Now gift of treasure and girding of sword,
joy of the house and home-delight
shall fail your folk; his freehold-land
every clansman within your kin
shall lose and leave, when lords high-born
hear afar of that flight of yours,
a fameless deed. Yea, death is better
for liegemen all than a life of shame!”

XXXVIII

THAT battle-toil bade he at burg to announce,
at the fort on the cliff, where, full of sorrow,
all the morning earls had sat,
daring shieldsmen, in doubt of twain:
would they wail as dead, or welcome home,
their lord beloved? Little (Note: Nothing.) kept back
of the tidings new, but told them all,
the herald that up the headland rode. —
“Now the willing-giver to Weder folk
in death-bed lies; the Lord of Geats
on the slaughter-bed sleeps by the serpent’s deed!
And beside him is stretched that slayer-of-men
with knife-wounds sick: (Note: Dead.) no sword availed
on the awesome thing in any wise
to work a wound. There Wiglaf sitteth,
Weohstan’s bairn, by Beowulf’s side,
the living earl by the other dead.
and heavy of heart a head-watch (Note: Death-watch, guard of honor, “lyke-wake.”) keeps
o’er friend and foe. — Now our folk may look
for waging of war when once unhidden
to Frisian and Frank the fall of the king
is spread afar. — The strife began
when hot on the Hugas (Note: A name for the Franks.) Hygelac fell
and fared with his fleet to the Frisian land.
Him there the Hetwaras humbled in war,
plied with such prowess their power o’erwhelming
that the bold-in-battle bowed beneath it
and fell in fight. To his friends no wise
could that earl give treasure! And ever since
the Merowings’ favor has failed us wholly.
Nor aught expect I of peace and faith
from Swedish folk. ’Twas spread afar
how Ongentheow reft at Ravenswood
Haethcyn Hrethling of hope and life,
when the folk of Geats for the first time sought
in wanton pride the Warlike-Scylfings.
Soon the sage old sire (Note: Ongentheow.) of Ohtere,
ancient and awful, gave answering blow;
the sea-king (Note: Haethcyn.) he slew, and his spouse redeemed,
his good wife rescued, though robbed of her gold,
mother of Ohtere and Onela.
Then he followed his foes, who fled before him
sore beset and stole their way,
bereft of a ruler, to Ravenswood.

With his host he besieged there what swords had left,
the weary and wounded; woes he threatened
the whole night through to that hard-pressed throng:
some with the morrow his sword should kill,
some should go to the gallows-tree
for rapture of ravens. But rescue came
with dawn of day for those desperate men
when they heard the horn of Hygelac sound,
tones of his trumpet; the trusty king
had followed their trail with faithful band.

XXXIX

“THE bloody swath of Swedes and Geats
and the storm of their strife, were seen afar,
how folk against folk the fight had wakened.
The ancient king with his atheling band
sought his citadel, sorrowing much:
Ongentheow earl went up to his burg.
He had tested Hygelac’s hardihood,
the proud one’s prowess, would prove it no longer,
defied no more those fighting-wanderers
nor hoped from the seamen to save his hoard,
his bairn and his bride: so he bent him again,
old, to his earth-walls. Yet after him came
with slaughter for Swedes the standards of Hygelac
o’er peaceful plains in pride advancing,
till Hrethelings fought in the fenced town. (Note: The line may mean: till Hrethelings stormed on the hedged
shields, -- i.e. the shield-wall or hedge of defensive war -- Hrethelings, of course, are Geats.)
Then Ongentheow with edge of sword,
the hoary-bearded, was held at bay,
and the folk-king there was forced to suffer
Eofor's anger. In ire, at the king
Wulf Wonreding with weapon struck;
and the chieftain's blood, for that blow, in streams
flowed 'neath his hair. No fear felt he,
stout old Scylfing, but straightway repaid
in better bargain that bitter stroke
and faced his foe with fell intent.
Nor swift enough was the son of Wonred
answer to render the aged chief;
too soon on his head the helm was cloven;
blood-bedecked he bowed to earth,
and fell adown; not doomed was he yet,
and well he waxed, though the wound was sore.

Then the hardy Hygelac-thane, (Note: Eofor, brother to Wulf Wonreding.)
when his brother fell, with broad brand smote,
giants' sword crashing through giants'-helm
across the shield-wall: sank the king,
his folk's old herdsman, fatally hurt.
There were many to bind the brother's wounds
and lift him, fast as fate allowed
his people to wield the place-of-war.
But Eofor took from Ongentheow,
earl from other, the iron-breastplate,
hard sword hilted, and helmet too,
and the hoar-chief's harness to Hygelac carried,
who took the trappings, and truly promised
rich fee 'mid folk, — and fulfilled it so.
For that grim strife gave the Geatish lord,
Hrethel's offspring, when home he came,
to Eofor and Wulf a wealth of treasure,
Each of them had a hundred thousand (Note: Sc. "value in" hides and the weight of the gold.)
in land and linked rings; nor at less price reckoned
mid-earth men such mighty deeds!
And to Eofor he gave his only daughter
in pledge of grace, the pride of his home.

"Such is the feud, the foeman's rage,
death-hate of men: so I deem it sure
that the Swedish folk will seek us home
for this fall of their friends, the fighting-Scylfings,
when once they learn that our warrior leader
lifeless lies, who land and hoard
ever defended from all his foes,
furthered his folk's weal, finished his course
a hardy hero. — Now haste is best,
that we go to gaze on our Geatish lord,
and bear the bountiful breaker-of-rings
to the funeral pyre. No fragments merely
shall burn with the warrior. Wealth of jewels,
gold untold and gained in terror,
treasure at last with his life obtained,
all of that booty the brands shall take,
fire shall eat it. No earl must carry
memorial jewel. No maiden fair
shall wreathe her neck with noble ring:
nay, sad in spirit and shorn of her gold,
oft shall she pass o'er paths of exile

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now our lord all laughter has laid aside,
all mirth and revel. Many a spear
morning-cold shall be clasped amain,
lifted aloft; nor shall lilt of harp
those warriors wake; but the wan-hued raven,
fain o'er the fallen, his feast shall praise
and boast to the eagle how bravely he ate
when he and the wolf were wasting the slain.”

So he told his sorrowful tidings,
and little (Note: Not at all.) he lied, the loyal man
of word or of work. The warriors rose;
sad, they climbed to the Cliff-of-Eagles,
went, welling with tears, the wonder to view.

Found on the sand there, stretched at rest,
their lifeless lord, who had lavished rings
of old upon them. Ending-day
had dawned on the doughty-one; death had seized
in woful slaughter the Weders’ king.
There saw they, besides, the strangest being,
loathsome, lying their leader near,
prone on the field. The fiery dragon,
fearful fiend, with flame was scorched.

Reckoned by feet, it was fifty measures
in length as it lay. Aloft erewhile
it had revelled by night, and anon come back,
seeking its den; now in death’s sure clutch
it had come to the end of its earth-hall joys.

By it there stood the stoups and jars;
dishes lay there, and dear-decked swords
eaten with rust, as, on earth’s lap resting,
a thousand winters they waited there.

For all that heritage huge, that gold
of bygone men, was bound by a spell, (Note: Laid on it when it was put in the barrow. This spell, or in our days
the “curse,” either prevented discovery or brought dire ills on the finder and taker.)
so the treasure-hall could be touched by none
of human kind, — save that Heaven’s King,
God himself, might give whom he would,
Helper of Heroes, the hoard to open, —
even such a man as seemed to him meet.

XL

A PERILOUS path, it proved, he (Note: Probably the fugitive is meant who discovered the hoard. Ten Brink and Gering assume that the dragon is meant. “Hid” may well mean here “took while in hiding.”) trod
who heinously hid, that hall within,
wealth under wall! Its watcher had killed
one of a few, (Note: That is “one and a few others.” But Beowulf seems to be indicated.) and the feud was
avenged
in woful fashion. Wondrous seems it,
what manner a man of might and valor
oft ends his life, when the earl no longer
in mead-hall may live with loving friends.

So Beowulf, when that barrow's warden
he sought, and the struggle; himself knew not
in what wise he should wend from the world at last.

For (Note: Ten Brink points out the strongly heathen character of this part of the epic. Beowulf's end came, so the old tradition ran, from his unwitting interference with spell-bound treasure.) princes potent, who placed the gold,
with a curse to doomsday covered it deep,
so that marked with sin the man should be,
hedged with horrors, in hell-bonds fast,
rack’d with plagues, who should rob their hoard.  
Yet no greed for gold, but the grace of heaven,  
ever the king had kept in view. (Note: A hard saying, variously interpreted. In any case, it is the somewhat clumsy effort of the Christian poet to tone down the heathenism of his material by an edifying observation.)
Wiglaf spake, the son of Weohstan: —
“At the mandate of one, oft warriors many  
sorrow must suffer; and so must we.  
The people’s-shepherd showed not aught  
of care for our counsel, king beloved!  
That guardian of gold he should grapple not, urged we,  
but let him lie where he long had been  
in his earth-hall waiting the end of the world,  
the hest of heaven. — This hoard is ours  
but grievously gotten; too grim the fate  
which thither carried our king and lord.  
I was within there, and all I viewed,  
the chambered treasure, when chance allowed me  
(and my path was made in no pleasant wise)  
under the earth-wall. Eager, I seized  
such heap from the hoard as hands could bear  
and hurriedly carried it hither back  
to my liege and lord. Alive was he still,  
still wielding his wits. The wise old man  
spake much in his sorrow, and sent you greetings  
and bade that ye build, when he breathed no more,  
on the place of his balefire a barrow high,  
memorial mighty. Of men was he  
worthiest warrior wide earth o’er  
the while he had joy of his jewels and burg.  
Let us set out in haste now, the second time  
to see and search this store of treasure,  
these wall-hid wonders, — the way I show you, —  
where, gathered near, ye may gaze your fill  
at broad-gold and rings. Let the bier, soon made,  
be all in order when out we come,  
our king and captain to carry thither  
— man beloved — where long he shall bide  
safe in the shelter of sovran God.”
Then the bairn of Weohstan bade command,  
hardy chief, to heroes many  
that owned their homesteads, hither to bring  
firewood from far — o’er the folk they ruled —  
for the famed-one’s funeral. “Fire shall devour  
and wan flames feed on the fearless warrior  
who oft stood stout in the iron-shower,  
when, sped from the string, a storm of arrows  
shot o’er the shield-wall: the shaft held firm,  
featly feathered, followed the barb.”
And now the sage young son of Weohstan  
seven chose of the chieftain’s thanes,  
the best he found that band within,  
and went with these warriors, one of eight,  
under hostile roof. In hand one bore  
a lighted torch and led the way.  
No lots they cast for keeping the hoard  
when once the warriors saw it in hall,  
altogether without a guardian,  
lying there lost. And little they mourned  
when they had hastily haled it out,  
dear-bought treasure! The dragon they cast,
the worm, o’er the wall for the wave to take,  
and surges swallowed that shepherd of gems.  
Then the woven gold on a wain was laden —  
countless quite! — and the king was borne,  
hoary hero, to Hrones-Ness.

XLI

THEN fashioned for him the folk of Geats  
firm on the earth a funeral-pile,  
and hung it with helmets and harness of war  
and breastplates bright, as the boon he asked;  
and they laid amid it the mighty chieftain,  
heroes mourning their master dear.  
Then on the hill that hugest of balefires  
the warriors wakened. Wood-smoke rose  
black over blaze, and blent was the roar  
of flame with weeping (the wind was still),  
till the fire had broken the frame of bones,  
hot at the heart. In heavy mood  
their misery moaned they, their master’s death.  
Wailing her woe, the widow (Note: Nothing is said of Beowulf’s wife in the poem, but Bugge surmises that Beowulf finally accepted Hygd’s offer of kingdom and hoard, and, as was usual, took her into the bargain.) old,  
her hair upbound, for Beowulf’s death  
sung in her sorrow, and said full oft  
she dreaded the doleful days to come,  
deaths enow, and doom of battle,  
and shame. — The smoke by the sky was devoured.  
The folk of the Weders fashioned there  
on the headland a barrow broad and high,  
by ocean-farers far descried:  
in ten days’ time their toil had raised it,  
the battle-brave’s beacon. Round brands of the pyre  
a wall they built, the worthiest ever  
that wit could prompt in their wisest men.  
They placed in the barrow that precious booty,  
the rounds and the rings they had reft erewhile,  
hardy heroes, from hoard in cave, —  
trusting the ground with treasure of earls,  
gold in the earth, where ever it lies  
useless to men as of yore it was.  
Then about that barrow the battle-keen rode,  
atheling-born, a band of twelve,  
lament to make, to mourn their king,  
chant their dirge, and their chieftain honor.  
They praised his earlship, his acts of prowess  
worthily witnessed: and well it is  
that men their master-friend mightily laud,  
heartily love, when hence he goes  
from life in the body forlorn away.

Thus made their mourning the men of Geatland,  
for their hero’s passing his hearth-companions:  
quoth that of all the kings of earth,  
of men he was mildest and most beloved,
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Alternate Translations

A modernized version of *Beowulf: A Verse Translation with Treasures of the Ancient North* can be downloaded as a PDF from the University of Oxford website.

Part 1 of *Beowulf: A Verse Translation with Treasures of the Ancient North*

Part 2 of *Beowulf: A Verse Translation with Treasures of the Ancient North*

Please note that the PDFs come through sideways. You can rotate them in your PDF viewer.

Audio Files

“Beowulf Lecture” by Dr. Francis Leneghan from University of Oxford

Podcast lecture of the background and import of Beowulf in British Literature.

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EVERYMAN

EVERYMAN: BACKGROUND

The Somonyng of Everyman (The Summoning of Everyman), usually referred to simply as Everyman, is a late 15th-century morality play. Like John Bunyan’s 1678 Christian novel The Pilgrim’s Progress, Everyman uses allegorical characters to examine the question of Christian salvation and what Man must do to attain it. The premise is that the good and evil deeds of one’s life will be tallied by God after death, as in a ledger book. The play is the allegorical accounting of the life of Everyman, who represents all mankind. In the course of the action, Everyman tries to convince other characters to accompany him in the hope of improving his account. All the characters are also allegorical, each personifying an abstract idea such as Fellowship, (material) Goods, and Knowledge. The conflict between good and evil is dramatised by the interactions between characters. Everyman is being singled out because it is difficult for him to find characters to accompany him on his pilgrimage. Everyman eventually realizes through this pilgrimage that he is essentially alone, despite all the personified characters that were supposed necessities and friends to him. Everyman learns that when you are brought to death and placed before God all you are left with is your own good deeds.

Additional information on Everyman can be found here.

EVERYMAN: A 15TH CENTURY MORALITY PLAY

CHARACTERS

• Everyman
• God: Adonai
• Death
• Messenger
• Fellowship
EVERYMAN

HERE BEGINNETH A TREATISE HOW THE HIGH FATHER OF HEAVEN SENDETH DEATH TO SUMMON EVERY CREATURE TO COME AND GIVE ACCOUNT OF THEIR LIVES IN THIS WORLD AND IS IN MANNER OF A MORAL PLAY.

Messenger. I pray you all give your audience,
And hear this matter with reverence,
By figure a moral play—
The Summoning of Everyman called it is,
That of our lives and ending shows
How transitory we be all day.
This matter is wondrous precious,
But the intent of it is more gracious,
And sweet to bear away.
The story saith,—Man, in the beginning,
Look well, and take good heed to the ending,
Be you never so gay!
Ye think sin in the beginning full sweet,
Which in the end causeth thy soul to weep,
When the body lieth in clay.
Here shall you see how Fellowship and Jollity,
Both Strength, Pleasure, and Beauty,
Will fade from thee as flower in May.
For ye shall hear, how our heaven king
Calleth Everyman to a general reckoning:
Give audience, and hear what he doth say.

God. I perceive here in my majesty,
How that all creatures be to me unkind,
Living without dread in worldly prosperity:
Of ghostly sight the people be so blind,
Drowned in sin, they know me not for their God;
In worldly riches is all their mind,
They fear not my rightwiseness, the sharp rod;
My law that I shewed, when I for them died,
They forget clean, and shedding of my blood red;
I hanged between two, it cannot be denied;
To get them life I suffered to be dead;
I healed their feet, with thorns hurt was my head:
I could do no more than I did truly,
And now I see the people do clean forsake me.
They use the seven deadly sins damnable;
As pride, covetise, wrath, and lechery,
Now in the world be made commendable;
And thus they leave of angels the heavenly company;
Everyman liveth so after his own pleasure,
And yet of their life they be nothing sure:
I see the more that I them forbear
The worse they be from year to year;
All that liveth appaireth (Note: is impaired,) fast,
Therefore I will in all the haste
Have a reckoning of Everyman's person
For and I leave the people thus alone
In their life and wicked tempests,
Verily they will become much worse than beasts;
For now one would by envy another up eat;
Charity they all do clean forget.
I hoped well that Everyman
In my glory should make his mansion,
And thereto I had them all elect;
But now I see, like traitors deject,
They thank me not for the pleasure that I to them meant,
Nor yet for their being that I them have lent;
I proffered the people great multitude of mercy,
And few there be that asketh it heartily;
They be so cumbered with worldly riches,
That needs on them I must do justice,
On Everyman living without fear.
Where art thou, Death, thou mighty messenger?

Death. Almighty God, I am here at your will,
Your commandment to fulfil.

God. Go thou to Everyman,
And show him in my name
A pilgrimage he must on him take,
Which he in no wise may escape;
And that he bring with him a sure reckoning
Without delay or any tarrying.

Death. Lord, I will in the world go run over all,
And cruelly outsearch both great and small;
Every man will I beset that liveth beastly
Out of God's laws, and dreadeth not folly:
He that loveth riches I will strike with my dart,
His sight to blind, and from heaven to depart,
Except that alms be his good friend,
In hell for to dwell, world without end.
Lo, yonder I see Everyman walking;
Full little he thinketh on my coming;
His mind is on fleshly lusts and his treasure,
And great pain it shall cause him to endure
Before the Lord Heaven King.
Everyman, stand still; whither art thou going
Thus gaily? Hast thou thy Maker forget?

Everyman. Why askst thou?
Wouldest thou wete? (Note: know.)

Death. Yea, sir, I will show you;
In great haste I am sent to thee
From God out of his majesty.

Everyman. What, sent to me?
Death. Yea, certainly.
Though thou have forget him here,
He thinketh on thee in the heavenly sphere,
As, or we depart, thou shalt know.

Everyman. What desireth God of me?

Death. That shall I show thee:
A reckoning he will needs have
Without any longer respite.

Everyman. To give a reckoning longer leisure I crave;
This blind matter troubleth my wit.

Death. On thee thou must take a long journey:
Therefore thy book of count with thee thou bring;
For turn again thou can not by no way,
And look thou be sure of thy reckoning:
For before God thou shalt answer, and show
Thy many bad deeds and good but a few;
How thou hast spent thy life, and in what wise,
Before the chief lord of paradise.
Have ado that we were in that way,
For, wete thou well, thou shalt make none attournay. (Note: mediator.)

Everyman. Full unready I am such reckoning to give.
I know thee not: what messenger art thou?

Death. I am Death, that no man dreadeth.
For every man I rest and no man spareth;
For it is God’s commandment
That all to me should be obedient.

Everyman. O Death, thou comest when I had thee least in mind;
In thy power it lieth me to save,
Yet of my good will I give thee, if ye will be kind,
Yea, a thousand pound shalt thou have,
And defer this matter till another day.

Death. Everyman, it may not be by no way;
I set not by gold, silver, nor riches,
Ne by pope, emperor, king, duke, ne princes.
For and I would receive gifts great,
All the world I might get;
But my custom is clean contrary.
I give thee no respite: come hence, and not tarry.

Everyman. Alas, shall I have no longer respite?
I may say Death giveth no warning:
To think on thee, it maketh my heart sick,
For all unready is my book of reckoning,
But twelve year and I might have abiding,
My counting book I would make so clear,
That my reckoning I should not need to fear.
Wherefore, Death, I pray thee, for God’s mercy,
Spare me till I be provided of remedy.

Death. Thee availeth not to cry, weep, and pray:
But haste thee lightly that you were gone the journey,
And prove thy friends if thou can.
For, wete thou well, the tide abideth no man,
And in the world each living creature
For Adam’s sin must die of nature.

Everyman. Death, if I should this pilgrimage take,
And my reckoning surely make,
Show me, for saint charity,
Should I not come again shortly?

Death. No, Everyman; and thou be once there,
Thou mayst never more come here,
Trust me verily.

Everyman. O gracious God, in the high seat celestial,
Have mercy on me in this most need;
Shall I have no company from this vale terrestrial
Of mine acquaintance that way me to lead?

Death. Yea, if any be so hardy,
That would go with thee and bear thee company.
Hie thee that you were gone to God’s magnificence,
Thy reckoning to give before his presence.
What, weenest thou thy life is given thee,
And thy worldly goods also?

Everyman. I had wend so, verily.

Death. Nay, nay; it was but lent thee;
For as soon as thou art go,
Another awhile shall have it, and then go therefro
Even as thou hast done.
Everyman, thou art mad; thou hast thy wits five,
And here on earth will not amend thy life,
For suddenly I do come.

Everyman. O wretched caitiff, whither shall I flee,
That I might scape this endless sorrow!
Now, gentle Death, spare me till to-morrow,
That I may amend me
With good advisement.

Death. Nay, thereto I will not consent,
Nor no man will I respite,
But to the heart suddenly I shall smite
Without any advisement.
And now out of thy sight I will me hie;
See thou make thee ready shortly,
For thou mayst say this is the day
That no man living may scape away.

Everyman. Alas, I may well weep with sighs deep;
Now have I no manner of company
To help me in my journey, and me to keep;
And also my writing is full unready.
How shall I do now for to excuse me?
I would to God I had never be gete! (Note: been gotten, been born.)
To my soul a full great profit it had be;
For now I fear pains huge and great.
The time passeth; Lord, help that all wrought;
For though I mourn it availeth nought.
The day passeth, and is almost a-go;
I wot not well what for to do.
To whom were I best my complaint to make?
What, and I to Fellowship thereof spake,
And showed him of this sudden chance?
For in him is all mine affiance;
We have in the world so many a day
Be on good friends in sport and play.
I see him yonder, certainly;
I trust that he will bear me company;
Therefore to him will I speak to ease my sorrow.
Well met, good Fellowship, and good morrow!

Fellowship speaketh. Everyman, good morrow by this day.
Sir, why lookest thou so piteously?
If any thing be amiss, I pray thee, me say,
That I may help to remedy.

Everyman. Yea, good Fellowship, yea,
I am in great jeopardy.

Fellowship. My true friend, show to me your mind;
I will not forsake thee, unto my life’s end,
In the way of good company.

Everyman. That was well spoken, and lovingly.

Fellowship. Sir, I must needs know your heaviness;
I have pity to see you in any distress;
If any have you wronged ye shall revenged be,
Though I on the ground be slain for thee,–
Though that I know before that I should die.

Everyman. Verily, Fellowship, gramercy.

Fellowship. Tush! by thy thanks I set not a straw.
Show me your grief, and say no more.

Everyman. If I my heart should to you break,
And then you to turn your mind from me,
And would not me comfort, when you hear me speak,
Then should I ten times sorrier be.

Fellowship. Sir, I say as I will do in deed.

Everyman. Then be you a good friend at need:
I have found you true here before.

Fellowship. And so ye shall evermore;
For, in faith, and thou go to Hell,
I will not forsake thee by the way!

Everyman. Ye speak like a good friend; I believe you well;
I shall deserve it, and I may.

Fellowship. I speak of no deserving, by this day.
For he that will say and nothing do
Is not worthy with good company to go;
Therefore show me the grief of your mind,
As to your friend most loving and kind.

Everyman. I shall show you how it is;
Commanded I am to go a journey,
A long way, hard and dangerous,
And give a strait count without delay
Before the high judge Adonai. (Note: God.)
Wherefore I pray you, bear me company,
As ye have promised, in this journey.

_Fellowship._ That is matter indeed! Promise is duty,
But, and I should take such a voyage on me,
I know it well, it should be to my pain:
Also it make me afeard, certain.
But let us take counsel here as well as we can,
For your words would fear a strong man.

_Everyman._ Why, ye said, If I had need,
Ye would me never forsake, quick nor dead,
Though it were to hell truly.

_Fellowship._ So I said, certainly,
But such pleasures be set aside, thee sooth to say:
And also, if we took such a journey,
When should we come again?

_Everyman._ Nay, never again till the day of doom.

_Fellowship._ In faith, then will not I come there!
Who hath you these tidings brought?

_Everyman._ Indeed, _Death_ was with me here.

_Fellowship._ Now, by God that all hath bought,
If _Death_ were the messenger,
For no man that is living to-day
I will not go that loath journey—
Not for the father that begat me!

_Everyman._ Ye promised other wise, pardie.

_Fellowship._ I wot well I say so truly;
And yet if thou wilt eat, and drink, and make good cheer,
Or haunt to women, the lusty company,
I would not forsake you, while the day is clear,
Trust me verily!

_Everyman._ Yea, thereto ye would be ready;
To go to mirth, solace, and play,
Your mind will sooner apply
Than to bear me company in my long journey.

_Fellowship._ Now, in good faith, I will not that way.
But and thou wilt murder, or any man kill,
In that I will help thee with a good will!

_Everyman._ O that is a simple advice indeed!
Gentle fellow, help me in my necessity;
We have loved long, and now I need,
And now, gentle _Fellowship_, remember me.

_Fellowship._ Whether ye have loved me or no,
By Saint John, I will not with thee go.

_Everyman._ Yet I pray thee, take the labour, and do so much for me
To bring me forward, for saint charity,
And comfort me till I come without the town.
Fellowship. Nay, and thou would give me a new gown,
I will not a foot with thee go;
But and you had tarried I would not have left thee so.
And as now, God speed thee in thy journey,
For from thee I will depart as fast as I may.

Everyman. Whither away, Fellowship? will you forsake me?

Fellowship. Yea, by my fay, to God I betake thee.

Everyman. Farewell, good Fellowship; for this my heart is sore;
Adieu for ever, I shall see thee no more.

Fellowship. In faith, Everyman, farewell now at the end;
For you I will remember that parting is mourning.

Everyman. Alack! shall we thus depart indeed?
Our Lady, help, without any more comfort,
Lo, Fellowship forsaketh me in my most need:
For help in this world whither shall I resort?
Fellowship herebefore with me would merry make;
And now little sorrow for me doth he take.
It is said, in prosperity men friends may find,
Which in adversity be full unkind.
Now whither for succour shall I flee,
Sith that Fellowship hath forsaken me?
To my kinsmen I will truly,
Praying them to help me in my necessity;
I believe that they will do so,
For kind will creep where it may not go.
I will go say, for yonder I see them go.
Where be ye now, my friends and kinsmen?

Kindred. Here be we now at your commandment.
Cousin, I pray you show us your intent
In any wise, and not spare.

Cousin. Yea, Everyman, and to us declare
If ye be disposed to go any whither,
For wete you well, we will live and die together.

Kindred. In wealth and woe we will with you hold,
For over his kin a man may be bold.

Everyman. Gramercy, my friends and kinsmen kind.
Now shall I show you the grief of my mind:
I was commanded by a messenger,
That is an high king’s chief officer;
He bade me go a pilgrimage to my pain,
And I know well I shall never come again;
Also I must give a reckoning straight,
For I have a great enemy, that hath me in wait,
Which intendeth me for to hinder.

Kindred. What account is that which ye must render?
That would I know.

Everyman. Of all my works I must show
How I have lived and my days spent;
Also of ill deeds, that I have used
In my time, sith life was me lent;
And of all virtues that I have refused.
Therefore I pray you go thither with me,
To help to make mine account, for saint charity.

Cousin. What, to go thither? Is that the matter?
Nay, Everyman, I had liefer fast bread and water
All this five year and more.

Everyman. Alas, that ever I was bore! (Note: born.)
For now shall I never be merry
If that you forsake me.

Kindred. Ah, sir; what, ye be a merry man!
Take good heart to you, and make no moan.
But one thing I warn you, by Saint Anne,
As for me, ye shall go alone.

Everyman. My Cousin, will you not with me go?

Cousin. No, by our Lady; I have the cramp in my toe.
Trust not to me, for, so God me speed,
I will deceive you in your most need,
Kindred. It availeth not us to tice.
Ye shall have my maid with all my heart;
She loveth to go to feasts, there to be nice,
And to dance, and abroad to start:
I will give her leave to help you in that journey,
If that you and she may agree.

Everyman. Now show me the very effect of your mind.
Will you go with me, or abide behind?

Kindred. Abide behind? yea, that I will and I may!
Therefore farewell until another day.

Everyman. How should I be merry or glad?
For fair promises to me make,
But when I have most need, they me forsake.
I am deceived; that maketh me sad.

Cousin. Cousin Everyman, farewell now,
For verily I will not go with you;
Also of mine own an unready reckoning
I have to account; therefore I make tarrying.
Now, God keep thee, for now I go.

Everyman. Ah, Jesus, is all come hereto?
Lo, fair words maketh fools feign;
They promise and nothing will do certain.
My kinsmen promised me faithfully
For to abide with me steadfastly,
And now fast away do they flee:
Even so Fellowship promised me.
What friend were best me of to provide?
I lose my time here longer to abide.
Yet in my mind a thing there is;—
All my life I have loved riches;
If that my good now help me might,
He would make my heart full light.
I will speak to him in this distress.—
Where art thou, my Goods and riches?
I lie here in corners, trussed and piled so high,
And in chests I am locked so fast,
Also sacked in bags, thou mayst see with thine eye,
I cannot stir; in packs low I lie,
What would ye have, lightly me say.

Everyman. Come hither, Good, in all the haste thou may,
For of counsel I must desire thee.

Goods. Sir, and ye in the world have trouble or adversity,
That can I help you to remedy shortly.

Everyman. It is another disease that grieveth me;
In this world it is not, I tell thee so.
I am sent for another way to go,
To give a straight account general
Before the highest Jupiter of all;
And all my life I have had joy and pleasure in thee.
Therefore I pray thee go with me,
For, peradventure, thou mayst before God Almighty
My reckoning help to clean and purify;
For it is said ever among,
That money maketh all right that is wrong.

Goods. Nay, Everyman, I sing another song,
I follow no man in such voyages;
For and I went with thee
Thou shouldst fare much the worse for me;
For because on me thou did set thy mind,
Thy reckoning I have made blotted and blind,
That thine account thou cannot make truly;
And that hast thou for the love of me.

Everyman. That would grieve me full sore,
When I should come to that fearful answer.
Up, let us go thither together.

Goods. Nay, not so, I am too brittle, I may not endure;
I will follow no man one foot, be ye sure.

Everyman. Alas, I have thee loved, and had great pleasure
All my life-days on good and treasure.

Goods. That is to thy damnation without leising,
For my love is contrary to the love everlasting.
But if thou had me loved moderately during,
As, to the poor give part of me,
Then shouldst thou not in this dolour be,
Nor in this great sorrow and care.

Everyman. Lo, now was I deceived or I was ware,
And all I may wyte (Note: blame.) my spending of time.

Goods. What, weenest thou that I am thine?

Everyman. I had wend so.

Goods. Nay, Everyman, I say no;
As for a while I was lent thee,
A season thou hast had me in prosperity;
My condition is man's soul to kill;
If I save one, a thousand I do spill;
Weenest thou that I will follow thee?
Nay, from this world, not verily.

Everyman. I had wend otherwise.

Goods. Therefore to thy soul Good is a thief;
For when thou art dead, this is my guise
Another to deceive in the same wise
As I have done thee, and all to his soul's reprieve.

Everyman. O false Good, cursed thou be!
Thou traitor to God, that hast deceived me,
And caught me in thy snare.

Goods. Marry, thou brought thyself in care,
Whereof I am glad,
I must needs laugh, I cannot be sad.

Everyman. Ah, Good, thou hast had long my heartly love;
I gave thee that which should be the Lord's above.
But wilt thou not go with me in deed?
I pray thee truth to say.

Goods. No, so God me speed,
Therefore farewell, and have good day.

Everyman. O, to whom shall I make my moan
For to go with me in that heavy journey?
First Fellowship said he would with me gone;
His words were very pleasant and gay,
But afterward he left me alone.
Then spake I to my kinsmen all in despair,
And also they gave me words fair,
They lacked no fair speaking,
But all forsake me in the ending.
Then went I to my Goods that I loved best,
In hope to have comfort, but there had I least;
For my Goods sharply did me tell
That he bringeth many into hell.
Then of myself I was ashamed,
And so I am worthy to be blamed;
Thus may I well myself hate.
Of whom shall I now counsel take?
I think that I shall never speed
Till that I go to my Good-Deed,
But alas, she is so weak,
That she can neither go nor speak;
Yet will I venture on her now.—
My Good-Deeds, where be you?

Good-Deeds. Here I lie cold in the ground;
Thy sins hath me sore bound,
That I cannot stir.

Everyman. O, Good-Deeds, I stand in fear;
I must you pray of counsel,
For help now should come right well.

Goods-Deeds. Everyman, I have understanding
That ye be summoned account to make
Before *Messias*, of Jerusalem King;
And you do by me (Note: If you go by me.) that journey what (Note: with.) you will I take.

*Everyman*. Therefore I come to you, my moan to make;
I pray you, that ye will go with me.

*Good-Deeds*. I would full fain, but I cannot stand verily.

*Everyman*. Why, is there anything on you fall?

*Good-Deeds*. Yea, sir, I may thank you of all;
If ye had perfectly cheered me,
Your book of account now full ready had be.
Look, the books of your works and deeds eke;
Oh, see how they lie under the feet,
To your soul’s heaviness.

*Everyman*. Our Lord Jesus, help me!
For one letter here I can not see.

*Good-Deeds*. There is a blind reckoning in time of distress!

*Everyman*. *Good-Deeds*, I pray you, help me in this need,
Or else I am for ever damned indeed;
Therefore help me to make reckoning
Before the redeemer of all thing,
That king is, and was, and ever shall.

*Good-Deeds*. *Everyman*, I am sorry of your fall,
And fain would I help you, and I were able.

*Everyman*. *Good-Deeds*, your counsel I pray you give me.

*Good-Deeds*. That shall I do verily;
Though that on my feet I may not go,
I have a sister, that shall with you also,
Called *Knowledge*, which shall with you abide,
To help you to make that dreadful reckoning.

*Knowledge*. *Everyman*, I will go with thee, and be thy guide,
In thy most need to go by thy side.

*Everyman*. In good condition I am now in every thing,
And am wholly content with this good thing;
Thanked be God my Creator.

*Good-Deeds*. And when he hath brought thee there,
Where thou shalt heal thee of thy smart,
Then go you with your reckoning and your *Good-Deeds* together
For to make you joyful at heart
Before the blessed Trinity.

*Everyman*. My *Good-Deeds*, gramercy;
I am well content, certainly,
With your words sweet.

*Knowledge*. Now go we together lovingly,
To *Confession*, that cleansing river.

*Everyman*. For joy I weep; I would we were there;
But, I pray you, give me cognition
Where dwelleth that holy man, *Confession*. 
Knowledge. In the house of salvation:
We shall find him in that place,
That shall us comfort by God's grace.
Lo, this is Confession; kneel down and ask mercy,
For he is in good conceit with God almighty.

Everyman. O glorious fountain that all uncleanness doth clarify,
Wash from me the spots of vices unclean,
That on me no sin may be seen;
I come with Knowledge for my redemption,
Repent with hearty and full contrition;
For I am commanded a pilgrimage to take,
And great accounts before God to make.
Now, I pray you, Shrift, mother of salvation,
Help my good deeds for my piteous exclamation.

Confession. I know your sorrow well, Everyman;
Because with Knowledge ye come to me,
I will you comfort as well as I can,
And a precious jewel I will give thee,
Called penance, wise voider of adversity;
Therewith shall your body chastised be,
With abstinence and perseverance in God's service:
Here shall you receive that scourge of me,
Which is penance strong, that ye must endure,
To remember thy Saviour was scourged for thee
With sharp scourges, and suffered it patiently;
So must thou, or thou scape that painful pilgrimage;
Knowledge, keep him in this voyage,
And by that time Good-Deeds will be with thee.
But in any wise, be sure of mercy,
For your time draweth fast, and ye will saved be;
Ask God mercy, and He will grant truly,
When with the scourge of penance man doth him bind,
The oil of forgiveness then shall he find.

Everyman. Thanked be God for his gracious work!
For now I will my penance begin;
This hath rejoiced and lighted my heart,
Though the knots be painful and hard within.

Knowledge. Everyman, look your penance that ye fulfil,
What pain that ever it to you be,
And Knowledge shall give you counsel at will,
How your accounts ye shall make clearly.

Everyman. O eternal God, O heavenly figure,
O way of rightwiseness, O goodly vision,
Which descended down in a virgin pure
Because he would Everyman redeem,
Which Adam forfeited by his disobedience:
O blessed Godhead, elect and high-divine,
Forgive my grievous offence;
Here I cry thee mercy in this presence.
O ghostly treasure, O ransomer and redeemer
Of all the world, hope and conductor,
Mirror of joy, and founder of mercy,
Which illumineth heaven and earth thereby,
Hear my clamorous complaint, though it late be;
Receive my prayers; unworthy in this heavy life,
Though I be, a sinner most abominable,
Yet let my name be written in Moses’ table;  
O Mary, pray to the Maker of all thing,  
Me for to help at my ending,  
And save me from the power of my enemy,  
For Death assaileth me strongly;  
And, Lady, that I may by means of thy prayer  
Of your Son’s glory to be partaker,  
By the means of his passion I it crave,  
I beseech you, help my soul to save.—  
Knowledge, give me the scourge of penance;  
My flesh therewith shall give a quittance:  
I will now begin, if God give me grace.

Knowledge. Everyman, God give you time and space:  
Thus I bequeath you in the hands of our Saviour,  
Thus may you make your reckoning sure.

Everyman. In the name of the Holy Trinity,  
My body sore punished shall be:  
Take this body for the sin of the flesh;  
Also thou delightest to go gay and fresh,  
And in the way of damnation thou did me bring;  
Therefore suffer now strokes and punishing.  
Now of penance I will wade the water clear,  
To save me from purgatory, that sharp fire.

Good-Deeds. I thank God, now I can walk and go;  
And am delivered of my sickness and woe.  
Therefore with Everyman I will go, and not spare;  
His good works I will help him to declare.

Knowledge. Now, Everyman, be merry and glad;  
Your Good-Deeds cometh now; ye may not be sad;  
Now is your Good-Deeds whole and sound,  
Going upright upon the ground.

Everyman. My heart is light, and shall be evermore;  
Now will I smite faster than I did before.

Good-Deeds. Everyman, pilgrim, my special friend,  
Blessed be thou without end;  
For thee is prepared the eternal glory.  
Ye have me made whole and sound,  
Therefore I will bide by thee in every stound. (Note: season.)

Everyman. Welcome, my Good-Deeds; now I hear thy voice,  
I weep for very sweetness of love.

Knowledge. Be no more sad, but ever rejoice,  
God seeth thy living in his throne above;  
Put on this garment to thy behove,  
Which is wet with your tears,  
Or else before God you may it miss,  
When you to your journey’s end come shall.

Everyman. Gentle Knowledge, what do you it call?

Knowledge. It is a garment of sorrow:  
From pain it will you borrow;  
Contrition it is,
That getteth forgiveness;
It pleaseth God passing well.

*Good-Deeds.* Everyman, will you wear it for your heal?

*Everyman.* Now blessed be Jesu, Mary’s Son!
For now have I on true contrition.
And let us go now without tarrying:
*Good-Deeds,* have we clear our reckoning?

*Good-Deeds.* Yea, indeed I have it here.

*Everyman.* Then I trust we need not fear;
Now, friends, let us not part in twain.

*Knowledge.* Nay, *Everyman,* that will we not, certain.

*Good-Deeds.* Yet must thou lead with thee
Three persons of great might.

*Everyman.* Who should they be?

*Good-Deeds.* *Discretion* and *Strength* they hight,
And thy *Beauty* may not abide behind.

*Knowledge.* Also ye must call to mind
Your *Five-wits* as for your counsellors.

*Good-Deeds.* You must have them ready at all hours.

*Everyman.* How shall I get them hither?

*Knowledge.* You must call them all together,
And they will hear you incontinent.

*Everyman.* My friends, come hither and be present
*Discretion,* *Strength,* my *Five-wits,* and *Beauty.*

*Beauty.* Here at your will we be all ready.
What will ye that we should do?

*Good-Deeds.* That ye would with *Everyman* go,
And help him in his pilgrimage,
Advise you, will ye with him or not in that voyage?

*Strength.* We will bring him all thither,
To his help and comfort, ye may believe me.

*Discretion.* So will we go with him all together.

*Everyman.* Almighty God, loved thou be,
I give thee laud that I have hither brought
*Strength,* *Discretion,* *Beauty,* and *Five-wits*; lack I nought;
And my *Good-Deeds,* with *Knowledge* clear,
All be in my company at my will here;
I desire no more to my business.

*Strength.* And I, *Strength,* will by you stand in distress,
Though thou would in battle fight on the ground.

*Five-wits.* And though it were through the world round,
We will not depart for sweet nor sour.
Beauty. No more will I unto death’s hour, 
Whatsoever thereof befall.

Discretion. Everyman, advise you first of all; 
Go with a good advisement and deliberation; 
We all give you virtuous monition 
That all shall be well.

Everyman. My friends, hearken what I will tell: 
I pray God reward you in his heavenly sphere. 
Now hearken, all that be here, 
For I will make my testament 
Here before you all present.
In alms half my good I will give with my hands twain 
In the way of charity, with good intent, 
And the other half still shall remain 
In quiet to be returned there it ought to be. 
This I do in despite of the fiend of hell 
To go quite out of his peril 
Ever after and this day.

Knowledge. Everyman, hearken what I say; 
Go to priesthood, I you advise, 
And receive of him in any wise 
The holy sacrament and ointment together; 
Then shortly see ye turn again hither; 
We will all abide you here.

Five-Wits. Yea, Everyman, hie you that ye ready were, 
There is no emperor, king, duke, ne baron, 
That of God hath commission, 
As hath the least priest in the world being; 
For of the blessed sacraments pure and benign, 
He beareth the keys and thereof hath the cure 
For man's redemption, it is ever sure; 
Which God for our soul's medicine 
Gave us out of his heart with great pine; 
Here in this transitory life, for thee and me 
The blessed sacraments seven there be, 
Baptism, confirmation, with priesthood good, 
And the sacrament of God's precious flesh and blood, 
Marriage, the holy extreme unction, and penance; 
These seven be good to have in remembrance, 
Gracious sacraments of high divinity.

Everyman. Fain would I receive that holy body 
And meekly to my ghostly father I will go.

Five-wits. Everyman, that is the best that ye can do: 
God will you to salvation bring, 
For priesthood exceedeth all other thing; 
To us Holy Scripture they do teach, 
And converteth man from sin heaven to reach; 
God hath to them more power given, 
Than to any angel that is in heaven; 
With five words he may consecrate 
God’s body in flesh and blood to make, 
And handleth his maker between his hands; 
The priest bindeth and unbindeth all bands, 
Both in earth and in heaven; 
Thou ministers all the sacraments seven;
Though we kissed thy feet thou were worthy;
Thou art surgeon that cureth sin deadly:
No remedy we find under God
But all only priesthood.
*Everyman*, God gave priests that dignity,
And setteth them in his stead among us to be;
Thus be they above angels in degree.

*Knowledge*. If priests be good it is so surely;
But when Jesus hanged on the cross with great smart
There he gave, out of his blessed heart,
The same sacrament in great torment:
He sold them not to us, that Lord Omnipotent.
Therefore Saint Peter the apostle doth say
That Jesu's curse hath all they
Which God their Saviour do buy or sell,
Or they for any money do take or tell.
Sinful priests giveth the sinners example bad;
Their children sitteth by other men's fires, I have heard;
And some haunteth women's company,
With unclean life, as lusts of lechery
These be with sin made blind.

*Five-wits*. I trust to God no such may we find;
Therefore let us priesthood honour,
And follow their doctrine for our souls' succour;
We be their sheep, and they shepherds be
By whom we all be kept in surety.
Peace, for yonder I see *Everyman* come,
Which hath made true satisfaction.

*Good-Deeds*. Methinketh it is he indeed.

*Everyman*. Now Jesu be our alder speed. (Note: speed in help of all.)
I have received the sacrament for my redemption,
And then mine extreme unction:
Blessed be all they that counselled me to take it!
And now, friends, let us go without longer respite;
I thank God that ye have tarried so long.
Now set each of you on this rod your hand,
And shortly follow me:
I go before, there I would be; God be our guide.

*Strength*. *Everyman*, we will not from you go,
Till ye have gone this voyage long.

*Discretion*. I, *Discretion*, will bide by you also.

*Knowledge*. And though this pilgrimage be never so strong,
I will never part you fro:
*Everyman*, I will be as sure by thee
As ever I did by Judas Maccabee.

*Everyman*. Alas, I am so faint I may not stand,
My limbs under me do fold;
Friends, let us not turn again to this land,
Not for all the world's gold,
For into this cave must I creep
And turn to the earth and there to sleep.

*Beauty*. What, into this grave? alas!
Everyman. Yea, there shall you consume more and less.

Beauty. And what, should I smother here?

Everyman. Yea, by my faith, and never more appear.
In this world live no more we shall,
But in heaven before the highest Lord of all.

Beauty. I cross out all this; adieu by Saint John;
I take my cap in my lap and am gone.

Everyman. What, Beauty, whither will ye?

Beauty. Peace, I am deaf; I look not behind me,
Not and thou would give me all the gold in thy chest.

Everyman. Alas, whereto may I trust?

Beauty goeth fast away hie;
She promised with me to live and die.

Strength. Everyman, I will thee also forsake and deny;
Thy game liketh me not at all.

Everyman. Why, then ye will forsake me all.
Sweet Strength, tarry a little space.

Strength. Nay, sir, by the rood of grace
I will hie me from thee fast,
Though thou weep till thy heart brast.

Everyman. Ye would ever bide by me, ye said.

Strength. Yea, I have you far enough conveyed;
Ye be old enough, I understand,
Your pilgrimage to take on hand;
I repent me that I hither came.

Everyman. Strength, you to displease I am to blame;
Will you break promise that is debt?

Strength. In faith, I care not;
Thou art but a fool to complain,
You spend your speech and waste your brain;
Go thrust thee into the ground.

Everyman. I had wend surer I should you have found.
He that trusteth in his Strength
She him deceiveth at the length.
Both Strength and Beauty forsaketh me,
Yet they promised me fair and lovingly.

Discretion. Everyman, I will after Strength be gone,
As for me I will leave you alone.

Everyman. Why, Discretion, will ye forsake me?

Discretion. Yea, in faith, I will go from thee,
For when Strength goeth before
I follow after evermore.

Everyman. Yet, I pray thee, for the love of the Trinity,
Look in my grave once piteously.
Discretion. Nay, so nigh will I not come.
Farewell, every one!

Everyman. O all thing faileth, save God alone;
Beauty, Strength, and Discretion;
For when Death bloweth his blast,
They all run from me full fast.

Five-wits. Everyman, my leave now of thee I take;
I will follow the other, for here I thee forsake.

Everyman. Alas! then may I wail and weep,
For I took you for my best friend.

Five-wits. I will no longer thee keep;
Now farewell, and there an end.

Everyman. O Jesu, help, all hath forsaken me!

Good-Deeds. Nay, Everyman, I will bide with thee,
I will not forsake thee indeed;
Thou shalt find me a good friend at need.

Everyman. Gramercy, Good-Deeds; now may I true friends see;
They have forsaken me every one;
I loved them better than my Good-Deeds alone.
Knowledge, will ye forsake me also?

Knowledge. Yea, Everyman, when ye to death do go:
But not yet for no manner of danger.

Everyman. Gramercy, Knowledge, with all my heart.

Knowledge. Nay, yet I will not from hence depart,
Till I see where ye shall be come.

Everyman. Methinketh, alas, that I must be gone,
To make my reckoning and my debts pay,
For I see my time is nigh spent away.
Take example, all ye that this do hear or see,
How they that I loved best do forsake me,
Except my Good-Deeds that bideth truly.

Good-Deeds. All earthly things is but vanity:
Beauty, Strength, and Discretion, do man forsake,
Foolish friends and kinsmen, that fair spake,
All fleeth save Good-Deeds, and that am I.

Everyman. Have mercy on me, God most mighty;
And stand by me, thou Mother and Maid, holy Mary.

Good-Deeds. Fear not, I will speak for thee.

Everyman. Here I cry God mercy.

Good-Deeds. Short our end, and minish our pain;
Let us go and never come again.

Everyman. Into thy hands, Lord, my soul I commend;
Receive it, Lord, that it be not lost;
As thou me boughtest, so me defend,
And save me from the fiend’s boast,
That I may appear with that blessed host
That shall be saved at the day of doom.
In manus tuas—of might’s most
For ever—commendō spiritum meum.

Knowledge. Now hath he suffered that we all shall endure;
The Good-Deeds shall make all sure.
Now hath he made ending;
Methinketh that I hear angels sing
And make great joy and melody,
Where Everyman’s soul received shall be.

Angel. Come, excellent elect spouse to Jesu:
Hereabove thou shalt go
Because of thy singular virtue:
Now the soul is taken the body fro;
Thy reckoning is crystal-clear.
Now shalt thou into the heavenly sphere,
Unto the which all ye shall come
That liveth well before the day of doom.

Doctor. This moral men may have in mind;
Ye hearers, take it of worth, old and young,
And forsake pride, for he deceiveth you in the end,
And remember Beauty, Five-wits, Strength, and Discretion,
They all at the last do Everyman forsake,
Save his Good-Deeds, there doth he take.
But beware, and they be small
Before God, he hath no help at all.
None excuse may be there for Everyman:
Alas, how shall he do then?
For after death amends may no man make,
For then mercy and pity do him forsake.
If his reckoning be not clear when he do come,
God will say—in maledicti in ignem aeternum.
And he that hath his account whole and sound,
High in heaven he shall be crowned;
Unto which place God bring us all thither
That we may live body and soul together.
Thereto help the Trinity,
Amen, say ye, for saint Charity.

THUS ENDETH THIS MORALL PLAY OF EVERYMAN.
This link provide excellent contextual information about medieval drama. *Everyman*, this week’s literature reading assignment is a Morality Play. The section on Morality plays follows the section on Mystery Plays. We are not reading a Mystery play, but it will help you to understand the Morality play as a type of liturgical (religious) drama to read that section as well. The section from The Interludes onwards looks ahead to later drama. It is not directly applicable to this weeks literature, but will help you understand the context of dramas (such as Shakespeare) when we get there.
THE SECOND SHEPHERDS' PLAY

THE SECOND SHEPHERDS' PLAY: BACKGROUND

The Second Shepherds' Play (also known as The Second Shepherds’ Pageant) is a famous medieval mystery play which is contained in the manuscript HM1, the unique manuscript of the Wakefield Cycle. These plays are also referred to as the Towneley Plays, on account of the manuscript residing at Towneley Hall. The plays within the manuscript roughly follow the chronology of the Bible and so were believed to be a cycle, which is now considered not to be the case. This play gained its name because in the manuscript it immediately follows another nativity play involving the shepherds. In fact, it has been hypothesized that the second play is a revision of the first. It appears that the two shepherd plays were not intended to be performed together since many of the themes and ideas of the first play carry over to the second one. In both plays it becomes clear that Christ is coming to Earth to redeem the world from its sins. Although the underlying tone of The Second Shepherd’s Play is serious, many of the antics that occur among the shepherds are extremely farcical in nature.

The name “Wakefield Master” is a title given by Charles Mills Gayley to an unknown author of at least five of the plays that are found in the Wakefield Mystery Plays. Although nothing is known about the author, or the origins of the plays, it is agreed by several scholars that they date sometime between 1400-1450. Because of his influence in most of the Wakefield plays, it is possible he was brought into Wakefield with the purpose of editing and reworking the several plays that were already written, and did such a successful job that he was kept on to write several other plays afterwards.

The plays of the “Wakefield Master” are identified by their unique stanza form, which is nine lines rhyming a a b c c b with internal rhymes in the first four lines.

Additional information on The Second Shepherd’s Play can be found here.

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THE WAKEFIELD SECOND SHEPHERDS' PLAY

CHARACTERS

• 1st Shepherd
• 2nd Shepherd
• 3rd Shepherd
• Mac, the Sheep-stealer
• Mac's Wife, Gill
• Mary
• The Child Christ
• An Angel

THE WAKEFIELD SECOND NATIVITY PLAY

1st Shepherd. Lord! what, these weathers are cold, and I am ill happed;
I am near hand-dold (Note: numb of hand), so long have I napped;
My legs bend and fold, my fingers are chapped,
It is not as I would, for I am all lapped
In sorrow.
In storms and tempest,
Now in the east, now in the west,
Woe is him has never rest,
Mid day nor morrow.
But we silly shepherds, that walk upon the moor,
In faith, we are near hands out of the door;
No wonder, as it stands, if we be poor,
For the tilth of our lands lies fallow as the floor,
We are so lamed,
So taxed and shamed,
We are made hand-tamed,
With these gentlery-men.
Thus they rieve us of rest, Our Lady them wary,
These men that are lord-fest (Note: fast tied (to a lord, as a public-house to a brewer)), they cause the plough tarry.
That men say is for the best, we find it contrary,
Thus are husbands (Note: husbandmen) opprest, in point to miscarry,
In life.
Thus hold they us under,
Thus they bring us in blunder,
It were great wonder,
And ever should we thrive.
For may he get a paint sleeve (Note: a painted sleeve), or a brooch now on days,
Woe is he that shall grieve, or once again says,
Dare no man him reprieve, what mast'ry he has,
And yet may none believe one word that he says–
No letter.
He can make purveyance,
With boast and bragance, (Note: bragging)
And all through maintenance,
Of men that are greater.
There shall come a swain, as proud as a po, (Note: peacock)
He must borrow my wain, my plough also,
Then I am full fain to grant or he go.
Thus live we in pain, anger, and woe,
By night and day;
He must have if he longéd
If I should forgang (Note: forego) it,
I were better be hangéd
Than once say him nay.
It does me good, as I walk thus by mine own,
Of this world for to talk in manner of moan
To my sheep will I stalk and hearken anon
There abide on a balk, or sit on a stone
Full soon.
For I trow, pardie!
True men if they be,
We get more company
Or it be noon.

2nd Shepherd. “Beniste” (Note: Benedicite) and “Dominus!” what may this bemean?
Why fares this world thus, oft have we not seen.
Lord, these weathers are spitous, (Note: spiteful) and the weather full keen;
And the frost so hideous they water mine een,
No lie.
Now in dry, now in wet,
Now in snow, now in sleet,
When my shoon freeze to my feet
It is not all easy.
But as far as I ken, or yet as I go,
We silly wed-men dree mickle woe; (Note: we silly wedded men endure much woe)
We have sorrow then and then, it falls often so,
Silly capyl, our hen, both to and fro
She cackles,
But begin she to croak,
To groan or to cluck,
Woe is him, say of our cock,
For he is in the shackles.
These men that are wed, have not all their will,
When they are full hard sted, (Note: placed, bestead) they sigh full still;
God wait they are led full hard and full ill,
In bower nor in bed they say not there till
This tide.
My part have I found,
My lesson is learn’d,
Woe is him that is bound,
For he must abide.
But now late in our lives, a marvel to me,
That I think my heart rives, (Note: is riven asunder) such wonders to see,
What that destiny drives it should so be,
Some men will have two wives, and some men three,
In store.
Some are woe that have any;
But so far ken I,
Woe is he who has many,
For he feels it sore.
But young men of wooing, for God that you bought,
Be well ware of wedding, and think in your thought
“Had I wist” is a thing it serves ye of nought;
Mickle still mourning has wedding home brought,
And griefs,
With many a sharp shower,
For thou may catch in an hour
That shall serve thee full sour
As long as thou lives.
For as read I epistle, I have one to my fear
As sharp as a thistle, as rough as a brere. (Note: briar)
She is bowed like a bristle with a sour lenten cheer;
Had she once wet her whistle she could sing full clear
Her pater-noster.
She is as great as a whale,
She has a gallon of gall;
By him that died for us all!
I would I had run till I lost her.

1st Shepherd. God look over the row, full deafly ye stand.

2nd Shepherd. Yea, the devil in thy maw!—so tariand, (Note: tarrying)
Saw thou aught now of Daw?

1st Shepherd. Yea, on a lea land
Heard I him blow, he comes here at hand,
Not far;
Stand still.

2nd Shepherd. Why?

1st Shepherd. For he comes here, hope I.

2nd Shepherd. He will make us both a lie,
But if we beware.

3rd Shepherd. Christ’s cross me speed, and Saint Nicholas!
Thereof had I need, it is worse than it was.
Whoso could take heed, and let the world pass,
It is ever in dread and brittle as glass,
And slithers, (Note: slithers, slides away)
This world fared never so,
With marvels mo and mo, (Note: more and more)
Now in weal, now in woe,
And all things withers.
Was never since Noah’s flood such floods seen,
Winds and rains so rude, and storms so keen,
Some stammered, some stood in doubt, as I ween,
Now God turn all to good, I say as I mean,
For ponder.
These floods so they drown
Both in fields and in town,
They bear all down,
And that is a wonder.
We that walk in the nights, our cattle to keep,
We see sudden sights, when other men sleep:
Yet methinks my heart lights, I see shrews peep,
Ye are two, all wights, (Note: You are two who wit, or know, all I will give my sheep)
A turn.
But full ill have I meant,
As I walk on this bent, (Note: field)
I may lightly repent,
My toes if I spurn.
Ah, sir, God you save, and master mine!
A drink fain would I have and somewhat to dine.
1st Shepherd. Christ's curs, my knave, thou art a lazy hyne. (Note: hind)

2nd Shepherd. What, the boy list rave. Abide until syne (Note: till such time as we have made it)
We have made it.
I'll thrift on thy pate!
Though the shrew came late
Yet is he in state
To dine if he had it.

3rd Shepherd. Such servants as I, that sweats and swinks,
Eats our bread full dry, and that me forthinks;
We are oft wet and weary when master men winks,
Yet comes full lately both dinners and drinks,
But neatly.
Both our dame and our sire,
When we have run in the mire,
They can nip at our hire, (Note: stint our wages)
And pay us full lately.
But hear my truth, master, for the fare that ye make
I shall do thereafter work, as I take;
I shall do a little, sir, and strive and still lack,
For yet lay my supper never on my stomack
In fields.
Where to should I threap? (Note: argue)
With my staff can I leap,
And men say “light cheap
Letherly for yields.” (Note: a light bargain yields badly)

1st Shepherd. Thou wert an ill lad, to ride on wooing
With a man that had but little of spending.

2nd Shepherd. Peace, boy!—I bade: no more jangling,
Or I shall make thee afraid, by the heaven's king!

3rd Shepherd. Sir, this same day at morn,
I them left in the corn,
When they rang lauds;
They have pasture good, they cannot go wrong.

1st Shepherd. That is right by the rood, these nights are long,
Yet I would, or we yode, (Note: went) one gave us a song.

2nd Shepherd. So I thought as I stood, to mirth us among. (Note: to make mirth among us)

3rd Shepherd. I grant.

1st Shepherd. Let me sing the tenory.

2nd Shepherd. And I the treble so high.

3rd Shepherd. Then the mean falls to me;
Let see how ye chaunt.

[Mac enters, with a cloak thrown over his smock.

Mac. Now, Lord, for thy names seven, that made both moon and starns (Note: stars)
Well more than I can even: thy will, Lord, of my thorns;
I am all uneven, that moves oft my horns, (Note: "harnes" in original, which may mean "harness")
Now would God I were in heaven, for there weep no bairns
So still.
1st Shepherd. Who is that pipes so poor?

Mac. Would God ye knew how I fare!
Lo, a man that walks on the moor,
And has not all his will.

2nd Shepherd. Mac, where hast thou gone? Tell us tidings.

3rd Shepherd. Is he come? Then each one take heed to his things.

[Takes his cloak from him.

Mac. What, I am a yeoman, I tell you, of the king;
The self and the same, sent from a great lording,
And sich. (Note: such (of such))
Fy on you, get thee hence,
Out of my presence,
I must have reverence,
Why, who be ich? (Note: I)


2nd Shepherd. But, Mac, list, ye saint? I trow that ye sang.

3rd Shepherd. I trow the shrew can paint, the devil might him hang!

Mac. I shall make complaint, and make you all to thwang. (Note: be thwacked, or flogged)
At a word,
And tell even how ye doth.

1st Shepherd. But, Mac, is that sooth?
Now take out that southern tooth,
And set in a tord.

2nd Shepherd. Mac, the devil in your ee, (Note: eye) a stroke would I lend you.

3rd Shepherd. Mac, know ye not me? By God, I could tell you.

Mac. God look you all three, methought I had seen you.
Ye are a fair company.

1st Shepherd. Can ye now moan you?

2nd Shepherd. Shrew, jape! (Note: jest)
Thus late as thou goes,
What will men suppose?
And thou hast an ill noise (Note: rumour (ill repute))
Of stealing of sheep.

Mac. And I am true as steel all men wait,
But a sickness I feel, that holds me full haytt, (Note: hot)
My belly fares not well, it is out of its state.

3rd Shepherd. Seldom lies the devil dead by the gate.

Mac. Therefore
Full sore am I and ill,
If I stand stock still;
I eat not a nedyll (Note: needle--not a little bit)
This month and more.

1st Shepherd. How fares thy wife? By my hood, how fares she?
Mac. Lies weltering! by the rood! by the fire, lo!
And a house full of brood, (Note: brood, children) she drinks well too,
Ill speed other good that she will do;
But so
Eats as fast as she can,
And each year that comes to man,
She brings forth a lakan, plaything
And some years two.
But were I not more gracious, and richer by far,
I were eaten out of house, and of harbour,
Yet is she a foul dowse, if ye come near.
There is none that trows, nor knows, a war (Note: worse)
Than ken I.
Now will ye see what I proffer,
To give all in my coffer
To-morrow next to offer,
Her head mass-penny.

2nd Shepherd. I wot so forwaked (Note: early waked, or perhaps, wearied by watching) is none in this shire:
I would sleep if I taked less to my hire.

3rd Shepherd. I am cold and naked, and would have a fire.

1st Shepherd. I am weary for-raked, (Note: over-walked) and run in the mire.
Wake thou!

2nd Shepherd. Nay, I will lie down-by,
For I must sleep truly.

3rd Shepherd. As good a man’s son was I
As any of you.
But, Mac, come hither, between us shalt thou lie.

Mac. Then might I stay you bedene (Note: at once): of that ye would say,—
No dread.
From my head to my toe
Mantis tuas commendo,
Pontio Pilato. (Note: Into thy hands I commend (them), Pontius Pilate)
Christ’s cross me speed,

[He rises, the shepherds sleeping, and says:

Now were time for a man, that lacks what he wold,
To stalk privately then into a fold,
And namely to work then, and be not too bold,
He might abide the bargain, if it were told
At the ending.
Now were time for to revel;
But he needs good counsel
That fain would fare well,
And has but little spending.

[Mac works a spell on them.

But about you a circle, as round as a moon,
Till I have done that I will, till that it be noon,
That ye lie stone-still, till that I have done,
And I shall say there till of good words a foyn (Note: few)
On height;
Over your heads my hand I lift,
Out go your eyes, fore to do your sight,
But yet I must make better shift,
And it be right.
What, Lord? they sleep hard! that may ye all hear;
Was I never a shepherd, but now will I leer (Note: learn)
If the flock be scared, yet shall I nap near,
Who draws hitherward, now mends our cheer,
From sorrow:
A fat sheep I dare say,
A good fleece dare I lay,
Eft white when I may,
But this will I borrow.

[He steals a sheep and goes home.]


*His Wife.* Who makes such din this time of night?
I am set for to spin: I hope not I might
Rise a penny to win: I shrew them on height.
So faires
A housewife that has been
To be raised thus between:
There may no note be seen
For such small chares. (Note: chare,--job, as in charwoman)

*Mac.* Good wife, open the hek. (Note: wicket) See’st thou not what I bring?

*Wife.* I may let thee draw the sneck. Ah! come in, my sweeting.

*Mac.* Yea, thou dost not reck of my long standing.

*Wife.* By thy naked neck, thou art like for to hang.

*Mac.* Go away:
I am worthy of my meat,
For in a strait can I get
More than they that swinck (Note: toil) and sweat
All the long day,
Thus it fell to my lot, Gill, I had such grace.

*Wife.* It were a foul blot to be hanged for the case.

*Mac.* I have scaped, Jelott, oft as hard as glass.

*Wife.* “But so long goes the pot to the water,” men says,
“At last comes it home broken.”

*Mac.* Well know I the token,
But let it never be spoken;
But come and help fast.
I would he were flayn; (Note: flayed) I list we’ll eat:
This twelvemonth was I not so fain of one sheep-meat.

*Wife.* Come they if he be slain, and hear the sheep bleat?

*Mac.* Then might I be ta’en: that were a cold sweat.
Go bar
The gate door.

*Wife.* Yes, Mac,
For and they come at thy back.
Mac. Then might I pay for all the pack:  
The devil of them war! (Note: The devil of them give warning)

Wife. A good bowrde (Note: jest) have I spied, since thou can none:  
Here shall we him hide, till they be gone;  
In my cradle abide. Let me alone,  
And I shall lie beside in childbed and groan.

Mac. Thou red? (Note: advisest, sayest so?)  
And I shall say thou wast light  
Of a knave child this night.

Wife. Now well is my day bright,  
That ever I was bred.  
This is a good guise and a far cast;  
Yet a woman’s advice helps at the last.  
I care never who spies: again go thou fast.

Mac. But I come or they rise; else blows a cold blast—  
I will go sleep. [Mac goes back to the field.  
Yet sleep all this menye, (Note: company)  
And I shall go stalk privily,  
As it had never been I  
That carried their sheep.

1st Shepherd. Resurrex à mortrius: have hold my hand.  
Judas carnas dominus, I may not well stand:  
My foot sleeps, by Jesus, and I water fastand!  
I thought that we laid us full near England.

2nd Shepherd. Ah ye!  
Lord, how I have slept wee!  
As fresh as an eel,  
As light I me feel  
As leaf on a tree.

3rd Shepherd. Benste! (Note: Benedicite) be herein! So my head quakes  
My heart is out of skin, what so it makes.  
Who makes all this din? So my brow aches,  
To the door will I win. Hark fellows, wakes!  
We were four:  
See ye anything of Mac now?

1st Shepherd. We were up ere thou.

2nd Shepherd. Man, I give God a vow,  
Yet heed he nowhere.

3rd Shepherd. Methought he was wrapped in a wolf’s-skin.

1st Shepherd. So are many happed, now namely within.

2nd Shepherd. When we had long napped; methought with a gin  
A fat sheep he trapped, but he made no din.

3rd Shepherd. Be still:  
Thy dream makes thee wood: (Note: mad)  
It is but phantom, by the rood.

1st Shepherd. Now God turn all to good,  
If it be his will.
2nd Shepherd. Rise, Mac, for shame! thou ly'st right long.

Mac. Now Christ, his holy name be us amang,
What is this? for Saint James!–I may not well gang.
I trust I be the same. Ah! my neck has lain wrang
Enough
Mickle thank, since yester-even
Now, by Saint Stephen!
I was flayed with a sweven,— (Note: dream)
My heart out of slough. (Note: sloth(?))
I thought Gill began to croak, and travail full sad,
Well nigh at the first cock,—of a young lad,
For to mend our flock: then be I never glad.
To have two on my rock,—more than ever I had.
Ah, my head!
A house full of young tharmes, (Note: bellies)
The devil knock out their harnes! (Note: brains)
Woe is he has many bairns,
And thereto little bread.
I must go home, by your leave, to Gill as I thought.
I pray you look my sleeve, that I steal nought:
I am loth you to grieve, or from you take aught.

3rd Shepherd. Go forth, ill might thou chefe, (Note: prosper) now would I we sought,
This morn,
That we had all our store.

1st Shepherd. But I will go before,
Let us meet.

2nd Shepherd. Whor? (Note: where)

3rd Shepherd. At the crooked thorn.

Mac (at his own door again). Undo this door! who is here? How long shall I stand?

Wife. Who makes such a stir?—Now walk in the wenyand. (Note: waning moon)

Mac. Ah, Gill, what cheer?—It is I, Mac, your husband.

His Wife. Then may we be here,—the devil in a band,
Sir Gile.
Lo, he commys (Note: comes) with a lot,
As he were holden in the throat.
I may not sit, work or not
A hand long while.

Mac. Will ye hear what fare she makes—to get her a glose, (Note: lie)
And do naught but lakes (Note: plays)—and close her toes.

Wife. Why, who wanders, who wakes,—who comes, who goes?
Who brews, who bakes? Who makes for me this hose?
And then
It is ruth to behold,
Now in hot, now in cold,
Full woful is the household
That wants a woman.
But what end hast thou made with the herds, Mac?

Mac. The last word that they said,—when I turned my back,
They would look that they had—their sheep all the pack.
I hope they will not be well paid,—when they their sheep lack.
Perdie!
But howso the game goes,
To me they will suppose,
And make a foul noise,
And cry out upon me.
But thou must do as thou hight,

_Wife_. I accord me thertylle. (Note: thereto)
I shall swaddle him right in my cradle.
If it were a greater slight, yet could I help till.
I will lie down straight. Come hap me.

_Mac_. I will.

_Wife_. Behind,
Come Coll and his marrow,
They will nip us full narrow.

_Mac_. But I may cry out “Harrro!” (Note: Help! or Halloo!)
The sheep if they find.

_Wife_. Hearken aye when they call: they will come anon.
Come and make ready all, and sing by thine own,
Sing “Lullay!” thou shall, for I must groan,
And cry out by the wall on Mary and John,
For sore.
Sing “Lullay” full fast
When thou hears at the last;
And but I play a false cast
Trust me no more.

_[Re-enter the Three Shepherds._]

3rd _Shepherd_. Ah, Coll! good morn:–why sleepest thou not?

1st _Shepherd_. Alas, that ever was I born!–we have a foul blot.
A fat wether have we lorne. (Note: lost)

3rd _Shepherd_. Marry, Godys forbot! (Note: God forbid)

2nd _Shepherd_. Who should do us that scorn? That were a foul spot.

1st _Shepherd_. Some shrew.
I have sought with my dogs,
All Horbery shrogs, (Note: Horbery Shrubberies, near Wakefield)
And of fifteen hogs
Found I but one ewe.

3rd _Shepherd_. Now trust me if you will;–by Saint Thomas of Kent!
Either Mac or Gill–was at that assent.

1st _Shepherd_. Peace, man, be still:–I saw when he went.
Thou slanderst him ill; thou ought to repent.
Good speed.

2nd _Shepherd_. Now as ever might I thee,
If I should even here dee, (Note: die)
I would say it were he,
That did that same deed.

3rd _Shepherd_. Go we thither I rede, (Note: advise)–and run on our feet.
May I never eat bread,–the truth till I wit.
1st Shepherd. Nor drink, in my heed,—with him till I meet.

2nd Shepherd. I will rest in no stead, till that I him greet,
My brother
One I will hight: (Note: call)
Till I see him in sight
Shall I never sleep one night
There I do another.

3rd Shepherd. Will ye hear how they hack, (Note: "take on," make game)—Our Sire! list, how they croon!

1st Shepherd. Hard I never none crack,—so clear out of tune.
Call on him.

2nd Shepherd. Mac! undo your door soon.

Mac. Who is it that spoke,—as it were noon?
On loft,
Who is that I say?

3rd Shepherd. Good fellows! were it day?

Mac. As far as ye may,—
Good, speak ye soft!
Over a sick woman's head,—that is ill mate ease,
I had liefer be dead,—or she had any disease.

Wife. Go to another stead; I may not well queasse (Note: breathe)
Each foot that ye tread—goes near make me sneeze (Note: nose (?) The "so he" is meant for a she)
So he!

1st Shepherd. Tell us, Mac, if ye may,
How fare ye, I say?

Mac. But are ye in this town to-day?
Now how fare ye?
Ye have run in the mire, and are wet yit:
I shall make you a fire, if ye will sit.
A horse would I hire; think ye on it.
Well quit is my hire, my dream—this is it.
A season.
I have bairns if ye knew,
Well more than enew, (Note: enow, enough)
But we must drink as we brew,
And that is but reason.
I would ye dined e'er ye yode: (Note: went) methink that ye sweat.

2nd Shepherd. Nay, neither mends our mode, drink nor meat.

Mac. Why, sir, ails you aught, but good?

3rd Shepherd. Yes, our sheep that we gat,
Are stolen as they yode. (Note: went, were grazing)Our loss is great.

Mac. Sirs, drinkýs!
Had I been there,
Some should have bought it full dear.

1st Shepherd. Marry, some men trows that ye were,
And that us forethinkýs. (Note: bothers us, makes us suspect)

2nd Shepherd. Mac, some men trows that it should be ye.
3rd Shepherd. Either ye or your spouse; so say we.

Mac. Now if ye have suspouse (Note: suspicion) to Gill or to me, Come and rip our house, and then may ye see Who had her. If I any sheep got, Either cow or stot, And Gill, my wife rose not Here since she laid her. As I am both true and leal, to God here I pray, That this be the first meal, I shall eat this day.

1st Shepherd. Mac, as I have weal, arise thee, I say! “He learned timely to steal, that could not say nay.”

Wife. I swelt. (Note: swelter) Out thieves from my once! Ye come to rob us for the nonce.

Mac. Hear ye not how she groans? Your heart should melt.

Wife. Out thieves, from my bairn! Nigh him not thore.

Mac. Knew ye how she had farne, (Note: fared) your hearts would be sore. Ye do wrong, I you warn, that thus commys before To a woman that has farn; (Note: been in labour) but I say no more.

Wife. Ah, my middle! I pray to God so mild, If ever I you beguiled, That I eat this child, That lies in this cradle.

Mac. Peace, woman, for God’s pain, and cry not so: Thou spill’st thy brain, and mak’st me full woe.

2nd Shepherd. I know our sheep be slain, what find ye too?

3rd Shepherd. All work we in vain: as well may we go. But hatters.confound it I can find no flesh, Hard nor nesh, (Note: soft) Salt nor fresh, But two tome (Note: empty) platters: No cattle but this, tane nor wild, None, as have I bliss; as loud as he smiled.

Wife. No, so God me bliss, and give me joy of my child.

1st Shepherd. We have markëd amiss: I hold us beguiled.

2nd Shepherd. Sir, done! Sir, our lady him save, Is your child a knave? (Note: a boy)

Mac. Any lord might him have This child to his son. When he wakens he skips, that joy is to see.

3rd Shepherd. In good time, be his steps, and happy they be! But who was his gossips, tell now to me!
Mac. So fair fall their lips!

1st Shepherd (aside). Hark now, a lee! (Note: a lie)

Mac. So God them thank,
Parkin, and Gibbon Waller, I say,
And gentle John Horne, in good fay, (Note: faith)
He made all the garray, (Note: hubbub)
With the great shank.

2nd Shepherd. Mac, friends will we be, for we are all one.

Mac. Why! now I hold for me, for help get I none.
Farewell all three: all glad were ye gone.

3rd Shepherd. Fair words may there be, but love there is none.

1st Shepherd. Gave ye the child anything?

2nd Shepherd. I trust not one farthing.

3rd Shepherd. Fast again will I fling,
Abide ye me there. [He returns to Mac’s cot.
Mac, take it to no grief, if I come to thy barn.

Mac. Nay, thou dost me great reprieve, and foul hast thou farne. (Note: done)

3rd Shepherd. The child will it not grieve, that little day starn. (Note: day-star)
Mac, with your leave, let me give your bairn,
But sixpence.

Mac. Nay, go ‘way: he sleepys.

3rd Shepherd. Methink he peepys.

Mac. When he wakens he weepys.
I pray you go hence.

3rd Shepherd. Give me leave him to kiss, and lift up the clout.
What the devil is this? He has a long snout.

1st Shepherd. He is marked amiss. We wait ill about.

2nd Shepherd. Ill spun weft, I wis, aye cometh foul out;
Aye so;
He is like to our sheep.

3rd Shepherd. How, Gib, may I peep?

1st Shepherd. I trow, kind will creep,
Where it may not go.

2nd Shepherd. This was a quaint gaud, (Note: gem, something prankt out, or shown off, like a false gem) and a far cast
It was a high fraud.

3rd Shepherd. Yea, sirs, was’t.
Let burn this bawd and bind her fast.
A false skawd (Note: scold) hangs at the last;
So shall thou.
Will ye see how they swaddle
His four feet in the middle?
Saw I never in a cradle
A hornèd lad e’er now.

Mac. Peace bid I: what! let be your fare;
I am he that him gat, and yond woman him bare.

1st Shepherd. What devil shall he halt? (Note: hight, be called) Mac, lo, God makes air.

2nd Shepherd. Let be all that. Now God give him care!
I sagh. (Note: say)

Wife. A pretty child is he,
As sits upon a woman’s knee;
A dyly-downe, perdie!
To make a man laugh.

3rd Shepherd. I know him by the ear mark:—that is a good token.

Mac. I tell you, sirs, hark:—his nose was broken.
Since then, told me a clerk,—that he was forespoken. (Note: bewitched)

1st Shepherd. This is a false work.—I would fain be wroken: (Note: be avenged, wreak vengeance)
Get a weapon!

Wife. He was taken by an elf; (Note: i.e. for a changeling)
I saw it myself.
When the clock struck twelve,
Was he mis-shapen.

2nd Shepherd. Ye two are right deft,—same in a stead.

3rd Shepherd. Since they maintain their theft,—let’s do them to dead.

Mac. If I trespass eft, gird off my head.
With you will I be left.

1st Shepherd. Sirs, do my red
For this trespass,
We will neither ban nor flyte (Note: curse nor flout)
Fight, nor chyte, (Note: chide)
But seize him tight,
And cast him in canvas.

[They toss Mac for his sins.

1st Shepherd (as the three return to the fold). Lord, how I am sore, in point for to tryst:
In faith I may no more, therefore will I rest.

2nd Shepherd. As a sheep of seven score, he weighed in my fist.
For to sleep anywhere, methink that I list.

3rd Shepherd. Now I pray you,
Lie down on this green.

1st Shepherd. On these thefts yet I mean.

3rd Shepherd. Whereto should ye tene? (Note: vex about it)
Do as I say you.

[Enter an Angel above, who sings “Gloria in Excelsis,” then says:
Rise, hired-men, heynd, (Note: gracious) for now is he born
That shall take from the fiend, that Adam had lorn: (Note: lost)
That warlock to sheynd, (Note: destroy) this night is he born.
God is made your friend; now at this morn,
He behests;
To Bedlem go see,
There lies that free (Note: free, or divine, One)
In a crib full poorly,
Betwixt two beasts.

1st Shepherd. This was a quaint stevyn (Note: voice) that ever yet I heard.
It is a marvel to nevyn (Note: name, relate) thus to be scared.

2nd Shepherd. Of God’s son of heaven, he spoke up word.
All the wood like the levin, (Note: lightning) methought that he gard
Appear.

3rd Shepherd. He spoke of a bairn
In Bedlem I you warn.

1st Shepherd. That betokens yonder starn (Note: star)
Let us seek him there.

2nd Shepherd. Say, what was his song? Heard ye not how he cracked it?
Three breves to a long. (Note: three short notes to a long one)

3rd Shepherd. Yea, marry, he hacked (Note: shouted it out it).
Was no crochet wrong, nor no thing that lacked it.

1st Shepherd. For to sing us among, right as he knacked it,
I can.

2nd Shepherd. Let us see how ye croon
Can ye bark at the moon?

3rd Shepherd. Hold your tongues, have done.

1st Shepherd. Hark after, then.

2nd Shepherd. To Bedlem he bade—that we should gang:
I am full feared—that we tarry too lang.

3rd Shepherd. Be merry and not sad: of mirth is our sang,
Everlasting glad, our road may we fang, (Note: take)
Without noise.

1st Shepherd. Hie we thither quickly;
If we be wet and weary,
To that child and that lady
We have it not to slose. (Note: delay)

2nd Shepherd. We find by the prophecy—let be your din—
Of David and Esai, and more than I min; (Note: can mind)
They prophesied by clergy, that on a virgin
Should he light and ly, to pardon our sin
And slake it,
Our kind from woe;
For Esai said so,
Cite virgo
Concipiet a child that is naked.
3rd Shepherd. Full glad may we be,—and abide that day
That lovely to see,—that all mights may.
Lord, well for me,—for once and for aye,
Might I kneel on my knee—some word for to say
To that child.
But the angel said
In a crib was he laid;
He was poorly arrayed,
Both meaner and mild.

1st Shepherd. Patriarchs that have been,—and prophets beforne,
They desired to have seen—this child that is born.
They are gone full clean,—that have they lorn.
We shall see him, I ween,—éer it be morn
By token
When I see him and feel,
Then know I full weel
It is true as steel
That prophets have spoken.
To so poor as we are, that he would appear,
First find, and declare by his messenger.

2nd Shepherd. Go we now, let us fare: the place is us near.

3rd Shepherd. I am ready and yare: (Note: eager) go we in fear
To that light!
Lord! if thy wills be,
We are lewdunlearn’d, rude all three,
Thou grant us of thy glee, (Note: happiness)
To comfort thy wight.

[The Shepherds arrive at Bethlehem.

1st Shepherd. Hail, comely and clean; hail, young child!
Hail, maker, as I mean, of a maiden so mild!
Thou hast wared, I ween, off the warlock (Note: demon, evil one) so wild,
The false guiler of teen, (Note: worker of evil. The "he" in the next line refers to the Holy Babe again) now goes he beguiled.
Lo, he merry is!
Lo, he laughs, my sweeting,
A welcome meeting!
I have given my greeting
Have a bob of cherries?

2nd Shepherd. Hail, sovereign saviour, for thou hast us sought!
Hail freely, leaf and flow’r, that all thing has wrought!
Hail full of favour, that made all of nought!
Hail! I kneel and I cower. A bird have I brought
To my bairn!
Hail, little tiny mop, (Note: pate, little tiny-pate)
Of our creed thou are crop!
I would drink in thy cup,
Little day-starn. (Note: day-star)

3rd Shepherd. Hail, darling dear, full of godheed!
I pray thee be near, when that I have need.
Hail! sweet is thy cheer: my heart would bleed
To see thee sit here in so poor weed.
With no pennies.
Hail! put forth thy dall!— (Note: hand)
I bring thee but a ball
Have and play thee with all,
And go to the tennis.

Mary. The Father of Heaven, God omnipotent,
That set all on levin, (Note: set all alight; gave light to all) his son has he sent.
My name could he neven, (Note: could he (i.e. the babe) tell, name) and laught as he went. (Note: weened; i.e. laughed as if he knew all about it)
I conceived him full even, through might, as God meant;
And new is he born.
He keep you from woe:
I shall pray him so;
Tell forth as ye go,
And mind on this morn.

1st Shepherd. Farewell, lady, so fair to behold,
With thy child on thy knee.

2nd Shepherd. But he lies full cold,
Lord, well is me: now we go forth, behold!

3rd Shepherd. Forsooth, already it seems to be told
Full oft.

1st Shepherd. What grace we have fun. (Note: found)

2nd Shepherd. Come forth, now are we won.

3rd Shepherd. To sing are we bun: (Note: bound)
Let take on loft. (Note: Let us sing it aloft, or aloud!)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional Versions

“The Wakefield Second Shepherds’ Play” from Calvin.edu

A modernized version of the play, adapted by Karen Saupe, can be found in full here.
SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT

SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT: BACKGROUND

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (Middle English: Sir Gawayn and þe Grene Knyȝt) is a late 14th-century Middle English chivalric romance. It is one of the best known Arthurian stories, and is of a type known as the "beheading game." The Green Knight is interpreted by some as a representation of the Green Man of folklore and by others as an allusion to Christ. Written in stanzas of alliterative verse, each of which ends in a rhyming bob and wheel, it draws on Welsh, Irish and English stories, as well as the French chivalric tradition. It is an important poem in the romance genre, which typically involves a hero who goes on a quest which tests his prowess, and it remains popular to this day in modern English renderings from J. R. R. Tolkien, Simon Armitage and others, as well as through film and stage adaptations.

It describes how Sir Gawain, a knight of King Arthur’s Round Table, accepts a challenge from a mysterious “Green Knight” who challenges any knight to strike him with his axe if he will take a return blow in a year and a day. Gawain accepts and beheads him with his blow, at which the Green Knight stands up, picks up his head and reminds Gawain of the appointed time. In his struggles to keep his bargain Gawain demonstrates chivalry and loyalty until his honour is called into question by a test involving Lady Bertilak, the lady of the Green Knight’s castle.

The poem survives in a single manuscript, the Cotton Nero A.x., which also includes three religious narrative poems: Pearl, Purity and Patience. All are thought to have been written by the same unknown author, possibly Cameron of Sutherland, dubbed the “Pearl Poet” or “Gawain Poet,” since all four are written in a North West Midland dialect of Middle English.

Additional information on Sir Gawain and the Green Knight can be found here.
PREFACE

Arms and the man I sing,—not as of old
The Mantuan bard his mighty verse unrolled,
But in such humbler strains as may beseem
Light changes rung on a fantastic theme.
My tale is ancient, but the sense is new,—
Replete with monstrous fictions, yet half true;—
And, if you'll follow till the story's done,
I promise much instruction, and some fun.

CANTO I

King Arthur and his court were blithe and gay

In high-towered Camelot, on Christmas day,
For all the Table Round were back again,
At peace with God and with their fellow-men.
Their shields hung idly on the pictured wall;
Their blood-stained banners decked the festal hall
Light footsteps, rustling on the rush-strewn floors,
And laughter, rippling down long corridors,
Attested minds at ease and hearts at play,—
Rude Mars unharnessed for love's holiday.
In the great hall the Christmas feast was done.
The level sunbeams from the setting sun
Stretched through the mullioned casements to the wall,
And wove fantastic shadows over all.
The revelry was hushed. In tranquil ease
The warriors grouped themselves by twos and threes
About the dames and damsels of the court,
And chattered careless words of small import;
But in an alcove, unobserved, apart,
Young Gawayne sat with Lady Elfinhart,
In Arthur's court no goodlier knight than he
Wore shirt of mail, or Cupid's panoply;
And Elfinhart, to Gawayne's eager eyes.
Of all heaven's treasures seemed the goodliest prize.
Now daylight faded, and the twilight gloom
Deepened the stillness in the vaulted room,
Save where upon the hearth a fitful glow
Blushed from the embers as the fire burned low.
There is a certain subtle twilight mood,
When two hearts meet in a dim solitude,
That thrills the soul e'en to the finger-tips,
And brings the heart's dear secrets to the lips.

In Gawayne's corner, as the shades grew thicker,
Four eyes waxed brighter, and two pulses quicker;
Ten minutes more of quiet talk unbroken,
And heaven alone can tell what might be spoken!
But it was not to be, for fates unequal
Compelled—'tis but this anticipates the sequel.

Just in the nick of time, King Arthur rose
From his sedate post-prandial repose,
And called for lights. Along the shadowy aisles
His pages' footsteps pattered o'er the tiles,
Speeding to do his errand, and at once
Four tapers flickered from each silver sconce.
The scene was changed, the dreamer's dream dispelled,
And what might else have been his fate withheld
From Gawayne's grasp. So may one touch of chance
Shatter the fragile fabric of romance,
And all the heart's desire, -- the joy, the trouble, --
Flash to oblivion with the bursting bubble!

But Arthur, on his kingly dais-seat,
Felt nothing of the passion and the heat
That fire young blood. He raised his warlike head
And glancing moodily around him, said:
"So have ye feasted well, my knights, this day,
And filled your hearts with revel and with play.
But to my mind that day is basely spent
Which passes by without accomplishment
Of some bright deed of arms or chivalry.
We rust in indolence. As well not be,
As be the minions of an idle court
Where all is gallantry and girlish sport!
Some bold adventure let our thoughts devise,
To stir our courage and to cheer our eyes."
And lo! while yet he spoke, from far away
In the thick shroud of the departed day,
Upon the frosty air of evening borne,
Came the faint challenge of a fairy horn!

King Arthur started up in mild surprise,
While knights and dames looked round with questioning eyes,
And each to other spoke some hurried word,
As, "Did you hear it?"—"What was that I heard?"
But well they knew; for you must understand
That Camelot lay close to Fairyland,
And the wild blast of fairy horns, once known,
Is straightway recognized as soon as blown,
Being a sound unique, unearthly, shrill,—
Between a screech-owl and a whip-poor-will.
The mischief is, that no one e'er can tell
Whether such heralding bodes ill or well!

The ladies of the palace looked faint fear,
Dreading some perilous adventure near;
For peril can the bravest spirits move,
When threatening not ourselves, but those we love;
But Lady Elfinhart clapped hands in glee,—
In sooth, no sentimentalist seemed she,—
And cried: “Now, brave Sir Gawayne,—O what fun!
Succor us, save us, else we are undone;
Show us the prowess of your arm this night;
I never saw a tilt by candle-light!”
Gaily she spoke, and seemed all unconcerned;
And yet a curious watcher might have learned
From a slight quaver in her laughter free
To doubt the frankness of her flippancy.
Gawayne, bewildered, looked the other way,
And wondered what she meant; for in that day
The ready wit of man was under muzzle,
And woman’s heart was still an unsolved puzzle;
And Gawayne, though in valor next to none,
Wished that _her_ heart had been a tenderer one.
His sword was out for any foe on earth,
And yet to face death for a lady’s mirth
Seemed scarce worth while. What honor bade, he’d do,
But would have liked to see a tear or two.

While thus he pondered, came a sudden burst
Of high-pitched fairy horn-calls, like the first,
But nearer, clearer, deadlier than before,
Blown seemingly from just outside the door.
The casements shook, the taper lights all trembled;
The bravest knight’s dismay was ill-dissembled;
And as all sprang with one accord to win
Their swords and shields, stern combat to begin,
The great doors shot their bolts, and opened slowly in.

And now my laboring muse is hard beset,
For something followed such as never yet
Was writ or sung, by human voice or hand,
Save those that tell old tales from Fairyland.
“Miracles _do_ not happen:”—t is plain sense,
If you italicize the present tense;
But in those days, as rare old Chaucer tells,
All Britain was fulfilled of miracles.
So, as I said, the great doors opened wide.
In rushed a blast of winter from outside,
And with it, galloping on the empty air,
A great green giant on a great green mare
Plunged like a tempest-cleaving thunderbolt,
And struck four-footed, with an earthquake’s jolt,
Plump on the hearthstone. There the uncouth wight
Sat greenly laughing at the strange affright
That paled all cheeks and opened wide all eyes;
Till after the first shock of quick surprise
The people circled round him, still in awe,
And circling stared; and this is what they saw:
Cassock and hood and hose, of plushy sheen
Like close-cut grass upon a bowling-green,
Covered his stature, from his verdant toes
To the green brows that topped his emerald nose.
His beard was glossy, like unripened corn;
His eyes shot sparklets like the polar morn.
But like in hue unto that deep-sea green
Wherewith must shine those gems of ray serene

God Speed is a painting by British artist Edmund Leighton, depicting an armored knight departing to war and leaving his beloved. The woman ties a red sash around the knight’s arm, which he is meant to return, a medieval custom which assured both parties that they would be reunited, alive and well. A griffin on the banister of the stairs is a symbol of strength and military courage.
The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear.
Green was his raiment, green his monstrous mare.
He rode unarmed, uncorsleted, unshielded,
Except that in his huge right hand he wielded
A frightful battle-axe, with blade as green
As coppery rust;–but the long edge shone keen.

Such was the stranger, and he turned his head
From one side to the other, and then said,
With gentle voice, most like a summer breeze
That rustles through the leaves of the green trees:
“So this is Arthur’s court! My noble lord,
You said just now you felt a trifle bored,
And wished, instead of dancing, feasting, flirting,
Your gallant warriors might be exerting
Their puissance upon some worthier thing.
The wish, my lord, was worthy of a king!
It pleased me; here I am; and I intend
To serve your fancy as a faithful friend.
I bring adventure,—no hard, tedious quest,
But merely what I call a merry jest.
Let some good knight, the doughtiest of you all,
Swing this my battle-axe, and let it fall
On whatsoever part of me he will;
I will abide the blow, and hold me still;
But let him, just a twelvemonth from this day,
Come to me, if by any means he may,
And let me, if I live, pay back my best,
As he pays me. What think you of the jest?”
He said; and made a courteous bow,—the while
Lighting his features with a bright green smile;
As when June breezes, after rain-clouds pass,
Ripple in sunlight o’er the unmown grass.

The jest seemed fair indeed; but none the less
No knight showed any undue forwardness
To seize the offer. Some with laughter free
Daffed it aside; while others carelessly
Strolled to the farthest corners of the hall
As if they had not heard his words at all,
And whistled with an air of idle ease,
Or studied figures in the tapestries.
Not so Sir Gawayne. Vexed in mind he stood
With downcast eyes, and knew not what he would.
Trained in the school of chivalry to prize
His honor as the light of his dear eyes,
He held his life, his fortunes, everything,
In sacred trust for knighthood and his king,
And in the battle-field or tilting-yard
He met his foe full-fronted, and struck hard.
But now it seemed a foolish thing to throw
One’s whole life to the fortune of a blow.
True valor breathes not in the braggart vaunt;
True honor takes no shame from idle taunt;
So let this wizard, if he wants to, scoff;
Why should our hero have his head cut off?

While thus Sir Gawayne, wrapped in thought intense,
Debated honor versus common sense,
The stranger knight was casting his green glance
Around the circling throng,—until by chance
He met the eyes of Lady Elfinhart,
And—did she flush?—and did the Green Knight start?
Surely a quiver twinkled in each eye;
But what of that? It need not signify;
Beneath his glance a brave man well might flush;
What wonder then that a fair maid should blush?
And as for him, no man that ever loved
Could look upon her loveliness unmoved.

Could I but picture her—ah, you would deem
My tale the figment of a poet's dream;
And if you saw her, (could such bliss be given),
You'd think _yourself_ in dreamland—or in heaven.
Not the red rapture of new-wakened roses,
When morning dew their soul of love uncloses,
(Roses that must be wooed,—nor may be won
Save by the prince of lovers, the warm sun),
Not the fair lily, nor the violet shy,
Whose heart's love lurks deep in her still blue eye,
Nor any flower, the loveliest and the best,
Can image to you half the charm compressed
In those dear eyes, those lips,—nay, every part
That made that sum of witcheries—Elfinhart.

Her face was a dim dream of shadowy light,
Like misty moonbeams on the fields of night,
And in her voice sweet nature's sweetest tunes
Sang the glad song of twenty cloudless Junes.
Her raiment,—nay; go, reader, if you please,
To some sage Treatise on Antiquities,
Whence writers of historical romances
Cull old embroideries for their new-spun fancies;
I care not for the trivial, nor the fleeting.
Beneath her dress a woman's heart was beating
The rhythm of love's eternal eloquence,
And I confess to you, in confidence,
Though flowers have grown a thousand years above her,
Unseen, unknown, with all my soul I love her.

From these digressions upon love and glory,
'Tis time we were returning to our story.
I only meant, in a few words, to tell you
(For fear my heroine's conduct should repel you)
That if she jests, for instance, out of season,
Perhaps there is a good substantial reason.
Sir Gawayne, had he seen the stranger wink
And seen the lady blushing, you may think
Might have been spared a most unhappy lot.
Perhaps you're right;—but peradventure not.
I give you but a hint, for half the art
Of narrative is holding back a part,
And if without reserve I gave my best
In the first canto, who would read the rest?
But now Sir Gawayne, with a troubled eye,  
Looked up, and saw his lady standing by.  
Quoth he: “And if this conjurer unblest  
Win no acceptance of his bitter jest,  
How then in after days shall Arthur’s court  
Confront the calumny and foul report  
Of idle tongues?” The wrath in Gawayne’s eyes  
Hashed for an instant; then in humbler wise  
He spoke on: “Yet God grant I be not blind  
Where honor lights the way; for to my mind  
True honor bids us shun the devil’s den,  
To fight God’s battles in the world of men.  
Who takes this challenge up, I doubt will rue it.”  
Quoth Elfinhart: “I’d like to see you do it!”  
She laughed a gay laugh, but by hard constraint:  
Then turned and hid her face, all pale and faint,  
As one might be who stabs and turns the knife  
In the warm heart of one more dear than life.  
She turned and Gawayne saw not; but he heard,  
And felt his heart-strings tighten at her word.  
“Nay, lady, if you wish it I will try;  
Be your least wish my will, although I die!  
Yet one thing, if I may, I fain would ask,  
Before I make the venture;—if this task  
Prove fateful as it threatens,—do you care?”  
“Perhaps,” said Elfinhart, “you do not dare!”  
Lightly she laughed, and scoffing tossed her head,  
Yet spoke as one who knew not what she said,  
With random words, and with quick-taken breath;  
Then turned again, ere that same look of death  
Should steal upon her and betray her heart  
Despite all stratagems of woman’s art.  
And Gawayne heard but saw not; and the night  
Descended on him, and his face grew white  
With grief and passion. When all else is lost,  
The brave man gives life too, nor counts the cost.  
“I dreamt,” he murmured to himself, “and dreaming  
I took for truth what was but sweetest seeming.  
My waking eyes find naught in life to keep;  
I take the venture, and so back—to sleep.”

By this, the stranger had at last become  
Tired of long waiting, and of sitting dumb  
Upon his charger; so with greenest leer  
He vented his impatience in a sneer.  
“Is this,” he said, “the glorious Table Round,  
And is its glory naught but empty sound?  
Braggarts! I put your bluster to the test,  
And find you quail before a merry jest!”  
Then the great king himself stood up in ire,  
With clenched hand raised, and eyes that gleamed dark fire,  
And fronting the Green Knight he cried: “Forswear!  
For by my sword Excalibur I swear,  
“Whate’er thou be, thou shalt not carry hence  
Unscathed the memory of thine insolence.  
Such jests as thine please not; yet even so  
I take thine axe; kneel thou, and take my blow.”

Across the Green Knight’s features there was seen  
To pass a fleeting shade of deeper green,
Whether of disappointment or resentment
None knew; but straight a smile of bright contentment
Followed, as through the throng of dazed beholders
He saw Sir Gawayne thrust his sturdy shoulders.
The stranger winked at Elfinhart once more,
Well pleased, and Gawayne knelt down on the floor.
“A boon,” he cried, “a boon, my lord and king!
If ever yet in any little thing
These hands have served thee, hear my last request:
Let me adventure this mad monster’s jest!”
King Arthur shook his head in dumb denial,
Loth to withdraw his own hand from the trial,
And leave the vengeance that himself had vowed;
But all the people called to him aloud,
“Sir Gawayne! let Sir Gawayne strike the blow!”
And Guinevere, the queen, besought him low
To leave this venture to the lesser man.
He yielded, and the merry jest began.

The visitor, dismounting, made a bow
To Arthur, then to all the court. “And now,”
Said he to Gawayne, “wheresoe’er you choose
To strike your blow, strike on; I’ll not refuse;
Head, shoulders, chest, or waist, I little reck;
Where shall it be?” Quoth Gawayne, “In the neck!”

So Gawayne took the axe. The stranger knelt
Before him on the hearth and loosed his belt,
And threw back his green cassock and his hood,
To give his foe the fairest mark he could.
Then thus to Gawayne: “Ready! But remember
To come the twenty-fifth of next December,
And take from me the self-same stroke again!”

“And where,” asked Gawayne, “may I find you then?”
“We’ll speak of that, please, when you’ve struck your blow;
For if I can’t speak, then you need not go!”
He chuckled softly to himself; then turned
And waited for the blow, all unconcerned.

Not so the knights and ladies of the court;
They pushed and craned their necks to see the sport;
Not from the lust of blood, for few expected
To see blood shed, or the Green Knight dissected,
But knowing that some marvel was in store
Unparalleled in all Arthurian lore,
And fairly filled with wide-eyed wonderment.
But Lady Elfinhart stayed not. She went
Into the alcove where we saw her first
And laid her sweet face in her arms, and burst
Into—but none could tell, unless by peeping,
Whether she shook with laughter or with weeping.

And Gawayne rubbed his arms, his chest he beat,
Then grasped the battle-axe and braced his feet,
And swung the ponderous weapon high in air,
And brought it down like lightning, fair and square
Upon the stranger’s neck. The axe flashed through,
Cutting the Green Knight cleanly right in two,
And split the hard stone floor like kindling wood.
The head dropped off; out gushed the thick, hot blood
Like—I can’t find the simile I want,
But let us say a flood of _crème de menthe_!
And then the warriors standing round about
Sent up from fifty throats a mighty shout,
As when o’er blood-sprent fields the long cheers roll
Cacophonous, for him who kicks a goal.

“O Gawayne! Well done, Gawayne!” they all cried;
But straight the tumult and the shouting died,
And deadly pallor overspread each face,
For the knight’s body stood up in its place
And stepping nimbly forward seized the head
That lay still on the hearth-stone, seeming dead;
Then vaulted lightly, with a careless air,
Back to the saddle of his grass-green mare.
He held the head up, and behold! it spoke.
“My best congratulations on that stroke,
Sir Gawayne; it was delicately done!
Our merry little jest is well begun,
But look you fail me not this day next year!
At the Green Chapel by the Murmuring Mere
I will await you when the sun sinks low,
And pay you back full measure, blow for blow!”
He wheeled about, the doors flew wide once more,
The mare’s hoofs struck green sparkles from the floor,
And with a whirring flash of emerald light
Both horse and rider vanished in the night.

Then all the lords and ladies rubbed their eyes
And slowly roused themselves from dumb surprise.
The great hall echoed once more with the clatter
Of laughing men’s and frightened women’s chatter;
But Gawayne, with the axe in hand, stood still,
Heedless of what was passing, with no will
For life or death, for all that made life dear
Was fled like summer when the leaves fall sere.
And Arthur spoke, misreading Gawayne’s thought:
“Heaven send we have not all too dearly bought
Our evening’s pastime, Gawayne. You have done
As fits a fearless knight, and nobly won
Our thanks in equal measure with our praise.
Be both remembered in the after days!”
So spoke the king, and, to confirm his word,
From far away in the deep night was heard
Once more the fairy horn-call, clear and shrill;
It died upon the wind, and all was still.
The hour was late. King Arthur, rising, said
Good-night to all his court, and went to bed.
CANTO II

ELFINHART

In Canto I. I followed the old rule
We learned from Horace when we went to school,
And took a headlong plunge _in medias res_,
As Maro did, and blind Mæonides;
And now, still following the ancient mode,
I come to the time-honored “episode,”
Retrace my way some twenty years or more,
And tell you what I should have told before.
It seems an awkward method, but it’s art;–
Besides, it brings us back to Elfinhart.

In those dark days before King Arthur came,
When Britain was laid waste with sword and flame,
When cut-throats lurked behind the blossoming thorn,
And young maids cursed the day when they were born,
A lady, widowed in one hideous night,
Fled over heath and hill, and in her flight
Came to the magic willow-woods that stand
Beside the Murmuring Mere, in Fairyland;
And there, untimely, by the forest-side,
Clasping her infant in her arms, she died.
Yet not all friendless,—for such mortal throes
Pass not unpitied, though no mortal knows;–
The spirits that infest the clearer air
Looked down upon the innocent lady there,
While troops of fairies smoothed her mossy bed
And with sweet balsam pillowed her fair head.
Her dim eyes could not see them, but she guessed
Whose gentle ministrations thus had blessed
Her travail; and when pitying fairies laid
Upon her heart the child,—a blue-eyed maid,—
Ere yet her troubled spirit might depart,
With one last word she named her “Elfinhart.”

So with new-quickened love the fairy elves
Took the forlorn child-maiden to themselves
And reared her in the wildwood, where no jar
Of alien discord, echoing from afar,
Broke the sweet forest murmur, long years round.
Her ears, attuned to every woodland sound,
Translated to her soul the great world’s voice,
And the world-spirit made her heart rejoice.
And love was hers,—perennial, intense,—
The love that wells from joy and innocence
And sanctifies the cloistered heart of youth,—
The love of love, of beauty, and of truth.

So Elfinhart grew up. Each passing year
Of forest life beside the Murmuring Mere
Enriched tenfold the natural dower of grace
That shone from the pure spirit in her face.
I cannot tell why each revolving season
Enhanced her beauty thus. Some say the reason
Was in the stars; I think those luminaries
Had less to do with it than had the fairies!
The more they found of grace in her, the more
Their silent influence added to her store;
For they were always with her; they and she
Still bore each other loving company.

And yet one further virtue,—not the least
Of those that make life lovable,—increased
In Elfinhart's sweet nature from her birth
By fairy tutelage; and that was mirth.
For fairy natures are compounded all
Of whimsies and of freaks fantastical,
And what the best of fairies loves the best
(Except pure kindness) is an artless jest.
And so wise men have argued, on the whole,
That the misguided creatures have no soul;
But as for me, if the bright fairy elf
Has none, I'll get along without, myself!
These fairies laughed and danced and sang sweet songs,
And did all else that to their craft belongs,—
All tricks and pranks of whole-souled jollity
That make life merry 'neath the greenwood tree.
The youngest of them childishly beguiled
The time when Elfinhart was still a child;
They pinched her fingers, and they pulled her ears,
Or sometimes, when her blue eyes dreamed of tears,
Half smothered her with showers of four-leafed clover,—
Then fled for refuge to some sweet-fern cover;
But she pursued them through their tangled lair
And caught them, and put fire-flies in their hair;
And then they all joined hands, and round and round
They danced a morris on the moonlit ground.

The years went by, and Elfinhart outgrew
The madcap antics of the younger crew,
(For fairies age but slowly: don't forget
That at two hundred they are children yet!)
But still she frolicked with them, though scarce of them,
And learned each year more tenderly to love them.
But most of all she loved with all her heart
On quiet summer nights to walk apart
And hold close converse with the fairies’ queen,—
A radiant maiden princess who had seen
Some twenty centuries of revolving suns
Pass over Fairyland,—all golden ones!
Sometimes they sat still in the mild moon's light,
Where chestnut blooms made sweet the breath of night,
And talked of the great world beyond the wood,—
Of death, or sin, or sorrow, understood
Of neither,—till the twinkling stars were gone,
And bustling Chanticleer proclaimed the dawn.
And Elfinhart grew wise in fairy learning;
But by degrees a half unconscious yearning
For humankind stirred in her gentle heart,
And woke a deep desire to bear her part
Of love and sorrow in the larger life
As sister, helper,—nay, perhaps as wife;—
For such vague instincts, after all, are human,
And Elfinhart herself was but a woman.
And yet, for all this new desire, I doubt
If Elfinhart would e’er have spoken out,
And told the fairies of her wish to leave them,
(A wish her conscious heart well knew would grieve them),
If in the ripening of her silent thought
A still voice had not whispered that she ought
To leave that world of love and mirth and beauty,
To share man’s burden in this world of duty.
(There’s anticlimax for you! Most provoking,
Just when you thought that I was only joking,
Or idly fingering the poet’s laurel,
To find my story threatens to be moral!
But as for morals, though in verse we scout them,
In life we somehow can’t get on without them;
So if I don’t insert a moral distich
Once in a while, I can’t be realistic;–
And in this tale, I solemnly aver,
My one wish is to tell things as they were!
But not _all_ things; time flies, and art is long,
And I must hurry onward with my song.)
How Elfinhart at last told what she wanted,
And what the fairies said, please take for granted.
She prayed, they yielded; Elfinhart full loth
To leave, as they to let her go, but both
Agreeing that this bitter thing must be;
For they were fairies, and a mortal she.
But ere they yielded, they made imposition
Of what then seemed to her a light condition.
’Twas done in kindness, be it understood,
With fairy foresight for the maiden’s good.
The elf-queen spoke for all: “Dear Elfinhart,
We bind you to one promise ere we part.
We fear naught from men’s malice; hate and wrath
And every evil thing will shun your path,
And sunshine will go with you when you move;
The only danger that we dread is love.
If in the after days, when suitors woo you,
Your heart makes choice of one, as dearest to you,
Before you put your hand in his and own
The sacred trust reserved for him alone,
Let us make trial of him, and approve
His virtue, and his manhood, and his love.
Send him to us; and if he bears the test,
And if we find him worthy to be blest
With love like yours, be sure we will befriend him;
And may a life-long happiness attend him!
But if he prove a traitor, or faint-hearted,
Or if his love and he are lightly parted,
In the deep willow-woods he shall remain,
And never look upon your face again!”
The maiden, fancy-free, was well content,
And with light laughter gave her full consent;
For when maids think of love (as maidens do)
It seems a far-off thing; and well she knew
Her lover, if she loved, would be both brave and true!
Not long thereafter came an errant band
Riding along the edge of Fairyland,—
Stout men-at-arms, without reproach or spot,
And in the lead the bold Sir Launcelot.
He, riding on ahead, silent, alone,
Was stopped by a beseeching ancient crone
Who hobbled to his side, as if in pain,
And clutched with palsied fingers at his rein.
And there behind her, from the leafage green,
The sweetest eyes his eyes had ever seen
Were gazing at him with wide wonderment,
Nor bold nor fearful; innocence unshent
Shone from their blue depths, and old dreams awoke
In Launcelot's breast, while thus the beldame spoke:
“A boon, a boon, Sir Launcelot of the Lake!
I Pray you of your courtesy to take
This damsel to the King. Her enemies
Have spoiled her of her birthright, and she flees
An innocent outcast from her wasted lands,
To lay her life and fortune in his hands.”
She spoke, and vanished in the woodland shade.

Then Launcelot, leaning over helped the maid
To mount behind and at an easy trot
They and the troop rode on to Camelot.
He asked no questions for some fairy spell
Made light his heart, and told him all was well;
And as these two rode through the land together,
By dappled greenwood shade and sunlit heather,
Her soft voice in his ears, the innocent charm
Of her light, steady touch upon his arm,
Wrought magic in his soul. That day, I ween,
Sir Launcelot well-nigh forgot his queen.
And Elfinhart (you knew those eyes were hers!)
Laughed with the silvery jingle of his spurs,
And from her heart the new world's rapture drove
All thought of Fairyland—excepting love.

And so to high-towered Camelot they came,
The golden city,—now a shadowy name;
For over heath-clad hills the wild-winds blow
Where Arthur's halls, a thousand years ago
Bright with all far-fetchèd gems of curious art,
Shone brighter with the eyes of Elfinhart.
She came to Camelot; the king receives her;
And there for five glad years my story leaves her.
Five glad years, and this "episode" is done,
And we are back again at Canto I.
I write of merry jest and greenwood shade,
But tales of chivalry are not my trade;
So if you wish to read that five years' story
Of lady-love, romance, and martial glory,—
The mighty feats of arms that Gawayne did,—
The ever ripening love that Gawayne hid
Five long years in his breast, biding his time,—
Go seek it in some abler poet's rime.
My tale begins with the young knight's brave soul
All Elfinhart's. She thinks herself heart-whole.

But at that Christmas feast, in Arthur's hall,
With night's soft mantle folded over all,
The magic influence of the evening tide
Stole on their two hearts beating side by side.
And Gawayne talked of troubles long ago,
When each man's neighbor was his dearest foe,
And of the trials he himself had passed,
And the high purpose that from first to last
Had been his stay and spur, he scarce knew how,
Since on Excalibur he took the vow.
He told of his own hopes for future days,
And how he wrought and fought not for men's praise,
(Though like all good men Gawayne held that dear),
Yet trusting, when men laid him on his bier,
They might remember, as they gathered round it,
"He left this good world better than he found it."
He talked as true men seldom talk, unless
Swayed utterly by some pure passion's stress,
And ever gently, though with heart on fire,
Still hovered nearer to his soul's desire.
And Elfinhart in gravest silence listened,
But her sweet heart beat high, her blue eyes glistened;
For as he bared his soul to her she dreamed
A day-dream strange and new, wherein it seemed
That in that soul's clear depth she saw her own,
And his most secret thought (till then unknown)
Seemed hers eternally. He spoke of death,
And then her heart shrank, and she drew deep breath.
Suddenly, ere she understood at all
What new life dawned before her, came the call
Of fairy horns; and so the Green Knight burst
Upon the scene, as told in Canto First.

One jarring note, the tuneful chords among,
May make mad discord of the sweetest song.
E'en so with dissonant clamor through the breast
Of Gawayne rang the Green Knight's merry jest;
But what wild meaning must it not impart
To the vague fears of gentle Elfinhart?
For she had heard in the first trumpet-blast
A signal to her from the far-gone past;
And now, of all the strange things that had been,
Her half forgotten compact with the queen
Flushed through her memory, and a swift thought came
Like sudden fear, a thought without a name,
An unvoiced question and a blind alarm;
And in sheer helplessness she reached an arm
Toward Gawayne scarcely knowing what she would;
Her eyes beheld him, and she understood.
And is it Gawayne? He? Yes, Elfinhart,
The hour has come, and you must play your part.

So now it's all explained; and I intend
To go straight onward to the story's end.
Sir Gawayne had cut off the Green Knight's head,
And Arthur and his court had gone to bed;
In the great hall the dying embers shone
With a faint ghostly gleam, and there, alone,
While all the rest of Camelot was sleeping,
In the dark alcove Elfinhart lay weeping.
But as she lay there, all about her head
There fell a checkered beam of moonlight, shed
Through the barred casement; and she faintly stirred,
For in her troubled soul it seemed she heard
Vague music from some region far away!
She raised her head and, turning where she lay,
Saw in the silver moonlight the serene
And tranquil beauty of the fairy queen!

“We sent before you called us, Elfinhart,
For love lent keener magic to our art,
And warned us of the thoughts that in your breast
Awoke new rapture, trembling unconfessed.”

And Elfinhart moved closer to her knees
And hid her face in the white draperies
That veiled the fairy form, till, nestling there,
Her heart recovered from that blank despair,
And whispered her that whatsoever befell
Love ruled the world, and all would yet be well.

And the good fairy stroked the maiden’s head
And kissed her tear-starred eyes, and smiling said:
“Fie on you women’s hearts! Consistency
Hides her shamed head where mortal women be!
True love breeds faith and trust, it makes hearts strong;
The heart’s anointed king can do no wrong!
And yet you weep as if you feared to prove him;—
Upon my word, I don’t believe you love him!”

And Elfinhart replied: “Laugh if you will,
My queen, but let me be a woman still.
You fairies love where love is wise and just;
We mortal women love because we must:
And if I feared to prove him, I confess
I fear I still must love him none the less.”

She paused, for once again her eyes grew dim:
“Think you I love his virtues? I love him!
But yet you judged me wrongly, for believe me,
(And then laugh once again, and so forgive me),
If at the first I feared what you might do,
My doubts were not of Gawayne, but of you!”
And so both laughed, and for a little space
Folded each other in a glad embrace;
(For fairies, bathed the whole year round in bliss,
May yet be gladdened by a fair maid’s kiss);
And Elfinhart spoke on: “Do what you will,
I trust you with my all, and fear no ill.
But oh, my friend, to wait the long, long year,—
To keep my heart in silence, not to hear
The words my whole soul hungers for, nor say
One syllable to brighten his dark day!
Must it be so, my queen? And how shall I
School eyes and lips to act this year-long lie?
From the dear teacher-guardian of my youth
The only ways I learned were ways of truth!
I tried my skill this night, and learned to know
That there are deeps below the deeps of woe;
Hearts may be bruised and broken, yet still live;—
The wounds that kill us are the wounds we give!”

And so these two talked on, until the night
Began to shiver with the gray dawn’s light,
And in the deep-dyed casement they might see
New life flush through old dreams of chivalry.
And then they parted. What the queen had said
I know not, but the lady, comforted,
Bade farewell with calm voice and tranquil eyes,
And saw with new-born strength the new sun rise.
Perhaps in Fairyland there chanced to be
For them that grieve some sovereign alchemy
To turn the worst to best, and the good queen
Applied this soothing balm. Such things have been;
But yet I doubt if any fairy art
Was needed in the case of Elfinhart;
The medicine that charmed away her dole
Nature had planted in her own sweet soul.
Of all sure things, this thing I’m surest of,—
That the best cure for love’s own ills is love.

GAWAYNE

O Muse!—But no: heaven knows I need a muse;
But which of all the nine, pray, should I choose?
Thalia, Clio, and Melpomene,
I love them all, but none, alas, loves me;
For if you want a muse to take your part
You must be solely hers with all your heart;
And I have mingled since my earliest youth
My smiles and tears, my fictions and my truth;
Nay, in this very tale, scarce yet half done,
I’ve courted all the nine, and so won none!
Not for me, therefore, the Parnassian lyre,
Or winged war-horse shod with heavenly fire;
Harsh numbers flow from throats whose thirst has been
A whole life long unslaked of Hippocrene;
But I will e’en go on as best I can
And let the story end as it began,—
A plain, straightforward man’s unvarnished word,
Part sad, part sweet,—and part of it absurd.

A year passed by, as years are wont to do,
Winter and spring, summer and autumn too,
Till mid-December’s flaw-blown flakes of snow
Warned Gawayne that the time was come to go
To the Green Chapel by the Murmuring Mere,
And take again the blow he gave last year.
In the great court his charger stamped the ground,
While knights and weeping ladies thronged around
To arm him (as the custom was of yore)
And bid him sad farewell for evermore.
One face alone in all that bustling throng
Our hero’s eyes sought eagerly, and long
Sought vainly; for the lady Elfinhart,
Debating with herself, stood yet apart;
But as Sir Gawayne gathered up his reins
And bade the draw-bridge warden loose the chains,
Suddenly Elfinhart stood by his side,
Her fair face flushed with love, and joy, and pride.
She plucked a sprig of holly from her gown
And looked up, questioning; and he leaned down,
And so she placed it in his helm. No word
Might Gawayne's lips then utter, but he heard
The voice that was his music, and could feel
The touch of gentle fingers through the steel.
"Wear this, Sir Gawayne, for a loyal friend
Whose hopes and prayers go with you to the end."
And, staying not for answer, she withdrew,
And in the throng was lost to Gawayne's view.
He roused himself, and waving high his hand,
Struck spur, and so rode off toward Fairyland.

Long time he traveled by an unknown way,
Unhoused at night, companionless by day.
The cold sleet stung him through his shirt of mail,
But, underneath, his stout heart would not fail,
But beat full measure through the fiercest storm,
And kept his head clear and his brave soul warm.
No need to tell the perils that he passed;
He conquered all, and came unscathed at last
To where a high-embattled castle stood
Deep in the heart of a dense willow-wood.
And Gawayne called aloud, and to the gate
A smiling porter came, who opened straight,
And bade him enter in and take his rest;
And Gawayne entered, and the people pressed
About him with fair speeches; and he laid
His armor off, and gave it them, and prayed
That they would take his message to their lord,—
prayer for friendly shelter, bed and board.
He told them whence he was, his birth and name;
And the bold baron of the castle came,
A mighty man, huge-limbed, with flashing eyes,
And welcomed him with old-time courtesies;
For manners, in those days, were held of worth,
And gentle breeding went with gentle birth.
He heartily was glad his guest had come,
And made Sir Gawayne feel himself at home;
And as they walked in, side by side, each knew
The other for an honest man and true.

That night our hero and the baron ate
A sumptuous dinner in the hall of state,
And all the household, ranged along the board,
Made good cheer with Sir Gawayne and their lord,
And passed the brimming bowl right merrily
With friendly banter and quick repartee.
And Gawayne asked if they had chanced to hear
Of a Green Chapel by a Murmuring Mere,
And straightway all grew grave. Within his breast
Sir Gawayne felt a tremor of unrest,
But told his story with a gay outside,
And asked for some good man to be his guide
To find his foe. "I promise him," said he,
"No golden guerdon;—his reward shall be
The consciousness that unto him 't was given
To show a parting soul the way to heaven!"

Up jumped his host. "My friend, I like your attitude,
And know no surer way to win heaven's gratitude
Than sending thither just such men as you;"
I'll be your guide. But since you are not due
At the Green Chapel till three nights from now,
And since the way is short, I'll tell you how
The interim may be disposed of best:–
In short, let me propose a merry jest!
At this Sir Gawayne gave a sudden start,
For some old memory seemed to clutch his heart,
And in the baron's eyes he seemed to see
A twinkling gleam of green benignity
Not wholly strange; but like a flash 't was gone.
Gawayne sank back, and his good host went on:
"Two days you sojourn here, and while I take
My daily hunting in the wood, you make
My house and castle yours; and then, each night,
We'll meet together here at candle-light,
And all my winnings in the wood, and all
That comes to you at home, whate'er befall,
We'll give each other in exchange; in fine,
My fortune shall be yours, and yours be mine."
To Gawayne this seemed generous indeed.
And with most cordial laughter he agreed.
They clasped hands o'er the bargain with good zest,
And then all said good-night, and went to rest.

Next morning Gawayne was awakened early
From a deep slumber by the hurly-burly
Of footman, horseman, seneschal, and groom,
Bustling beneath the windows of his room.
He rose and looked out, just in time to see
The baron and a goodly company
Of huntsmen, armed with cross-bow, axe, and spear,
Ride through the castle gate and disappear.
And then, while Gawayne dressed, there came a knock
Upon his chamber door. He threw the lock,
And a boy page brought robes of ermine fur
And Tarsic silk,—black, white, and lavender,—
For his array, and with them a kind message,
Which the good knight received with no ill presage:
"Will brave Sir Gawayne spare an idle hour
For quiet converse in my lady's bower?"
The boy led on, and Gawayne followed him
Through crooked corridors and archways dim,
Along low galleries echoing from afar,
And down a winding stair; then "Here we are!"
The page cried cheerily, and paused before
The massive carvings of an antique door.
This he swung open; and the knight passed through
Into a garden, fresh with summer dew!
A lady's bower in Fairyland! What pen
Could make that strange enchantment live again?
Not he who drew Acrasia's Bower of Bliss
And Phædria's happy isle could picture this.
That sweet-souled Puritan discerned too well
The serpent's coil behind the witch's spell;
And he who saw—when the dark veil was torn—
The rose of Paradise without the thorn,
(Sublimest prophet, whose immortal verse
Lent mightier thunders to the primal curse),
Even he too sternly, in the soul's defense,
Repressed the still importunate cries of sense.
Bid me not, therefore, task my feebler pen
With dreams beyond the limits of their ken;
The phantom conjurings of the magic hour
That Gawayne passed in that enchanted bower
Must be from mortal eyes forever hid.
But yet some part of what he felt and did
These lines must needs disclose. As he stood there,
Breathing soft odors from the mellow air,
All hopes, all aims of noble knighthood seemed
Like the dim yesterdays of one who dreamed,
In starless caves of memory sunken deep,
And, like lost music, folded in strange sleep.

"How long, O mortal man, wilt thou give heed
To the world's phantom voices? The hours speed,
And fame and fortune yield to moth and rust,
And good and evil crumble into dust.  
Even now the sands are running in the glass;
Set not your heart upon vain things that pass;
Ambitions, honors, toils, are but the snare
Where lurks for aye the blind old world's despair.
Nay, quiet the bootless striving in your breast
And let your tired heart here at last find rest.
In vain have joy, love, beauty, struck deep root
In your heart's heart, unless you pluck the fruit;
Then put away the cheating soul's pretense,
Heap high the press, fill full the cup of sense;
Shatter the idols of blind yesterday,
And let love, joy, and beauty reign alway!"

Such thoughts as these, confused and unexpressed,
Flooded the silence in Sir Gawayne's breast.
Meanwhile a brasier filled the scented air
With wreaths of magic mist, and he was ware
That the mist drew together like a shroud;
And then the veil was rent, and in the cloud
Stood one who seemed, in features, form, and dress,
The perfect image of all loveliness.

The wonders of that vision none could tell
Save one whose heart had felt the mystic spell.
Once and once only, in the golden days
When youth made melody for love's sweet lays,
In two dark eyes (yet oh, how bright, how bright!)
I saw the wakening rapture of love's light,
And, in the hush of that still dawning, heard
From two sweet trembling lips love's whispered word.
The twilight deepens when the sun has set;
In memory golden glories linger yet;
But these avail not. Though my soul lay bare,
With all those memories sanctuaried there,
That spell was human. But the unseen power
That wove the witchery of this fairy bower,
In Gawayne's heart such subtle magic wrought
That past and future were well-nigh forgot,
And all that earth holds else, or heaven above,
Seemed naught worth keeping, save this dream of love.

And now, as the strange cloud of incense broke,
The vision, if it were a vision, spoke,—
If it were speech that filled the quivering air
With low harmonious music. Let none dare
In the rude jargons of this world to fashion
That sweet, wild anthem of unearthly passion.
Could I from the broad-billowing ocean borrow
Of Tristan's love and of Isolde's sorrow,
The flood of those world-darkening surges, wrought
With thoughts that lie beyond the reach of thought,
Might bring me succor where weak words must fail.
But Gawayne saw and heard, and passion-pale
Shrank back, and made a darkness of his face;
(As though the unplumbed deeps of starless space
Could quench those lustrous eyes, or close his ears
To the eternal music of love's spheres!)
But the voice changed, and Gawayne, listening there,
Heard now a heart's low cry of wild despair.
He turned again, and lo! the vision knelt
And drew a jeweled poniard from her belt,
To arm herself against her own dear life;
But as she bared her white breast to the knife
He started quickly forward, and he grasped
The hand that held the hilt; and then she clasped
Her soft arms round his neck, and as their lips
Met in the shadowing fold of love's eclipse,
All earth, all heaven, all knightly hopes of grace,
Died in the darkness of one blind embrace.

Died? Nay; for Gawayne, ere the moment passed,
Broke from the arms that strove to bind him fast,
And turned away once more; and, as he pressed
A trembling hand against his throbbing breast,
His aimless fingers touched a treasured part
Of the green holly-branch of Elfinhart,
Laid in his breast when he put off his arms.
What perils now are left in fairy charms?
For poets fable when they call love blind;
Love's habitation is the purer mind,
Whence with his keen eyes he may penetrate
All mists and fogs that baser spells create.
Love? What is love? Not the wild feverish thrill,
When heart to heart the thronging pulses fill,
And lips that close in parching kisses find
No speech but those;--the best remains behind.
The tranquil spirit--the divine assurance
That this life's seemings have a high endurance--
Thoughts that allay this restless striving, calm
The passionate heart, and fill old wounds with balm;--
These are the choirs invisible that move
In white processionals up the aisles of love.

Such love was Gawayne's,--love that sanctifies
The heart's most secret altar; and his eyes
Were opened, and his pulses beat once more
Their old true rhythm. And so the strife was o'er,
And all the perilous wiles of magic art
Were foiled by Gawayne--and by Elfinhart.

But time flies, and 't were tedious to delay
My song for all the trials of that day.
Light summer breezes, skurrying o'er the deep,
Ripple and foam and flash,--then sink to sleep;
But underneath, serene and changing never,

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The mighty heart of ocean beats forever,
And his deep streams renew from pole to pole
The living world's indomitable soul.
Enough, then, of the spells that vexed the brain
Of Gawayne; love and knighthood made all vain.

And in the afternoon, when Gawayne learned
That his good host, the baron, had returned,
He met him in the hall at candle-light,
According to his promise of last night.
And then the baron motioned to a page,
And straightway six tall men, of lusty age
And mighty sinews, entered the great door,
Bearing the carcass of a huge wild boar,
In all its uncouth ugliness complete,
And dropped it quivering at our hero's feet.
“What do you say to that, Sir Gawayne?” cried
The baron, swelling with true sportsman's pride
“But come: your promise, now, of yester-eve;
’T is blessered to give than to receive!
Though I'll be sworn you'll find it hard to pay
Full value for the winnings of this day.”
“Not so,” said Gawayne; “you will rest my debtor;
Your gift is good, but mine will be far better.”
And then he strode with solemn steps along
The echoing hall, and through the listening throng,
And with the words, “My noble lord, take this!”
He gave the baron a resounding kiss.
The baron jumped up in ecstatic glee.
“Now by my great-great-grandsire's beard,” quoth he,
“Better than all dead boars in Christendom
Is one sweet loving kiss!—Whence did it come?”
“Nay, there,” Sir Gawayne said, “you step beyond
The terms we stipulated in our bond.
Take you my kiss in peace, as I your boar;
Be glad; give thanks;—and seek to know no more.”
Loud laughter made the baron's eyes grow bright
And glitter with green sparkles of delight;
And then he chuckled: “Sir, I'm proud of you;
I drink your best of health; _I think you'll do!_”
And now the board was laid and dressed, and all
Sat down to dinner at the baron's call;
And Gawayne looked along the room askance,
Seeking the lady; and he caught one glance
Of laughing eyes—then looked away in haste,
But turned again, and wondered why his taste
Had erred so strangely, for the lady seemed
Not fairer now than others. Had he dreamed?
He rubbed his eyes and pondered,—though in sooth
Without one glimmering presage of the truth,—
Till all passed lightly from his puzzled mind,
Leaving contentment and good cheer behind.
So all the company feasted well, and sped
The flying hours, till it was time for bed.

One whole day longer must our hero rest
Within doors, to fulfill the merry jest.
So when, next morning, Gawayne once more heard
The hunt's-up in the court, he never stirred,
But let the merry horsemen ride away
While he slept soundly well into the day.
Later he rose, and strolled from room to room,
Through vaulted twilights of ancestral gloom,
Until, descending a long stair, he found
The dim-lit castle crypt, deep under ground,
Where sculptured effigies forever kept
Their long last marble silence as they slept,
And iron sentinels, on bended knees,
Held eyeless vigil in old panoplies.

Sir Gawayne, wandering on in aimless mood,
Pondered the tomb-stone legends, quaint and rude,
Wherein the pensive dreamer might divine
A tragic history in every line;
For so does fate, with bitterest irony,
Epitomize fame’s immortality,
Perpetuating for all after days
Mute lamentations and unnoted praise.
And Gawayne, reading here and there the story
Of fame obscure and unremembered glory,
Found on a tablet these words: “Where he lies,
The gray wave breaks and the wild sea-mew flies:
If any be that loved him, seek not here,
But in the lone hills by the Murmuring Mere.”
A nameless cenotaph!—perhaps of one
Like Gawayne’s self deluded and undone
By the green stranger; and the legend brought
A tide of passion flooding Gawayne’s thought;
A flood-tide, not of fear,—for Gawayne’s breast
Shrank never at the perilous behest
Of noble knighthood,—but the love of life,
Compassion, and soul-sickness of the strife.
“If any be that loved him!” Oh, to die
Far from green-swarded Camelot, and lie
Among these bleak and barren hills alone,
His end unwept for and his grave unknown,—
Never again to see the glad sunrise
That brightened all his world in those dear eyes!

Half suffocating in the charneled air
Of that low vault, he staggered up the stair,
Out of the dim-lit halls of silent death
Into the living light, and drew quick breath
Where, through a casement-arch of ivied stone,
Bright from the clear blue sky the warm sun shone.
The whole of life’s glad rapture thrilled his heart;
Till a quick step behind him made him start,
And there, deep-veiled, in muffling cloak and hood,
Once more the lady of the castle stood.

Low-voiced she spoke, as if with studied care
Weighing the syllables of her parting prayer.
“Sir Gawayne—nay, I pray you, turn not yet,
But hear me;—though my heart may not forget
That once, for one sweet moment, you were kind,
I come not to recall that to your mind;—
Between us two be love’s words aye unspoken!
Yet ere you go, I pray you, leave some token
That in the long, long years may comfort me
For the dear face I nevermore shall see.”
“Nay, lady,” said the knight, “I have no gifts
To give you. Errant knighthood ever drifts
From shore to shore, by wandering breezes blown,
With naught save its good name to call its own.
In friendship, then, I pray you keep for me
My name untarnished in your memory.”
“Ah, sir,” she said, “my memory bears that name
Burnt in with characters of living flame.
But though you give me naught, I pray you take
This girdle from me;—wear it for my sake;
Nay, but refuse me not; you little know
Its magic power. I had it long ago
From Fairyland; and its encircling charm
Keeps scathless him who wears it from all harm;
No evil thing can touch him. Gird it on,
If but to ease my heart when you are gone.”

She held a plain green girdle in her hand,
In outward seeming just a narrow band
Of silk, with silver clasps; but in those days
The strangest things were wrought in simplest ways,
As Gawayne knew full well; and he could see
That all the lady said was verity.
He took the girdle, held it, fingered it,
Then clasped it round his waist to try the fit,
Irresolutely dallying with temptation,
Till conscience grew too weak for inclination;
For at the last he threw one wandering glance
Out at the casement, and the merry dance
Of sparkling sunbeams on the fields of snow
Wrought havoc in his wavering heart; and so,
Repeating to himself one word: “Life, life!”
He took the token from the baron’s wife.

That evening, when the baron and our knight
Met to exchange their gifts at candle-light,
The baron, looking graver than before,
Said: “Sir, my luck has left me; not a boar
Did we get wind of, all this blessed day.
I come with empty hands, only to pray
Your pardon. What good fortune do you bring?”
And Gawayne answered firmly: “Not a thing!”

CONCLUSION

By noon the next day, Gawayne and his host
Rode side by side along the perilous coast
Of the gray Mere, from whose unquiet sleep
Reverberating murmurs of the deep
Startled the still December’s listening air.
The baron, shuddering, pointed seaward. “There,”
He said, “year in, year out, these voices haunt
That fearful water; heaven knows what they want!
Men tell me—and I have no doubt it’s true—
They are knights-errant whom the Green Knight slew!
Woe unto him, the over-bold, who dares
Adventure near that uncouth monster’s snares!”
Quoth Gawayne: “How have _you_ escaped the net?”
The baron answered: “I? We never met!
When I’m about, he seems to shun the place,
And where he is, I never show my face;
But if we did meet, ’t would be safe to say
Not more than one of us would get away!”

And then the baron told tales by the score
About the Green Knight’s quenchless thirst for gore,
And kept repeating that no magic charm
Was proof against the prowess of his arm;
At his first blow each vain defense must fall,
For he was arch-magician over all.
And as from tale to tale the baron ran,
Sir Gawayne, had he been another man,
Would certainly have felt his heart’s blood curdle,
Despite his secret wearing of the girdle;
But when the baron finally suggested
Abandoning the venture, and protested
That the whole monstrous business was absurd,
Sir Gawayne simply said: “I gave my word.”
And when the baron saw he would not bend,
He seemed to lose all patience. “Well, my friend,
I’ll go no further with you. On your head
Shall be your own mad blood when you are dead.
Yonder your two roads fork; pause there, I pray,
And ponder well before you choose your way.
One takes the hills, one winds along the wave;
To Camelot this,—the other to your grave!
Choose the high road, Sir Gawayne; shun the danger!
Say you were misdirected by a stranger;—
I swear by all that’s sacred, I’ll not tell
One syllable to a soul;—and so farewell!”
He galloped off without another word,
And vanished where the road turned. Gawayne heard,
Long after he had disappeared, the sound
Of iron hoof-beats on the frozen ground,
Till all died into silence, save those drear
And hollow voices from the Murmuring Mere.

But Gawayne chose the lower road, and passed
Along the desolate shore. The die was cast.
The western skies, as the red sun sank low,
Cast purple shades across the drifted snow,
And Gawayne knew that the dread hour was come
For the fulfillment of his martyrdom.

And now, from just beyond a jutting hill,
Came hideous sounds, as of a giant mill
That hisses, roars, and sputters, clicks and clacks;—
It was the Green Knight sharpening his axe!
And Gawayne, coming past the corner, found him,
With ghastly mouldering skulls and bones strewn round him,
In joyous fury urging the keen steel
Against the surface of his grinding wheel.
The place was a wild hollow, circled round
With barren hills, and on the bottom ground
Stood the Green Chapel, moss-grown, solitary;–
In sooth, it seemed the devil's mortuary!
The Green Knight's back was turned, and he stirred not
Till Gawayne hailed him sharply; then he shot
One glance—as when, o'erhead, a living wire
Startles the night with flashes of green fire;–
Then hurried forward, bland as bland could be,
And greeted Gawayne with green courtesy.
"Dear sir, I ask a thousand pardons; pray
Forgive me. You are punctual to the day;
That's good! Of course I knew you would not fail.
How do you do? You look a trifle pale;
I trust, with all my heart, you are not ill?
Just the cold air? It does blow rather chill!
What can I do to cheer you? Let me see;–
Suppose I brew a cup of hot green tea?
You'd rather not? You're pressed for time? Of course,
I understand; then just get off your horse,
And I'll do all I can to expedite
Our little business for you. There, that's right;
And now your helmet? Thanks; and if you please
Perhaps you'll kindly kneel down on your knees,
As I did when I came to Camelot; So!
Are you all ready? Will you bide the blow?"
And Gawayne said "I will," in such soft notes
As happy bridegrooms utter, when their throats
Are paralyzed with blest anticipation;–
(What Gawayne looked for was decapitation!)
And then the Green Knight swung his axe in air
With a loud whirr; and Gawayne, kneeling there,
Shrank back an inch; and the green giant stayed
His threatening hand, and with a cold sneer said:
"You shrink, sir, from the axe; I can't hit true
Unless you hold still, as I did for you."
"Your pardon," Gawayne said, with bated breath;
"This time I swear to hold as still as death."
He did so, and the Green Knight swung again
His axe, and whirled it round his head, and then,
Pausing a second time, said: "Very good!
You're holding quite still now; I knew you would!"
Gawayne, in anger, said: "Jest, if you like,
After the blow; tarry no longer; strike!"
So once again the ponderous axe was raised;
But this time down it came, and lightly grazed
Sir Gawayne's neck. He felt the hot blood flow,
And saw red drops that sank deep in the snow,
And then he jumped up, faced his foe, and cried:
"Enough: you owed me one blow, though I died;
But be you man or beast or devil abhorred,
I yield no further; with my mortal sword
I do defy you; and if mortal man
May hope against" …
But the Green Knight began
A low melodious laugh, like running brooks
Whose pebbly babble fills the shadowy nooks
Of green-aisled woodlands, when the winds are still.
"My friend, we bear each other no ill will."
When first I swung my axe, you showed some fear;
I owed you that much for your blow last year.
The second time I swung,—yet spared your life,—
That paid you for the kiss you gave my wife!
“Your wife!” “My wife, Sir Gawaine; ’t was my word;
And when I swung my weapon for the third
And last time, then I made the red blood spirt
For that green girdle underneath your shirt!
You played me false, my friend!”
And Gawaine knelt
Once more, and casting off the magic belt,
In bitter broken words confessed his shame,
And begged the Green Knight to avenge the name
Of injured knighthood, and with one last blow
To end his guilty life. “Nay, nay, not so,”
The other softly said. “Be of good cheer;
Your fault was small, for all men hold life dear.
We tempted you, my friend, with all our might,
And proved you in good sooth a noble knight;
A veritable Joseph, sir, you are!”
Quoth Gawaine drily, “Thanks, Lord Potiphar!
But may I ask you why you played this part?”
The other said: “Ask Lady Elfinhart!”
He smiled, and from his smile a genial glow
Of green mid-summer seemed to overflow,
Filling with verdure all that barren place.
The warm red blood rushed to Sir Gawayne’s face;
He caught his breath, and in his eager eyes
There shone a sudden flash of dark surmise,
And then he stood a long while pondering;
But in his breast his heart began to sing
The old, old music whose still echoes roll
Forever voiceless through the listening soul.
He said farewell to his good fairy friend
As in a dream, where real and unreal blend
In phantom unison, and with the light
Of love to lead him home, rode through the night,
Beside the tranquil murmurs of the Mere,
And through the silence of the passing year;
And earth and sea and starlit sky took part
In the still exaltation of his heart,
While all but love and wonder was forgot,
Until he came to high-towered Camelot.

To Camelot he came, and there he found
The good King Arthur and his Table Round
Awaiting his return in anxious doubt;
But ere he passed the gates a mighty shout
Rose from the watchmen on the outward wall
And bore the tidings to the inmost hall.
From every window flaunting flags were flung;
From the high battlements brass trumpets sung;
And great bells, chiming in the topmost tower,
Pealed salutation to the joyous hour,
As Gawayne, riding through the cullis-port,
Faced the glad throng that filled the palace court.

And with this tribute paid to knightly glory
It seems most fitting to conclude my story.
Entreat me not, dear reader, to impart
Further of Gawayne, or of Elfinhart.
Let your own fancy round the story out
Whatever way you please; I cannot doubt
The sequel; but when I, in silent thought,
Had brought Sir Gawayne back to her, and sought
With hand profane to lift the veil, behind
Whose secret shelter their two hearts enshrined
The mutual covenant of love’s mystery,
That pure fane would not desecrated be.
But this alone I know: the power that wove
Through human lives the warp and woof of love
Wrought not in darkness, nor with hand unsure;–
His fabric must forevermore endure.
And hence I doubt not that these two were blest
As none may be, save they who have confessed
Allegiance to that mighty spirit’s law,
And trod his holy ground with reverent awe.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is a poem that connects to the Arthurian legend and tells the story of one of the knights of the Round Table, Sir Gawain (can be pronounced GAH-win or Guh-WAYNE). It tells the story in verse. The poem is comprised of 101 stanzas.

As with our other readings so far, we have to read them in translation.

Additional Translation

“Sir Gawain and the Green Knight” from Representative Poetry Online

The version we will use for class comes from the University of Toronto’s Representative Poetry Online website. This version includes the original text with a modern translation placed below each stanza. (Stanza numbers are above the original text, and that original text is then followed by the translation. You only need to read the modern translation.)

An advantage of this particular modern translation is that it retains the “bob and wheel” format of the stanzas. This is a significant poetic device that provides The Encyclopedia Britannica defines that term this way: “bob and wheel, in alliterative verse, a group of typically five rhymed lines following a section of unrhymed lines, often at the end of a strophe. The bob is the first line in the group and is shorter than the rest; the wheel is the quatrain that follows the bob.”

Background and Interpretation

“Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (c. 1375-1400)” from Luminarium
Because Sir Gawain is a heroic character, resource readings about the work itself and the medieval hero are also part of our required reading.

“Heroes of the Middle Ages” from Luminarium

Audio Files

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight Audio Book Part 1/3

Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/dz_nEW6TgY0

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight Audio Book Part 2/3

Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/YbDhsyZ0Ulo

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight Audio Book Part 3/3

Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/pBrujNXfVIs
Christopher Marlowe (baptised 26 February 1564 – 30 May 1593) was an English playwright, poet and translator of the Elizabethan era. Marlowe was the foremost Elizabethan tragedian of his day. He greatly influenced William Shakespeare, who was born in the same year as Marlowe and who rose to become the pre-eminent Elizabethan playwright after Marlowe's mysterious early death. Marlowe's plays are known for the use of blank verse and their overreaching protagonists.

A warrant was issued for Marlowe's arrest on 18 May 1593. No reason was given for it, though it was thought to be connected to allegations of blasphemy—a manuscript believed to have been written by Marlowe was said to contain "vile heretical conceipts." On 20 May he was brought to the court to attend upon the Privy Council for questioning. There is no record of their having met that day, however, and he was commanded to attend upon them each day thereafter until "licensed to the contrary." Ten days later, he was stabbed to death by Ingram Frizer. Whether the stabbing was connected to his arrest has never been resolved.

**Literary career**

Of the dramas attributed to Marlowe, *Dido, Queen of Carthage* is believed to have been his first. It was performed by the Children of the Chapel, a company of boy actors, between 1587 and 1593. The play was first published in 1594; the title page attributes the play to Marlowe and Thomas Nashe.

Marlowe's first play performed on the regular stage in London, in 1587, was *Tamburlaine the Great*, about the conqueror Tamburlaine, who rises from shepherd to war-lord. It is among the first English plays in blank verse, and, with Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, generally is considered the beginning of the mature phase of the Elizabethan theatre. *Tamburlaine* was a success, and was followed with *Tamburlaine the Great, Part II*.

The two parts of *Tamburlaine* were published in 1590; all Marlowe's other works were published posthumously. The sequence of the writing of his other four plays is unknown; all deal with controversial themes.

- *The Jew of Malta* (first published as *The Famous Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta*), about a Maltese Jew's barbarous revenge against the city authorities, has a prologue delivered by a character representing Machiavelli. It was probably written in 1589 or 1590, and was first performed in 1592. It was a success, and remained popular for the next fifty years.
- *Edward the Second* is an English history play about the deposition of King Edward II by his barons and the Queen, who resent the undue influence the king's favourites have in court and state affairs.
- *The Massacre at Paris* is a short and luridly written work, the only surviving text of which was probably a reconstruction from memory of the original performance text, portraying the events of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572, which English Protestants invoked as the blackest example of Catholic treachery. It features the silent “English Agent”, whom subsequent tradition has identified with
Marlowe himself and his connections to the secret service. *The Massacre at Paris* is considered his most dangerous play, as agitators in London seized on its theme to advocate the murders of refugees from the low countries and, indeed, it warns Elizabeth I of this possibility in its last scene.

- *Doctor Faustus* (or *The Tragicall History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus*), based on the German Faustbuch, was the first dramatised version of the Faust legend of a scholar’s dealing with the devil. While versions of “The Devil’s Pact” can be traced back to the 4th century, Marlowe deviates significantly by having his hero unable to “burn his books” or repent to a merciful God in order to have his contract annulled at the end of the play. Marlowe’s protagonist is instead carried off by demons, and in the 1616 quarto his mangled corpse is found by several scholars. Doctor Faustus is a textual problem for scholars as two versions of the play exist: the 1604 quarto, also known as the A text, and the 1616 quarto or B text. Both were published after Marlowe’s death.

Additional information on Marlowe’s life, work, and influence can be found here.

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**ENGLISH RENAISSANCE THEATRE**

*English Renaissance theatre*, also known as *early modern English theatre*, or (commonly) as *Elizabethan theatre*, refers to the theatre of England between 1562 and 1642.

This is the style of the plays of William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe and Ben Jonson.
Theatrical life and the establishment of permanent theatres

Theatrical life was largely centred just outside of London, as the theatre was banned inside the city itself, but plays were performed by touring companies all over England.

English companies even toured and performed English plays abroad, e.g. in Germany and in Denmark.

The period starts before the establishment of the first permanent theatres. Initially two types of location were used for performing plays, the courtyards of inns and the Inns of Court such as the Inner Temple. These venues continued to be used even after permanent theatres were established.

The first permanent English theatre, the ‘Red Lion’ opened in 1567 but it was a short-lived failure. The first successful theatres, such as The Theatre, opened in 1576.

The establishment of large and profitable public theatres was an essential enabling factor in the success of English Renaissance drama. Once they were in operation, drama could become a fixed and permanent rather than a transitory phenomenon. Their construction was prompted when the Mayor and Corporation of London first banned plays in 1572 as a measure against the plague, and then formally expelled all players from the city in 1575. This prompted the construction of permanent playhouses outside the jurisdiction of London, in the liberties of Halliwell/Holywell in Shoreditch and later the Clink, and at Newington Butts near the established entertainment district of St. George’s Fields in rural Surrey. The Theatre was constructed in Shoreditch in 1576 by James Burbage with his brother-in-law John Brayne (the owner of the unsuccessful Red Lion playhouse of 1567) and the Newington Butts playhouse was set up, probably by Jerome Savage, some time between 1575 and 1577. The Theatre was rapidly followed by the nearby Curtain Theatre (1577), the Rose (1587), the Swan (1595), the Globe (1599), the Fortune (1600), and the Red Bull (1604).

Archaeological excavations on the foundations of the Rose and the Globe in the late 20th century showed that all the London theatres had individual differences; yet their common function necessitated a similar general plan. The public theatres were three stories high, and built around an open space at the centre. Usually polygonal in plan to give an overall rounded effect (though the Red Bull and the first Fortune were square), the three levels of inward-facing galleries overlooked the open centre, into which jutted the stage—essentially a platform surrounded on three sides by the audience, only the rear being restricted for the entrances and exits of the actors and seating for the musicians. The upper level behind the stage could be used as a balcony, as in Romeo and Juliet or Antony and Cleopatra, or as a position from which an actor could harangue a crowd, as in Julius Caesar.

The playhouses were generally built with timber and plaster, and were three stories high. Individual theatre descriptions give additional information to their construction, such as flint stones being used to build the Swan. Theatres were also constructed to be able to hold large amounts of people.

A different model was developed with the Blackfriars Theatre, which came into regular use on a long-term basis in 1599. The Blackfriars was small in comparison to the earlier theatres and roofed rather than open to the sky; it resembled a modern theatre in ways that its predecessors did not. Other small enclosed theatres followed, notably the Whitefriars (1608) and the Cockpit (1617). With the building of the Salisbury Court Theatre in 1629 near the site of the defunct Whitefriars, the London audience had six theatres to choose from: three surviving large open-air “public” theatres, the Globe, the Fortune, and the Red Bull, and three smaller enclosed “private” theatres, the Blackfriars, the Cockpit, and the Salisbury Court. Audiences of the 1630s benefited from a half-century of vigorous dramaturgical development; the plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare and their contemporaries were still being performed on a regular basis (mostly at the public theatres), while the newest works of the newest playwrights were abundant as well (mainly at the private theatres).
Around 1580, when both the Theatre and the Curtain were full on summer days, the total theatre capacity of London was about 5000 spectators. With the building of new theatre facilities and the formation of new companies, the capital’s total theatre capacity exceeded 10,000 after 1610.

Ticket prices in general varied during this time period. The cost of admission was based on where in the theatre a person wished to be situated, or based on what a person could afford. If people wanted a better view of the stage or to be more separate from the crowd, they would pay more for their entrance. Due to inflation that occurred during this time period, admission increased in some theatres from a penny to a sixpence or even higher.

Performances

The acting companies functioned on a repertory system; unlike modern productions that can run for months or years on end, the troupes of this era rarely acted the same play two days in a row. Thomas Middleton’s *A Game at Chess* ran for nine straight performances in August 1624 before it was closed by the authorities—but this was due to the political content of the play and was a unique, unprecedented, and unrepeatable phenomenon. Consider the 1592 season of Lord Strange’s Men at the Rose Theatre as far more representative: between 19 Feb. and 23 June the company played six days a week, minus Good Friday and two other days. They performed 23 different plays, some only once, and their most popular play of the season, *The First Part of Hieronimo*, (based on Kyd’s *The Spanish Tragedy*), 15 times. They never played the same play two days in a row, and rarely the same play twice in a week. The workload on the actors, especially the leading performers like Edward Alleyn, must have been tremendous.

One distinctive feature of the companies was that they included only males. Female parts were played by adolescent boy players in women’s costume. Performances also occurred in the afternoon since no artificial lighting existed. When the light did begin to fade, candles were lit so that the play could continue until its end. Plays contained little to no scenery as the scenery was described by the actors through the course of the play.

Costumes

Costumes during this time period were often bright in color, visually entrancing, and expensive. Due to the fast-paced nature of the plays and their runs, there was sometimes not even enough time to create period specific costumes for the actors. As a result, the actors wore contemporary and not period specific clothing for the plays. Occasionally costumes were donated to actors by patrons, but more often than not, actors wore the clothes of their day.

Costumes were also used to recognize characters. Colors symbolized class, and costumes were made to reflect that. For example, if a character was royalty, their costume included purple. The colors as well as the different fabrics of the costumes allowed viewers to know the roles of each actor when they came on stage. Even though the English Sumptuary Law of 1574, a law which clearly defined the color, style, and fabric of the clothing different castes could wear, was in effect, a clause was built in that allowed actors to dress in clothes that were above their rank so long as they belonged to a licensed acting troupe.

Playwrights

The growing population of London, the growing wealth of its people, and their fondness for spectacle produced a dramatic literature of remarkable variety, quality, and extent. Although most of the plays written for the Elizabethan stage have been lost, over 600 remain.

The men (no women were professional dramatists in this era) who wrote these plays were primarily self-made men from modest backgrounds. Some of them were educated at either Oxford or Cambridge, but many were not. Although William Shakespeare and Ben Jonson were actors, the majority do not seem to have been performers, and no major author who came on to the scene after 1600 is known to have supplemented his income by acting.

Not all of the playwrights fit modern images of poets or intellectuals. Christopher Marlowe was killed in an apparent tavern brawl, while Ben Jonson killed an actor in a duel. Several probably were soldiers.
Playwrights were normally paid in increments during the writing process, and if their play was accepted, they would also receive the proceeds from one day’s performance. However, they had no ownership of the plays they wrote. Once a play was sold to a company, the company owned it, and the playwright had no control over casting, performance, revision or publication.

The profession of dramatist was challenging and far from lucrative. Entries in Philip Henslowe’s Diary show that in the years around 1600 Henslowe paid as little as £6 or £7 per play. This was probably at the low end of the range, though even the best writers could not demand too much more. A playwright, working alone, could generally produce two plays a year at most; in the 1630s Richard Brome signed a contract with the Salisbury Court Theatre to supply three plays a year, but found himself unable to meet the workload. Shakespeare produced fewer than 40 solo plays in a career that spanned more than two decades; he was financially successful because he was an actor and, most importantly, a shareholder in the company for which he acted and in the theatres they used. Ben Jonson achieved success as a purveyor of Court masques, and was talented at playing the patronage game that was an important part of the social and economic life of the era. Those who were playwrights pure and simple fared far less well; the biographies of early figures like George Peele and Robert Greene, and later ones like Brome and Philip Massinger, are marked by financial uncertainty, struggle, and poverty.

Playwrights dealt with the natural limitation on their productivity by combining into teams of two, three, four, and even five to generate play texts; the majority of plays written in this era were collaborations, and the solo artists who generally eschewed collaborative efforts, like Jonson and Shakespeare, were the exceptions to the rule. Dividing the work, of course, meant dividing the income; but the arrangement seems to have functioned well enough to have made it worthwhile. (The truism that says, diversify your investments, may have worked for the Elizabethan play market as for the modern stock market.) Of the 70-plus known works in the canon of Thomas Dekker, roughly 50 are collaborations; in a single year, 1598, Dekker worked on 16 collaborations for impresario Philip Henslowe, and earned £30, or a little under 12 shillings per week—roughly twice as much as the average artisan’s income of 1 s. per day. At the end of his career, Thomas Heywood would famously claim to have had “an entire hand, or at least a main finger” in the authorship of some 220 plays. A solo artist usually needed months to write a play (though Jonson is said to have done Volpone in five weeks); Henslowe’s Diary indicates that a team of four or five writers could produce a play in as little as two weeks. Admittedly, though, the Diary also shows that teams of Henslowe’s house dramatists—Anthony Munday, Robert Wilson, Richard Hathwaye, Henry Chettle, and the others, even including a young John Webster—could start a project, and accept advances on it, yet fail to produce anything stageworthy. (Modern understanding of collaboration in this era is biased by the fact that the failures have generally disappeared with barely a trace; for one exception to this rule, see: Sir Thomas More). Most playwrights, like Shakespeare for example, wrote in verse.
Genres

Genres of the period included the history play, which depicted English or European history. Shakespeare’s plays about the lives of kings, such as Richard III and Henry V, belong to this category, as do Christopher Marlowe’s Edward II and George Peele’s Famous Chronicle of King Edward the First. History plays dealt with more recent events, like A Larum for London which dramatizes the sack of Antwerp in 1576.

Tragedy was an amazingly popular genre. Marlowe’s tragedies were exceptionally popular, such as Dr. Faustus and The Jew of Malta. The audiences particularly liked revenge dramas, such as Thomas Kyd’s The Spanish Tragedy. The four tragedies considered to be Shakespeare’s greatest (Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, and Macbeth) were composed during this period, as well as many others (see Shakespearean tragedy).

Comedies were common, too. A subgenre developed in this period was the city comedy, which deals satirically with life in London after the fashion of Roman New Comedy. Examples are Thomas Dekker’s The Shoemaker’s Holiday and Thomas Middleton’s A Chaste Maid in Cheapside.

Though marginalised, the older genres like pastoral (The Faithful Shepherdess, 1608), and even the morality play (Four Plays in One, ca. 1608-13) could exert influences. After about 1610, the new hybrid subgenre of the tragicomedy enjoyed an efflorescence, as did the masque throughout the reigns of the first two Stuart kings, James I and Charles I.

Printed texts

Only a minority of the plays of English Renaissance theatre were ever printed; of Heywood’s 220 plays noted above, only about 20 were published in book form. A little over 600 plays were published in the period as a whole, most commonly in individual quarto editions. (Larger collected editions, like those of Shakespeare’s, Ben Jonson’s, and Beaumont and Fletcher’s plays, were a late and limited development.) Through much of the modern era, it was thought that play texts were popular items among Renaissance readers that provided healthy profits for the stationers who printed and sold them. By the turn of the 21st century, the climate of scholarly opinion shifted somewhat on this belief: some contemporary researchers argue that publishing plays was a risky and marginal business—though this conclusion has been disputed by others. Some of the most successful publishers of the English Renaissance, like William Ponsonby or Edward Blount, rarely published plays.

A small number of plays from the era survived not in printed texts but in manuscript form.

End of English Renaissance theatre: ban on plays by the English Parliament

The rising Puritan movement was hostile toward theatre, as they felt that “entertainment” was sinful. Politically, playwrights and actors were clients of the monarchy and aristocracy, and most supported the Royalist cause. The Puritan faction, long powerful in London, gained control of the city early in the First English Civil War, and on 2 September 1642, the Parliament, pushed by the Parliamentarian party, under Puritan influence, banned the staging of plays in the London theatres though it did not, contrary to what is commonly stated, order the closure, let alone the destruction, of the theatres themselves:

The text of the act is as follows: Whereas the distressed Estate of Ireland, steeped in her own Blood, and the distracted Estate of England, threatened with a Cloud of Blood by a Civil War, call for all possible Means to appease and avert the Wrath of God, appearing in these Judgements; among which, Fasting and Prayer, having been often tried to be very effectual, having been lately and are still enjoined; and whereas Public Sports do not well agree with Public Calamities, nor Public Stage-plays with the Seasons of Humiliation, this being an Exercise of sad and pious Solemnity, and the other being Spectacles of Pleasure, too commonly expressing lascivious Mirth and Levity: It is therefore thought fit, and Ordained, by the Lords and Commons in this Parliament assembled, That, while these sad causes and set Times of Humiliation do continue, Public Stage Plays shall cease, and be forbarn, instead of which are recommended to the People of this Land the profitable and
seasonable considerations of Repentance, Reconciliation, and Peace with God, which probably may produce outward Peace and Prosperity, and bring again Times of Joy and Gladness to these Nations.

Note that the Act purports the ban to be temporary ("...while these sad causes and set Times of Humiliation do continue, Public Stage Plays shall cease and be born") but does not assign a time limit to it.

After 1642, during the English Civil War and the ensuing Interregnum (English Commonwealth), even after the Puritan mandated banning of the performance of plays, theatrical activity which continued English Renaissance theatre could be seen to some extent, e.g. in the form of short comical plays called Drolls that were allowed by the authorities, while proper full-length plays were banned. The theatres were not closed. The buildings were used for purposes other than staging plays.

The performance of plays remained banned for most of the next eighteen years, becoming allowed again after the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660. The theatres started again performing many of the plays of the previous era, though often in adapted forms; new genres of Restoration comedy and spectacle soon evolved, giving English theatre of the later seventeenth century its distinctive character.

THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

THE POPE.
CARDINAL OF LORRAIN.
THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY.
DUKE OF VANHOLT.
FAUSTUS.
VALDES, ] friends to FAUSTUS.
CORNELIUS, ]
WAGNER, servant to FAUSTUS.
Clown.
ROBIN.
RALPH.
Vintner.
Horse-courser.
A Knight.
An Old Man.
Scholars, Friars, and Attendants.

DUCHESS OF VANHOLT

LUCIFER.
BELZEBUB.
MEPHISTOPHILIS.
Good Angel.
Evil Angel.
The Seven Deadly Sins.
Devils.
Spirits in the shapes of ALEXANDER THE GREAT, of his Paramour and of HELEN.
THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS

FROM THE QUARTO OF 1604.

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS. Not marching now in fields of Thrasymerne, 
Where Mars did mate (Note: mate-- i.e. confound, defeat.) the 
Carthaginians; 
Nor sporting in the dalliance of love, 
In courts of kings where state is overturn'd; 
Nor in the pomp of proud audacious deeds, 
Intends our Muse to vaunt (Note: So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "daunt.") her 
(Note: All the 4tos "his.") heavenly verse: 
Only this, gentlemen,—we must perform 
The form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad: 
To patient judgments we appeal our plaud, 
And speak for Faustus in his infancy. 
Now is he born, his parents base of stock, 
In Germany, within a town call'd Rhodes: 
Of riper years, to Wertenberg he went, 
Whereas (Note: Whereas-- i.e. where.) his kinsmen chiefly brought him up. 
So soon he profits in divinity, 
The fruitful plot of scholarism grac'd, 
That shortly he was grac'd with doctor's name, 
In heavenly matters of theology; 
Till swoln with cunning, (Note: cunning-- i.e. knowledge.) of a self-conceit, 
His waxen wings did mount above his reach, 
And, melting, heavens conspir'd his overthrow; 
For, falling to a devilish exercise, 
And glutted now (Note: So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "more.") with learning's golden gifts, 
He surfeits upon cursed necromancy; 
Nothing so sweet as magic is to him, 
Which he prefers before his chiefest bliss: 
And this the man that in his study sits. 

FAUSTUS discovered in his study. (Note: FAUSTUS discovered in his study-- Most probably, the Chorus, before going out, drew a curtain, and discovered Faustus sitting. In B. Barnes's DIVILS CHARTER, 1607, we find; "SCEN. VLTIMA. ALEXANDER VNBRAED BETWIXT TWO CARDINALLS in his study LOOKING VPON A BOOKE, whilst a groome draweth the Curtaine." Sig. L 3.)

FAUSTUS. Settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin 
To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess: 
Having commenc'd, be a divine in shew, 
Yet level at the end of every art, 
And live and die in Aristotle's works. 
Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou (Note: Analytics, 'tis thou, &c.-- Qy. "Analytic"?) (but such phraseology was not uncommon.) hast ravish'd me! 
Bene disserere est finis logices. 
Is, to dispute well, logic's chiefest end? 
Affords this art no greater miracle? 
Then read no more; thou hast attain'd that (Note: So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "the" (the printer having mistaken "yt" for "ye").) end:
A greater subject fitteth Faustus' wit:
Bid Economy (Note: So the later 4tos (with various spelling).--2to 1604 "Oncaymaeon.") farewell, and (Note: and-- So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) Galen come,
Seeing, Ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus:
Be a physician, Faustus; heap up gold,
And be eterniz'd for some wondrous cure:
Summum bonum medicinae sanitas,
The end of physic is our body's health.
Why, Faustus, hast thou not attain'd that end?
Is not thy common talk found aphorisms?
Are not thy bills hung up as monuments,
Whereby whole cities have escap'd the plague,
And thousand desperate maladies been eas'd?
Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man.
Couldst (Note: Couldst-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "Wouldst.") thou make men (Note: men-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "man.") to live eternally,
Or, being dead, raise them to life again,
Then this profession were to be esteem'd.
Physic, farewell! Where is Justinian?

[Reads.]
Si una eademque res legatur (Note: legatur-- All the 4tos "legatus.") duobus, alter rem, alter valorem rei, &c.

A pretty case of paltry legacies!

[Reads.]
Exhoereditare filium non potest pater, nisi, &c. (Note: &c.-- So two of the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.)

Such is the subject of the institute,
And universal body of the law: (Note: law-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "Church.")
This (Note: This-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "His.") study fits a mercenary drudge,
Who aims at nothing but external trash;
Too servile (Note: Too servile-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "The deuill.") and illiberal for me.
When all is done, divinity is best:
Jerome's Bible, Faustus; view it well.

[Reads.]
Stipendium peccati mors est.
Ha!
Stipendium, &c.

The reward of sin is death: that's hard.

[Reads.]
Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas;

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there's no truth in us. Why, then, belike we must sin, and so consequently die:
Ay, we must die an everlasting death.
What doctrine call you this, Che sera, sera, (Note: Che sera, sera-- Lest it should be thought that I am wrong in not altering the old spelling here, I may quote from Panizzi's very critical edition of the ORLANDO FURIOSO, "La satisfazion ci SERA pronta." C. xviii. st. 67.)
What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu!
These metaphysics of magicians,
And necromantic books are heavenly;
Lines, circles, scenes, (Note: scenes-- "And sooner may a gulling weather-spie By drawing forth heavens SCEANES tell certainly," &c. Donne's FIRST SATYRE,--p. 327, ed. 1633.) letters, and characters;
Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires.
O, what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honour, of omnipotence,
Is promis’d to the studious artizan!
All things that move between the quiet poles
Shall be at my command: emperors and kings
Are but obeyed in their several provinces,
Nor can they raise the wind, or rend the clouds;
But his dominion that exceeds in this,
Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man;
A sound magician is a mighty god:
Here, Faustus, tire (Note: tire—So the later 4tos.—2to 1604 "trie.") thy brains to gain a deity.

Enter WAGNER. (Note: Enter WAGNER, &c.-- Perhaps the proper arrangement is,) "Wagner! Enter WAGNER. Commend me to my dearest friends," &c.)

Wagner, commend me to my dearest friends,
The German Valdes and Cornelius;
Request them earnestly to visit me.

WAGNER. I will, sir.
[Exit.]

FAUSTUS. Their conference will be a greater help to me
Than all my labours, plod I ne’er so fast.

Enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.

GOOD ANGEL. O, Faustus, lay that damned book aside,
And gaze not on it, lest it tempt thy soul,
And heap God’s heavy wrath upon thy head!
Read, read the Scriptures:—that is blasphemy.

EVIL ANGEL. Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art
Wherein all Nature’s treasure (Note: treasure—So the later 4tos.—2to 1604 “treasury.”) is contain’d:
Be thou on earth as Jove (Note: Jove—So again, p. 84, first col.,[See Note 59]
"Seeing Faustus hath incurr’d eternal death
By desperate thoughts against JOVE’S deity," &c.:
and I may notice that Marlowe is not singular in applying the name
JOVE to the God of Christians:]
"Beneath our standard of JOUES powerfull sonne [i.e. Christ—"
MIR. FOR MAGISTRATES, p. 642, ed. 1610.
"But see the judgement of almightie JOUE," &c.
Id. p. 696.
"O sommo GIOVE per noi crocifisso," &c.
Pulci,—MORGANTE MAG. C. ii. st. 1.) is in the sky,
Lord and commander of these elements. (Note: these elements—So again, "Within the bowels of THESE elements," &c., p. 87, first col,[See Note 90—"THOSE" being equivalent to THE. (Not unfrequently in our old writers THESE is little more than redundant.))
[Exeunt Angels.]

FAUSTUS. How am I glutted with conceit of this!
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please,
Resolve (Note: resolve—i.e. satisfy, inform.) me of all ambiguities,
Perform what desperate enterprise I will?
I’ll have them fly to India for gold,
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,
And search all corners of the new-found world
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates;
I’ll have them read me strange philosophy,
And tell the secrets of all foreign kings;
I’ll have them wall all Germany with brass,
And make swift Rhine circle fair Wertenberg;  
I'll have them fill the public schools with silk, (Note: silk-- All the 4tos "skill" (and so the modern editors!).)  
Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad;  
I'll levy soldiers with the coin they bring,  
And chase the Prince of Parma from our land,  
And reign sole king of all the (Note: the-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "our.") provinces;  
Yea, stranger engines for the brunt of war,  
Than was the fiery keel at Antwerp's bridge, (Note: the fiery keel at Antwerp's bridge-- During the blockade of Antwerp by the Prince of Parma in 1585, "They of Antuerpe knowing that the bridge and the Stocadoes were finished, made a great shipp, to be a meanes to breake all this worke of the prince of Parmaes: this great shippe was made of masons worke within, in the manner of a vaulted caue: vpon the hatches there were layed myll-stones, graue-stones, and others of great weight; and within the vault were many barrels of powder, over the which there were holes, and in them they had put matches, hanging at a thred, the which burning vntill they came vnto the thred, would fall into the powder, and so blow vp all. And for that they could not haue any one in this shipp to conduct it, Lanckhaer, a sea captaine of the Hollanders, being then in Antuerpe, gaue them counsell to tye a great beame at the end of it, to make it to keepe a straight course in the middest of the streame. In this sort floated this shippe the fourth of Aprill, vntill that it came vnto the bridge; where (within a while after) the powder wrought his effect, with such violence, as the vessell, and all that was within it, and vpon it, flew in pieces, carrying away a part of the Stocado and of the bridge. The marquesse of Roubay Vicont of Gant, Gaspar of Robles lord of Billy, and the Seignior of Torchies, brother vnto the Seignior of Bours, with many others, were presently slaine; which were torne in pieces, and dispersed abroad, both vpon the land and vpon the water." Grimeston's GENERALL HISTORIE OF THE NETHERLANDS, p. 875, ed. 1609.)  
I'll make my servile spirits to invent.

Enter VALDES and CORNELIUS.

Come, German Valdes, and Cornelius,  
And make me blest with your sage conference.  
Valdes, sweet Valdes, and Cornelius,  
Know that your words have won me at the last  
To practice magic and concealed arts:  
Yet not your words only, (Note: only-- Qy. "alone"? (This line is not in the later 4tos.)) but mine own fantasy,  
That will receive no object; for my head  
But ruminates on necromantic skill.  
Philosophy is odious and obscure;  
Both law and physic are for petty wits;  
Divinity is basest of the three,  
Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible, and vile: (Note: vile-- Old ed. "vild": but see note II, p. 68.--(This line is not in the later 4tos.)

vile-- Old ed. "vild": but see note II, p. 68.--(This line is not in the later 4tos.)

[Note II from page 68 (The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great):]

Vile-- The 8vo "Vild"; the 4to "Wild" (Both eds. a little before, have "VILE monster, born of some infernal hag", and, a few lines after, "To VILE and ignominious servitude":--the fact is, our early writers (or rather transcribers), with their usual inconsistency of spelling, give now the one form, and now the other: compare the folio SHAKESPEARE, 1623, where we sometimes find "vild" and sometimes "VILE.")--"Tis magic, magic, that hath ravish'd me.  
Then, gentle friends, aid me in this attempt;  
And I, that have with concise syllogisms (Note: concise syllogisms-- Old ed. "Consissylogismes.")  
Gravell'd the pastors of the German church,  
And made the flowering pride of Wertenberg  
Swarm to my problems, as the infernal spirits  
On sweet Musaeus when he came to hell,
Will be as cunning (Note: cunning-- i.e. knowing, skilful.) as Agrippa (Note: Agrippa-- i.e. Cornelius Agrippa.) was, Whose shadow (Note: shadow-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "shadowes.") made all Europe honour him.

VALDES. Faustus, these books, thy wit, and our experience, Shall make all nations to canonize us. As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords, So shall the spirits (Note: spirits-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "subiects.") of every element Be always serviceable to us three; Like lions shall they guard us when we please; Like Almain rutters (Note: Almain rutters-- See note †, p. 43.)

Almain rutters-- See note †, p. 43.]

[Note † from p. 43. (The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great):

Almains, Rutters-- Rutters are properly--German troopers (reiter, reuter). In the third speech after the present one this line is repeated VERBATIM: but in the first scene of our author's FAUSTUS we have, "Like ALMAIN RUTTERS with their horsemen's staves."--] with their horsemen's staves, Or Lapland giants, trotting by our sides; Sometimes like women, or unwedded maids, Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows Than have the (Note: have the-- So two of the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "in their.") white breasts of the queen of love: From (Note: From-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "For.") Venice shall they drag huge argosies, And from America the golden fleece That yearly stuffs old Philip's treasury; If learned Faustus will be resolute.

FAUSTUS. Valdes, as resolute am I in this As thou to live: therefore object it not.

CORNELIUS. The miracles that magic will perform Will make thee vow to study nothing else. He that is grounded in astrology, Enrich'd with tongues, well seen in (Note: in-- So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) minerals, Hath all the principles magic doth require: Then doubt not, Faustus, but to be renown'd, (Note: renown'd-- See note II, p. 11.] [Note II from p. 11. (The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great): renownmed-- i.e. renowned.--So the 8vo.--The 4to "renowned." --The form "RENOWMED" (Fr. RENOMME) occurs repeatedly afterwards in this play, according to the 8vo. It is occasionally found in writers posterior to Marlowe's time. e.g. "Of Constantines great towne RENOUM'D in vaine." Verses to King James, prefixed to Lord Stirling's MONARCHICKE TRAGEDIES, ed. 1607.--]) And more frequented for this mystery Than heretofore the Delphian oracle. The spirits tell me they can dry the sea, And fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks, Ay, all the wealth that our forefathers hid Within the massy entrails of the earth: Then tell me, Faustus, what shall we three want?

FAUSTUS. Nothing, Cornelius. O, this cheers my soul! Come, shew me some demonstrations magical, That I may conjure in some lusty grove, And have these joys in full possession.

VALDES. Then haste thee to some solitary grove, And bear wise Bacon's and Albertus' (Note: Albertus'-- i.e. Albertus Magnus.--The correction of I. M. in Gent. Mag. for Jan. 1841.--All the 4tos "Albanus.") works, The Hebrew Psalter, and New Testament;
And whatsoever else is requisite
We will inform thee ere our conference cease.

CORNELIUS. Valdes, first let him know the words of art;
And then, all other ceremonies learn’d,
Faustus may try his cunning (Note: cunning-- i.e. skill.) by himself.

VALDES. First I’ll instruct thee in the rudiments,
And then wilt thou be perfecter than I.

FAUSTUS. Then come and dine with me, and, after meat,
We’ll canvass every quiddity thereof;
For, ere I sleep, I’ll try what I can do:
This night I’ll conjure, though I die therefore.

[Exeunt.]

Enter two SCHOLARS. (Note: Enter two SCHOLARS-- Scene, perhaps, supposed to be before Faustus's house, as Wagner presently says, "My master is within at dinner.")

FIRST SCHOLAR. I wonder what’s become of Faustus, that was wont
To make our schools ring with sic probo.

SECOND SCHOLAR. That shall we know, for see, here comes his boy.

Enter WAGNER.

FIRST SCHOLAR. How now, sirrah! where’s thy master?

WAGNER. God in heaven knows.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Why, dost not thou know?

WAGNER. Yes, I know; but that follows not.

FIRST SCHOLAR. Go to, sirrah! leave your jesting, and tell us
Where he is.

WAGNER. That follows not necessary by force of argument, that you,
Being licentiates, should stand upon: (Note: upon-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "vpon’t." therefore acknowledge
Your error, and be attentive.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Why, didst thou not say thou knewest?

WAGNER. Have you any witness on’t?

FIRST SCHOLAR. Yes, sirrah, I heard you.

WAGNER. Ask my fellow if I be a thief.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Well, you will not tell us?

WAGNER. Yes, sir, I will tell you: yet, if you were not dunces,
You would never ask me such a question; for is not he corpus
Naturale? and is not that mobile? then wherefore should you
Ask me such a question? But that I am by nature phlegmatic,
Slow to wrath, and prone to lechery (to love, I would say),
it were not for you to come within forty foot of the place
Of execution, although I do not doubt to see you both hanged
The next sessions. Thus having triumphed over you, I will set
My countenance like a precisian, and begin to speak thus:–
Truly, my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner,
with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine, if it could speak,
would (Note: speak, would-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "speake, IT would.") inform your worships: and so, the
Lord bless you,
preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren, my dear brethren! (Note: my dear brethren-- This repetition (not
found in the later 4tos) is perhaps an error of the original compositor.)
[Exit.]

FIRST SCHOLAR. Nay, then, I fear he is fallen into that damned art
for which they two are infamous through the world.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Were he a stranger, and not allied to me, yet should
I grieve for him. But, come, let us go and inform the Rector,
and see if he by his grave counsel can reclaim him.

FIRST SCHOLAR. O, but I fear me nothing can reclaim him!

SECOND SCHOLAR. Yet let us try what we can do.
[Exeunt.]

Enter FAUSTUS to conjure. (Note: Enter FAUSTUS to conjure-- The scene is supposed to be a grove; see p. 81,
last line of sec. col. [Page 81, second column, last line: "VALDES. Then haste thee to some solitary grove,"--])

FAUSTUS. Now that the gloomy shadow of the earth,
Longing to view Orion's drizzling look,
Leaps from th' antartic world unto the sky,
And dims the welkin with her pitchy breath,
Faustus, begin thine incantations,
And try if devils will obey thy hest,
Seeing thou hast pray'd and sacrific'd to them.
Within this circle is Jehovah's name,
Forward and backward anagrammatiz'd, (Note: anagrammatiz'd-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "and Agramithist.")
Th' abbreviated (Note: Th' abbreviated-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "The breuiated.") names of holy saints,
Figures of every adjunct to the heavens,
And characters of signs and erring (Note: erring-- i.e. wandering.) stars,
By which the spirits are enforc'd to rise:
Then fear not, Faustus, but be resolute,
And try the uttermost magic can perform.–
Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii! Valeat numen triplex Jehovoe!
Ignei, aerii, aquatani spiritus, salvete! Orientis princeps
Belzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha, et Demogorgon, propitiamus
vos, ut appareat et surgat Mephistophilis, quod tumeraris: (Note: surgat Mephistophilis, quod tumeraris-- The later
4tos have "surgat Mephistophilis DRAGON, quod tumeraris."--There is a corruption here, which seems to defy
emendation. For "quod TUMERARIS," Mr. J. Crossley, of Manchester, would read (rejecting the word "Dragon")
"quod TU MANDARES" (the construction being "quod tu mandares ut Mephistophilis appareat et surgat"): but the
"tu" does not agree with the preceding "vos."--The Revd. J. Mitford proposes "surgat Mephistophilis, per Dragon
(or Dagon) quod NUMEN EST AERIS.")
per Jehovam, Gehennam, et consecratam aquam quam nunc spargo,
signumque crucis quod nunc facio, et per vota nostra, ipse nunc
surgat nobis dicatus (Note: dicatus-- So two of the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "dicatis.") Mephistophilis!

Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.

I charge thee to return, and change thy shape;
Thou art too ugly to attend on me:
Go, and return an old Franciscan friar;
That holy shape becomes a devil best.
[Exit MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

I see there's virtue in my heavenly words:
Who would not be proficient in this art?
How pliant is this Mephistophilis,
Full of obedience and humility!
Such is the force of magic and my spells:
No, Faustus, thou art conjuror laureat,
That canst command great Mephistophilis:
Quin regis Mephistophilis fratris imagine.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS like a Franciscan friar. (Note: Re-enter Mephistophilis, &c.-- According to THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS, on which this play is founded, Faustus raises Mephistophilis in "a thicke wood neere to Wittenberg, called in the German tongue Spisser Wolt..... Presently, not three fathom above his head, fell a flame in manner of a lightning, and changed itselfe into a globe..... Suddenly the globe opened, and sprung up in the height of a man; so burning a time, in the end it converted to the shape of a fiery man[?-- This pleasant beast ran about the circle a great while, and, lastly, appeared in the manner of a Gray Fryer, asking Faustus what was his request?"
Sigs. A 2, A 3, ed. 1648. Again; "After Doctor Faustus had made his promise to the devill, in the morning betimes he called the spirit before him, and commanded him that he should alwayes come to him like a fryer after the order of Saint Francis, with a bell in his hand like Saint Anthony, and to ring it once or twice before he appeared, that he might know of his certaine coming." Id. Sig. A 4.})

MEPHIST. Now, Faustus, what wouldst thou have me do?

FAUSTUS. I charge thee wait upon me whilst I live,
To do whatever Faustus shall command,
Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere,
Or the ocean to overwhelm the world.

MEPHIST. I am a servant to great Lucifer,
And may not follow thee without his leave:
No more than he commands must we perform.

FAUSTUS. Did not he charge thee to appear to me?

MEPHIST. No, I came hither
(Note: came hither-- So two of the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "came NOW hither.") of mine own accord.

FAUSTUS. Did not my conjuring speeches raise thee? speak.

MEPHIST. That was the cause, but yet per accidens; (Note: accidens-- So two of the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "accident.")
For, when we hear one rack the name of God,
Abjure the Scriptures and his Saviour Christ,
We fly, in hope to get his glorious soul;
Nor will we come, unless he use such means
Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd.
Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring
Is stoutly to abjure the Trinity,
And pray devoutly to the prince of hell.

FAUSTUS. So Faustus hath
Already done; and holds this principle,
There is no chief but only Belzebub;
To whom Faustus doth dedicate himself.
This word "damnation" terrifies not him,
For he confounds hell in Elysium:
His ghost be with the old philosophers!
But, leaving these vain trifles of men’s souls,
Tell me what is that Lucifer thy lord?

MEPHIST. Arch-regent and commander of all spirits.

FAUSTUS. Was not that Lucifer an angel once?

MEPHIST. Yes, Faustus, and most dearly lov’d of God.
FAUSTUS. How comes it, then, that he is prince of devils?

MEPHIST. O, by aspiring pride and insolence;
For which God threw him from the face of heaven.

FAUSTUS. And what are you that live with Lucifer?

MEPHIST. Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer,
Conspir'd against our God with Lucifer,
And are for ever damn'd with Lucifer.

FAUSTUS. Where are you damn'd?

MEPHIST. In hell.

FAUSTUS. How comes it, then, that thou art out of hell?

MEPHIST. Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it: (Note: Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it-- Compare Milton, Par. Lost, iv. 75; "Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell.")
Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells,
In being depriv'd of everlasting bliss?
O, Faustus, leave these frivolous demands,
Which strike a terror to my fainting soul!

FAUSTUS. What. is great Mephistophilis so passionate
For being deprived of the joys of heaven?
Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude,
And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess.
Go bear these (Note: these-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "those.") tidings to great Lucifer:
Seeing Faustus hath incur'd eternal death
By desperate thoughts against Jove's deity, (Note: Jove's-- See note ‡, p. 80. [i.e. Note 24])
Say, he surrenders up to him his soul,
So he will spare him four and twenty (Note: four and twenty-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "24.") years,
Letting him live in all voluptuousness;
Having thee ever to attend on me,
To give me whatsoever I shall ask,
To tell me whatsoever I demand,
To slay mine enemies, and aid my friends,
And always be obedient to my will.
Go and return to mighty Lucifer,
And meet me in my study at midnight,
And then resolve (Note: resolve-- i.e. satisfy, inform.) me of thy master's mind.

MEPHIST. I will, Faustus.
[Exit.]

FAUSTUS. Had I as many souls as there be stars,
I'd give them all for Mephistophilis.
By him I'll be great emperor of the world,
And make a bridge thorough (Note: thorough-- So one of the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "through.") the moving air,
To pass the ocean with a band of men;
I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore,
And make that country (Note: country-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "land.") continent to Spain,
And both contributory to my crown:
The Emperor shall not live but by my leave,
Nor any potentate of Germany.
Now that I have obtain'd what I desir'd, (Note: desir'd-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "desire.")
I'll live in speculation of this art,
Till Mephistophilis return again.
[Exit.]

Enter WAGNER (Note: Enter WAGNER, &c.-- Scene, a street most probably.) and CLOWN.

WAGNER. Sirrah boy, come hither.

CLOWN. How, boy! sowons, boy! I hope you have seen many boys
with such pickadevaunts (Note: pickadevaunts-- i.e. beards cut to a point.) as I have: boy, quotha!

WAGNER. Tell me, sirrah, hast thou any comings in?

CLOWN. Ay, and goings out too; you may see else.

WAGNER. Alas, poor slave! see how poverty jesteth in his nakedness!
the villain is bare and out of service, and so hungry, that I know
he would give his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton,
though it were blood-raw.

CLOWN. How! my soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, though
'twere blood-raw! not so, good friend: by'r lady, (Note: by'r lady-- i.e. by our Lady.) I had need
have it well roasted, and good sauce to it, if I pay so dear.

WAGNER. Well, wilt thou serve me, and I'1l make thee go like
Qui mihi discipulus? (Note: Qui mihi discipulus-- The first words of W. Lily's AD DISCIPULOS CARMEN DE
MORIBUS, "Qui mihi discipulus, puer, es, cupis atque doceri, Huc ades," &c.)

CLOWN. How, in verse?

WAGNER. No, sirrah; in beaten silk and staves-acre. (Note: staves-acre-- A species of larkspur.)

CLOWN. How, how, knaves-acre! ay, I thought that was all the land
his father left him. Do you hear? I would be sorry to rob you of
your living.

WAGNER. Sirrah, I say in staves-acre.

CLOWN. Oho, oho, staves-acre! why, then, belike, if I were your
man, I should be full of vermin. (Note: vermin-- Which the seeds of staves-acre were used to destroy.)

WAGNER. So thou shalt, whether thou beest with me or no. But,
sirrah, leave your jesting, and bind yourself presently unto me
for seven years, or I'll turn all the lice about thee into
familiars, (Note: familiars-- i.e. attendant-demons.) and they shall tear thee in pieces.
CLOWN. Do you hear, sir? you may save that labour; they are too familiar with me already: sowwns, they are as bold with my flesh as if they had paid for their (Note: their-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "my.") meat and drink.

WAGNER. Well, do you hear, sirrah? hold, take these guilders. [Gives money.]

CLOWN. Gridirons! what be they?

WAGNER. Why, French crowns.

CLOWN. Mass, but for the name of French crowns, a man were as good have as many English counters. And what should I do with these?

WAGNER. Why, now, sirrah, thou art at an hour’s warning, whensoever or wheresoever the devil shall fetch thee.

CLOWN. No, no; here, take your gridirons again.

WAGNER. Truly, I’ll none of them.

CLOWN. Truly, but you shall.

WAGNER. Bear witness I gave them him.

CLOWN. Bear witness I give them you again.

WAGNER. Well, I will cause two devils presently to fetch thee away.—Baliol and Belcher!

CLOWN. Let your Baliol and your Belcher come here, and I’ll knock them, they were never so knocked since they were devils: say I should kill one of them, what would folks say? “Do ye see yonder tall fellow in the round slop? (Note: slop— i.e. wide breeches.) he has killed the devil.” So I should be called Kill-devil all the parish over.

Enter two DEVILS; and the CLOWN runs up and down crying.

WAGNER. Baliol and Belcher,—spirits, away! [Exeunt DEVILS.]

CLOWN. What, are they gone? a vengeance on them! they have vile (Note: vile— Old ed. "vild." See note II p. 68.)

[Note II from page 68 (The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great):

Vile— The 8vo "Vild"; the 4to "Wild" (Both eds. a little before, have "VILE monster, born of some infernal hag", and, a few lines after, "To VILE and ignominious servitude":—the fact is, our early writers (or rather transcribers), with their usual inconsistency of spelling, give now the one form, and now the other: compare the folio SHAKESPEARE, 1623, where we sometimes find "vild" and sometimes "VILE.") long nails. There was a he-devil and a she-devil: I’ll tell you how you shall know them; all he-devils has horns, and all she-devils has clifts and cloven feet.

WAGNER. Well, sirrah, follow me.
CLOWN. But, do you hear? if I should serve you, would you teach me to raise up Banios and Belcheos?

WAGNER. I will teach thee to turn thyself to any thing, to a dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat, or any thing.

CLOWN. How! a Christian fellow to a dog, or a cat, a mouse, or a rat! no, no, sir; if you turn me into any thing, let it be in the likeness of a little pretty frisking flea, that I may be here and there and every where: O, I'll tickle the pretty wenches’ plackets! I'll be amongst them, i'faith.

WAGNER. Well, sirrah, come.

CLOWN. But, do you hear, Wagner?

WAGNER. How!–Baliol and Belcher!

CLOWN. O Lord! I pray, sir, let Banio and Belcher go sleep.

WAGNER. Villain, call me Master Wagner, and let thy left eye be diametarily fixed upon my right heel, with quasi vestigiis nostris (Note: vestigiis nostris--All the 4tos "vestigias nostras.") insistere.

[Exit.]

CLOWN. God forgive me, he speaks Dutch fustian. Well, I'll follow him; I'll serve him, that's flat.

[Exit.]

FAUSTUS discovered in his study.

FAUSTUS. Now, Faustus, must Thou needs be damn'd, and canst thou not be sav'd: What boots it, then, to think of God or heaven? Away with such vain fancies, and despair; Despair in God, and trust in Belzebub: Now go not backward; no, Faustus, be resolute: Why waver'st thou? O, something soundeth in mine ears, “Abjure this magic, turn to God again!” Ay, and Faustus will turn to God again. To God? he loves thee not; The god thou serv'st is thine own appetite, Wherein is fix'd the love of Belzebub: To him I'll build an altar and a church, And offer lukewarm blood of new-born babes.

Enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.

GOOD ANGEL. Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art.

FAUSTUS. Contrition, prayer, repentance–what of them?

GOOD ANGEL. O, they are means to bring thee unto heaven!

EVIL ANGEL. Rather illusions, fruits of lunacy, That make men foolish that do trust them most.

GOOD ANGEL. Sweet Faustus, think of heaven and heavenly things.

EVIL ANGEL. No, Faustus; think of honour and of (Note: of--So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) wealth.

[Exeunt ANGELS.]
FAUSTUS. Of wealth!
Why, the signiory of Embden shall be mine.
When Mephistophilis shall stand by me,
What god can hurt thee, Faustus? thou art safe
Cast no more doubts.—Come, Mephistophilis,
And bring glad tidings from great Lucifer;—
Is't not midnight?—come, Mephistophilis,
Veni, veni, Mephistophile!

Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.

Now tell me (Note: me-- So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) what says Lucifer, thy lord?

MEPHIST. That I shall wait on Faustus whilst he lives, (Note: he lives-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "I liue.")
So he will buy my service with his soul.

FAUSTUS. Already Faustus hath hazarded that for thee.

MEPHIST. But, Faustus, thou must bequeath it solemnly,
And write a deed of gift with thine own blood;
For that security craves great Lucifer.
If thou deny it, I will back to hell.

FAUSTUS. Stay, Mephistophilis, and tell me, what good will my soul
do thy lord?

MEPHIST. Enlarge his kingdom.

FAUSTUS. Is that the reason why (Note: why-- So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) he tempts us thus?

MEPHIST. Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris. (Note: Solamen miseris, &c.-- An often-cited line of modern
Latin poetry: by whom it was written I know not.)

FAUSTUS. Why, (Note: Why-- So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) have you any pain that torture (Note: So the
later 4tos.--2to 1604 "tortures.") others!

MEPHIST. As great as have the human souls of men.
But, tell me, Faustus, shall I have thy soul?
And I will be thy slave, and wait on thee,
And give thee more than thou hast wit to ask.

FAUSTUS. Ay, Mephistophilis, I give it thee.

MEPHIST. Then, Faustus, (Note: So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) stab thine arm courageously,
And bind thy soul, that at some certain day
Great Lucifer may claim it as his own;
And then be thou as great as Lucifer.

FAUSTUS. [Stabbing his arm] Lo, Mephistophilis, for love of thee,
I cut mine arm, and with my proper blood
Assure my soul to be great Lucifer’s,
Chief lord and regent of perpetual night!
View here the blood that trickles from mine arm,
And let it be propitious for my wish.

MEPHIST. But, Faustus, thou must
Write it in manner of a deed of gift.

FAUSTUS. Ay, so I will [Writes]. But, Mephistophilis,
My blood congeals, and I can write no more.
MEPHIST. I'll fetch thee fire to dissolve it straight.
[Exit.]

FAUSTUS. What might the staying of my blood portend?
Is it unwilling I should write this bill? (Note: Bill-- i.e. writing, deed.)
Why streams it not, that I may write afresh?
FAUSTUS GIVES TO THEE HIS SOUL: ah, there it stay'd!
Why shouldst thou not? is not thy soul shine own?
Then write again, FAUSTUS GIVES TO THEE HIS SOUL.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with a chafer of coals.

MEPHIST. Here's fire; come, Faustus, set it on. (Note: Here's fire; come, Faustus, set it on-- This would not be intelligible without the assistance of THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS, the sixth chapter of which is headed, "How Doctor Faustus set his blood in a saucer on warme ashes, and writ as followeth." Sig. B, ed. 1648.)

FAUSTUS. So, now the blood begins to clear again;
Now will I make an end immediately.
[Writes.]

MEPHIST. O, what will not I do to obtain his soul?
[Aside.

FAUSTUS. Consummatum est; this bill is ended,
And Faustus hath bequeath'd his soul to Lucifer.
But what is this inscription (Note: But what is this inscription, &c.-- "He [Faustus-- tooke a small penknife and prickt a veine in his left hand; and for certainty thereupon were seen on his hand these words written, as if they had been written with blood, O HOMO, FUGE." THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS, Sig. B, ed. 1648.) on mine arm?
Homo, fuge: whither should I fly?
If unto God, he'll throw me (Note: me-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "thee.") down to hell.
My senses are deceiv'd; here's nothing writ:--
I see it plain; here in this place is writ,
Homo, fuge: yet shall not Faustus fly.

MEPHIST. I'll fetch him somewhat to delight his mind.
[Aside, and then exit.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with DEVILS, who give crowns and rich apparel to FAUSTUS, dance, and then depart.

FAUSTUS. Speak, Mephistophilis, what means this show?

MEPHIST. Nothing, Faustus, but to delight thy mind withal,
And to shew thee what magic can perform.

FAUSTUS. But may I raise up spirits when I please?

MEPHIST. Ay, Faustus, and do greater things than these.

FAUSTUS. Then there's enough for a thousand souls.
Here, Mephistophilis, receive this scroll,
A deed of gift of body and of soul:
But yet conditionally that thou perform
All articles prescrib'd between us both.

MEPHIST. Faustus, I swear by hell and Lucifer
To effect all promises between us made!

FAUSTUS. Then hear me read them. [Reads] ON THESE CONDITIONS FOLLOWING. FIRST, THAT FAUSTUS MAY BE A SPIRIT IN FORM AND SUBSTANCE. Secondly, THAT MEPHISTOPHILIS SHALL BE HIS SERVANT,
AND AT HIS COMMAND. THIRDLY, THAT MEPHISTOPHILIS SHALL DO FOR HIM, AND BRING HIM WHATSOEVER HE DESIRES. (Note: he desires-- Not in any of the four 4tos. In the tract just cited, the "3d Article" stands thus,--"That Mephostophiles should bring him any thing, and doe for him whatsoever." Sig. A 4, ed. 1648. A later ed. adds "he desired." Marlowe, no doubt, followed some edition of the HISTORY in which these words, or something equivalent to them, had been omitted by mistake. (2to 1661, which I consider as of no authority, has "he requireth.")

FOURTHLY, THAT HE SHALL BE IN HIS CHAMBER OR HOUSE INVISIBLE. LASTLY, THAT HE SHALL APPEAR TO THE SAID JOHN FAUSTUS, AT ALL TIMES, IN WHAT FORM OR SHAPE SOEVER HE PLEASE. I, JOHN FAUSTUS, OF WERTENBERG, DOCTOR, BY THESE PRESENTS, DO GIVE BOTH BODY AND SOUL TO LUCIFER PRINCE OF THE EAST, AND HIS MINISTER MEPHISTOPHILIS; AND FURTHERMORE GRANT UNTO THEM, THAT, (Note: that, &c.-- So all the 4tos, ungrammatically.) TWENTY-FOUR YEARS BEING EXPIRED, THE ARTICLES ABOVE-WRITTEN INVIOLATE, FULL POWER TO FETCH OR CARRY THE SAID JOHN FAUSTUS, BODY AND SOUL, FLESH, BLOOD, OR GOODS, INTO THEIR HABITATION WHERESOEVER. BY ME, JOHN FAUSTUS.

MEPHIST. Speak, Faustus, do you deliver this as your deed?

FAUSTUS. Ay, take it, and the devil give thee good on't!

MEPHIST. Now, Faustus, ask what thou wilt.

FAUSTUS. First will I question with thee about hell. Tell me, where is the place that men call hell?

MEPHIST. Under the heavens.

FAUSTUS. Ay, but whereabout?

MEPHIST. Within the bowels of these (Note: these-- See note §, p. 80.[i.e. Note 25]) elements, Where we are tortur'd and remain for ever: Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscrib'd In one self place; for where we are is hell, And where hell is, there (Note: there-- So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) must we ever be: And, to conclude, when all the world dissolves, All places shall be hell that are (Note: are-- So two of the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "is.") not heaven.

FAUSTUS. Come, I think hell's a fable.

MEPHIST. Ay, think so still, till experience change thy mind.

FAUSTUS. Why, think'st thou, then, that Faustus shall be damn'd?

MEPHIST. Ay, of necessity, for here's the scroll Wherein thou hast given thy soul to Lucifer.

FAUSTUS. Ay, and body too: but what of that? Think'st thou that Faustus is so fond (Note: fond-- i.e. foolish.) to imagine That, after this life, there is any pain? Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales.

MEPHIST. But, Faustus, I am an instance to prove the contrary, For I am damn'd, and am now in hell.

FAUSTUS. How! now in hell! Nay, an this be hell, I'll willingly be damn'd here: What! walking, disputing, &c. (Note: What! walking, disputing, &c.-- The later 4tos have "What, SLEEPING, EATING, walking, AND disputing!" But it is evident that this speech is not given correctly in any of the old eds.) But, leaving off this, let me have a wife, (Note: let me have a wife, &c.-- The ninth chapter of THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS narrates "How Doctor Faustus would have married, and how the Devill had almost killed him for
"It is no jesting [said Mephistophilis-- with us: hold thou that which thou hast vowed, and we will peforme as we have promised; and more shall that, thou shalt have thy hearts desire of what woman soever thou wilt, be she alive or dead, and so long as thou wilt thou shalt keep her by thee.--These words pleased Faustus wonderfull well, and repented himself that he was so foolish to wish himselfe married, that might have any woman in the whole city brought him at his command; the which he practised and persevered in a long time."

Sig. B 3, ed. 1648.)
The fairest maid in Germany;
For I am wanton and lascivious,
And cannot live without a wife.

MEPHIST. How! a wife!
I prithee, Faustus, talk not of a wife.

FAUSTUS. Nay, sweet Mephistophilis, fetch me one, for I will have one.

MEPHIST. Well, thou wilt have one? Sit there till I come: I'll fetch thee a wife in the devil's name.

[Exit.]

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with a DEVIL drest like a WOMAN, with fire-works.

MEPHIST. Tell me, (Note: me-- Not in 4to 1604. (This line is wanting in the later 4tos.)) Faustus, how dost thou like thy wife?

FAUSTUS. A plague on her for a hot whore!

MEPHIST. Tut, Faustus,
Marriage is but a ceremonial toy;
If thou lovest me, think no (Note: no-- So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) more of it.
I'll cull thee out the fairest courtesans,
And bring them every morning to thy bed:
She whom thine eye shall like, thy heart shall have,
Be she as chaste as was Penelope,
As wise as Saba, (Note: Saba-- i.e. Sabaea--the Queen of Sheba.) or as beautiful
As was bright Lucifer before his fall.
Hold, take this book, peruse it thoroughly:

[Give book.]

The iterating (Note: iterating-- i.e. reciting, repeating.) of these lines brings gold;
The framing of this circle on the ground
Brings whirlwinds, tempests, thunder, and lightning;
Pronounce this thrice devoutly to thyself,
And men in armour shall appear to thee,
Ready to execute what thou desir'st.

FAUSTUS. Thanks, Mephistophilis: yet fain would I have a book wherein I might behold all spells and incantations, that I might raise up spirits when I please.

MEPHIST. Here they are in this book.

[Turns to them.]

FAUSTUS. Now would I have a book where I might see all characters and planets of the heavens, that I might know their motions and dispositions.

MEPHIST. Here they are too.

[Turns to them.]
FAUSTUS. Nay, let me have one book more,—and then I have done,—
wherein I might see all plants, herbs, and trees, that grow upon
the earth.

MEPHIST. Here they be.

FAUSTUS. O, thou art deceived.

MEPHIST. Tut, I warrant thee.

[Turns to them.]

FAUSTUS. When I behold the heavens, then I repent,
And curse thee, wicked Mephistophilis,
Because thou hast depriv’d me of those joys.

MEPHIST. Why, Faustus,
Thinkest thou heaven is such a glorious thing?
I tell thee, ’tis not half so fair as thou,
Or any man that breathes on earth.

FAUSTUS. How prov’st thou that?

MEPHIST. ’Twas made for man, therefore is man more excellent.

FAUSTUS. If it were made for man, ’twas made for me:
I will renounce this magic and repent.

Enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.

GOOD ANGEL. Faustus, repent; yet God will pity thee.

EVIL ANGEL. Thou art a spirit; God cannot pity thee.

FAUSTUS. Who buzzeth in mine ears I am a spirit?
Be I a devil, yet God may pity me;
Ay, God will pity me, if I repent.

EVIL ANGEL. Ay, but Faustus never shall repent.

[Exeunt ANGELS.]

FAUSTUS. My heart’s so harden’d, I cannot repent:
Scarce can I name salvation, faith, or heaven,
But fearful echoes thunder in mine ears,
“Faustus, thou art damn’d!” then swords, and knives,
Poison, guns, halters, and envenom’d steel
Are laid before me to despatch myself;
And long ere this I should have slain myself,
Had not sweet pleasure conquer’d deep despair.
Have not I made blind Homer sing to me
Of Alexander’s love and Oenon’s death?
And hath not he, that built the walls of Thebes
With ravishing sound of his melodious harp,
Made music with my Mephistophilis?
Why should I die, then, or basely despair?
I am resolv’d; Faustus shall ne’er repent.—
Come, Mephistophilis, let us dispute again,
And argue of divine astrology. (Note: And argue of divine astrology, &c.—In THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS, there are several tedious pages on the subject; but our dramatist, in the dialogue which follows, has no particular obligations to them.)
Tell me, are there many heavens above the moon
Are all celestial bodies but one globe,
As is the substance of this centric earth?
MEPHIST. As are the elements, such are the spheres,
Mutually folded in each other's orb,
And, Faustus,
All jointly move upon one axletree,
Whose terminine is term'd the world's wide pole;
Nor are the names of Saturn, Mars, or Jupiter
Feign'd, but are erring (Note: erring--i.e. wandering.) stars.

FAUSTUS. But, tell me, have they all one motion, both situ et tempore?

MEPHIST. All jointly move from east to west in twenty-four hours
upon the poles of the world; but differ in their motion upon
the poles of the zodiac.

FAUSTUS. Tush,
These slender trifles Wagner can decide:
Hath Mephistophilis no greater skill?
Who knows not the double motion of the planets?
The first is finish'd in a natural day;
The second thus; as Saturn in thirty years; Jupiter in twelve;
Mars in four; the Sun, Venus, and Mercury in a year; the Moon in
twenty-eight days. Tush, these are freshmen's (Note: freshmen's--"A Freshman, tiro, novitius." Coles's DICT.
Properly, a student during his first term at the university.) suppositions.
But, tell me, hath every sphere a dominion or intelligentia?

MEPHIST. Ay.

FAUSTUS. How many heavens or spheres are there?

MEPHIST. Nine; the seven planets, the firmament, and the empyreal heaven.

FAUSTUS. Well, resolve (Note: resolve--i.e. satisfy, inform.) me in this question; why have we not
conjunctions, oppositions, aspects, eclipses, all at one time,
but in some years we have more, in some less?

MEPHIST. Per inoequalem motum respectu totius.

FAUSTUS. Well, I am answered. Tell me who made the world?

MEPHIST. I will not.

FAUSTUS. Sweet Mephistophilis, tell me.

MEPHIST. Move me not, for I will not tell thee.

FAUSTUS. Villain, have I not bound thee to tell me any thing?

MEPHIST. Ay, that is not against our kingdom; but this is. Think
thou on hell, Faustus, for thou art damned.

FAUSTUS. Think, Faustus, upon God that made the world.

MEPHIST. Remember this.
[Exit.]

FAUSTUS. Ay, go, accursed spirit, to ugly hell!
'Tis thou hast damn'd distressed Faustus' soul.
Is't not too late?

Re-enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.
EVIL ANGEL. Too late.

GOOD ANGEL. Never too late, if Faustus can repent.

GOOD ANGEL. If thou repent, devils shall tear thee in pieces.

GOOD ANGEL. Repent, and they shall never raze thy skin.

[Exeunt ANGELS.]

FAUSTUS. Ah, Christ, my Saviour,
Seek to save (Note: Seek to save-- Qy. "Seek THOU to save"? But see note II, p. 18.)

[Note II, from page 18 (The First Part of Tamburlaine The Great):

Barbarous-- Qy. "O Barbarous"? in the next line but one,
"O treacherous"? and in the last line of the speech,
"O bloody"? But we occasionally find in our early dramatists
lines which are defective in the first syllable; and in some
of these instances at least it would almost seem that nothing
has been omitted by the transcriber or printer.--] distressed Faustus’ soul!

Enter LUCIFER, BELZEBUB, and MEPHISTOPHILIS.

LUCIFER. Christ cannot save thy soul, for he is just:
There’s none but I have interest in the same.

FAUSTUS. O, who art thou that look’st so terrible?

LUCIFER. I am Lucifer,
And this is my companion-prince in hell.

FAUSTUS. O, Faustus, they are come to fetch away thy soul!

LUCIFER. We come to tell thee thou dost injure us;
Thou talk’st of Christ, contrary to thy promise:
Thou shouldst not think of God: think of the devil,
And of his dam too.

FAUSTUS. Nor will I henceforth: pardon me in this,
And Faustus vows never to look to heaven,
Never to name God, or to pray to him,
To burn his Scriptures, slay his ministers,
And make my spirits pull his churches down.

LUCIFER. Do so, and we will highly gratify thee. Faustus, we are
come from hell to shew thee some pastime: sit down, and thou
shalt see all the Seven Deadly Sins appear in their proper shapes.

FAUSTUS. That sight will be as pleasing unto me,
As Paradise was to Adam, the first day
Of his creation.

LUCIFER. Talk not of Paradise nor creation; but mark this show:
talk of the devil, and nothing else.--Come away!
worme," &c. &c. During this exhibition, "Lucifer himselfe sate in manner of a man all hairy, but of browne colour, like a squirrel, curled, and his tayle turning upward on his backe as the squirrels use: I think he could crack nuts too like a squirrel." Sig. D, ed. 1648.)

Now, Faustus, examine them of their several names and dispositions.

FAUSTUS. What art thou, the first?

PRIDE. I am Pride. I disdain to have any parents. I am like to Ovid’s flea; I can creep into every corner of a wench; sometimes, like a perriwig, I sit upon her brow; or, like a fan of feathers, I kiss her lips; indeed, I do—what do I not? But, fie, what a scent is here! I’ll not speak another word, except the ground were perfumed, and covered with cloth of arras.

FAUSTUS. What art thou, the second?

COVETOUSNESS. I am Covetousness, begotten of an old churl, in an old leathern bag: and, might I have my wish, I would desire that this house and all the people in it were turned to gold, that I might lock you up in my good chest: O, my sweet gold!

FAUSTUS. What art thou, the third?

WRATH. I am Wrath. I had neither father nor mother: I leapt out of a lion’s mouth when I was scarce half-an-hour old; and ever since I have run up and down the world with this case (Note: case—i.e. couple.) of rapiers, wounding myself when I had nobody to fight withal. I was born in hell; and look to it, for some of you shall be my father.

FAUSTUS. What art thou, the fourth?

ENVY. I am Envy, begotten of a chimney-sweeper and an oyster-wife. I cannot read, and therefore wish all books were burnt. I am lean with seeing others eat. O, that there would come a famine through all the world, that all might die, and I live alone! then thou shouldst see how fat I would be. But must thou sit, and I stand? come down, with a vengeance!

FAUSTUS. Away, envious rascal!—What art thou, the fifth?

GLUTTONY. Who I, sir? I am Gluttony. My parents are all dead, and the devil a penny they have left me, but a bare pension, and that is thirty meals a-day and ten bevers, (Note: bevers—i.e. refreshments between meals.)—a small trifle to suffice nature. O, I come of a royal parentage! my grandfather was a Gammon of Bacon, my grandmother a Hogshead of Claret-wine; my godfathers were these, Peter Pickle-herring and Martin Martlemas-beef; O, but my godmother, she was a jolly gentlewoman, and well-beloved in every good town and city; her name was Mistress Margery March-beer. Now, Faustus, thou hast heard all my progeny; wilt thou bid me to supper?

FAUSTUS. No, I’ll see thee hanged: thou wilt eat up all my victuals.

GLUTTONY. Then the devil choke thee!

FAUSTUS. Choke thyself, glutton!—What art thou, the sixth?

SLOTH. I am Sloth. I was begotten on a sunny bank, where I have lain ever since; and you have done me great injury to bring me
from thence: let me be carried thither again by Gluttony and Lechery. I’ll not speak another word for a king’s ransom.

FAUSTUS. What are you, Mistress Minx, the seventh and last?

LECHERY. Who I, sir? I am one that loves an inch of raw mutton better than an ell of fried stock-fish; and the first letter of my name begins with L. (Note: L.-- All the 4tos "Lechery."--Here I have made the alteration recommended by Mr. Collier in his Preface to COLERIDGE’S SEVEN LECTURES ON SHAKESPEARE AND MILTON, p. cviii.)

FAUSTUS. Away, to hell, to hell! (Note: Away, to hell, to hell-- In 4to 1604, these words stand on a line by themselves, without a prefix. (In the later 4tos, the corresponding passage is as follows; "------ begins with Lechery. LUCIFER. Away to hell, away! On, piper! [Exeunt the SINS. FAUSTUS. O, how this sight doth delight my soul!" &c.)]

[Exeunt the SINS.]

LUCIFER. Now, Faustus, how dost thou like this?

FAUSTUS. O, this feeds my soul!

LUCIFER. Tut, Faustus, in hell is all manner of delight.

FAUSTUS. O, might I see hell, and return again, How happy were I then!

LUCIFER. Thou shalt; I will send for thee at midnight. (Note: I will send for thee at midnight-- In THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS, we have a particular account of Faustus's visit to the infernal regions, Sig. D 2, ed. 1648.) In meantime take this book; peruse it throughly, And thou shalt turn thyself into what shape thou wilt.

FAUSTUS. Great thanks, mighty Lucifer! This will I keep as chary as my life.

LUCIFER. Farewell, Faustus, and think on the devil.

FAUSTUS. Farewell, great Lucifer.

[Exeunt LUCIFER and BELZEBUB.]

Come, Mephistophilis.

[Exeunt.]

Enter CHORUS. (Note: Enter CHORUS-- Old ed. "Enter WAGNER solus." That these lines belong to the Chorus would be evident enough, even if we had no assistance here from the later 4tos.--The parts of Wagner and of the Chorus were most probably played by the same actor: and hence the error.)

CHORUS. Learned Faustus, To know the secrets of astronomy (Note: Learned Faustus, To know the secrets of astronomy, &c.-- See the 21st chapter of THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS,--"How Doctor Faustus was carried through the ayre up to the heavens, to see the whole world, and how the sky and planets ruled," &c.) Graven in the book of Jove’s high firmament, Did mount himself to scale Olympus’ top, Being seated in a chariot burning bright, Drawn by the strength of yoky dragons’ necks. He now is gone to prove cosmography, And, as I guess, will first arrive at Rome, To see the Pope and manner of his court, And take some part of holy Peter’s feast, That to this day is highly solemniz’d. [Exit.]

Enter FAUSTUS and MEPHISTOPHILIS. (Note: Enter FAUSTUS and MEPHISTOPHILIS-- Scene, the Pope’s privy-chamber.)
FAUSTUS. Having now, my good Mephistophilis,
Pass’d with delight the stately town of Trier, (Note: Trier-- i.e. Treves or Triers.)
Environ’d round with airy mountain-tops,
With walls of flint, and deep-entrenched lakes,
Not to be won by any conquering prince;
From Paris next, (Note: From Paris next, &c.-- This description is from THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS; "He came from Paris to Mentz, where the river of Maine falls into the Rhine: notwithstanding he tarried not long there, but went into Campania, in the kingdome of Neapol, in which he saw an innumerable sort of cloysters, nunries, and churches, and great houses of stone, the streets faire and large, and straight forth from one end of the town to the other as a line; and all the pavement of the city was of bricke, and the more it rained into the town, the fairer the streets were: there saw he the tombe of Virgill, and the highway that he cut through the mighty hill of stone in one night, the whole length of an English mile," &c. Sig. E 2, ed. 1648.) coasting the realm of France,
We saw the river Maine fall into Rhine,
Whose banks are set with groves of fruitful vines;
Then up to Naples, rich Campania,
Whose buildings fair and gorgeous to the eye,
The streets straight forth, and pav’d with finest brick,
Quarter the town in four equivalents:
There saw we learned Maro’s golden tomb,
The way he cut, (Note: The way he cut, &c.-- During the middle ages Virgil was regarded as a great magician, and much was written concerning his exploits in that capacity. The LYFE OF VIRGILIUS, however, (see Thoms’s EARLY PROSE ROMANCES, vol. ii.,) makes no mention of the feat in question. But Petrarch speaks of it as follows. "Non longe a Puteolis Falernus collis attollitur, famoso palmitae nobilis. Inter Falernum et mare mans est saxeus, hominum manibus confossus, quod vulgus insulsam a Virgilio magico cantaminibus factum putant: ita clarorarum fama hominum, non veris contenta laudibus, saepe etiam fabulis viam facit. De quo cum me olim Robertus regno clarus, sed praecellus ingenio ac literis, quid sentirem, multis astantibus, percunctatus esset, humanitate fretus regia, qua non reges modo sed homines vicit, jocans nusquam me legisse magariamic sui. Non ille severissimae nuti frontis approbans, non illic magici sed ferri vestigia confessus est. Sunt autem fauces excavati montis angustae sed longissimae atque atrae: tenebrosa inter horrifica semper nox: publicum iter in medio, mirum et religione proximum, bellis quoque immolatum temporibus, sic vero populi vox est, et nullis unquam latrocinis attentatum, patet: Criptam Neapolitanam dicunt, cujus et in epistolis ad Lucilium Senecam mentionem fecit. Sub finem fusci tramitis, ubi primo videri coelum incipient, in aggeredito, ipsius Virgili busta visuntur, pervesi operis, unde haec forsan ab illo perforati montis fluxit opinio." ITINERARIUM SYRIACUM,--OPP. p. 560, ed. Bas.) an English mile in length,
Thorough a rock of stone, in one night’s space;
From thence to Venice, Padua, and the rest,
In one of which a sumptuous temple stands, (Note: From thence to Venice, Padua, and the rest, In one of which a sumptuous temple stands, &c.-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "In MIDST of which," &c.--THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS shews WHAT "sumptuous temple" is meant: "From thence he came to Venice....He wondred not a little at the fairenesse of S. Marks Place, and the sumptuous church standing thereon, called S. Marke, how all the pavement was set with coloured stones, and all the rood or loft of the church double gilded over." Sig. E 2, ed. 1648.)
That threatens the stars with her aspiring top.
Thus hitherto hath Faustus spent his time:
But tell me now what resting-place is this?
Hast thou, as erst I did command,
Conducted me within the walls of Rome?

MEPHIST. Faustus, I have; and, because we will not be unprovided,
I have taken up his Holiness’ privy-chamber for our use.

FAUSTUS. I hope his Holiness will bid us welcome.

MEPHIST. Tut, ’tis no matter; man; we’ll be bold with his good cheer.
And now, my Faustus, that thou mayst perceive
What Rome containeth to delight thee with,
Know that this city stands upon seven hills
Thatunderprop the groundwork of the same:
Just through the midst (Note: Just through the midst, &c.-- This and the next line are not in 4to 1604. I have inserted them from the later 4tos, as being absolutely necessary for the sense.) runs flowing Tiber’s stream
With winding banks that cut it in two parts;
Over the which four stately bridges lean,
That make safe passage to each part of Rome:
Upon the bridge call’d Ponte (Note: Ponte-- All the 4tos "Ponto.") Angelo
Erected is a castle passing strong,
Within whose walls such store of ordnance are,
And double cannons fram’d of carved brass,
As match the days within one complete year;
Besides the gates, and high pyramides,
Which Julius Caesar brought from Africa.

FAUSTUS. Now, by the kingdoms of infernal rule,
Of Styx, of (Note: of-- So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) Acheron, and the fiery lake
Of ever-burning Phlegethon, I swear
That I do long to see the monuments
And situation of bright-splendent Rome:
Come, therefore, let’s away.

MEPHIST. Nay, Faustus, stay: I know you’d fain see the Pope,
And take some part of holy Peter’s feast,
Where thou shalt see a troop of bald-pate friars,
Whose summum bonum is in belly-cheer.

FAUSTUS. Well, I’m content to compass then some sport,
And by their folly make us merriment.
Then charm me, that I (Note: Then charm me, that I, &c.-- A corrupted passage.--Compare THE HISTORY OF
DR. FAUSTUS, Sig. E 3, ed. 1648; where, however, the Cardinal, whom the Pope entertains, is called the
Cardinal of PAVIA.)
May be invisible, to do what I please,
Unseen of any whilst I stay in Rome.
[Mephistophilis charms him.]

MEPHIST. So, Faustus; now
Do what thou wilt, thou shalt not be discern’d.

Sound a Sonnet. (Note: Sonnet-- Various written, SENNET, SIGNET, SIGNATE, &c.--A particular set of notes
on the trumpet, or cornet, different from a flourish. See Nares’s GLOSS. in V. SENNET.) Enter the POPE and the
CARDINAL OF LORRAIN to the banquet, with FRIARS attending.

POPE. My Lord of Lorrain, will't please you draw near?

FAUSTUS. Fall to, and the devil choke you, an you spare!

POPE. How now! who’s that which spake?–Friars, look about.

FIRST FRIAR. Here’s nobody, if it like your Holiness.

POPE. My lord, here is a dainty dish was sent me from the Bishop
of Milan.

FAUSTUS. I thank you, sir.
[Snatches the dish.]

POPE. How now! who’s that which snatched the meat from me? will
no man look?–My lord, this dish was sent me from the Cardinal
of Florence.

FAUSTUS. You say true; I’ll ha’t.
[Snatches the dish.]

POPE. What, again!–My lord, I’ll drink to your grace.
FAUSTUS. I'll pledge your grace.
[Snatches the cup.]

C. OF LOR. My lord, it may be some ghost, newly crept out of
Purgatory, come to beg a pardon of your Holiness.

POPE. It may be so.—Friars, prepare a dirge to lay the fury
of this ghost.—Once again, my lord, fall to.
[The POPE crosses himself.]

FAUSTUS. What, are you crossing of yourself?
Well, use that trick no more, I would advise you.
[The POPE crosses himself again.]

Well, there's the second time. Aware the third;
I give you fair warning.
[The POPE crosses himself again, and FAUSTUS hits him a box
of the ear; and they all run away.]

Come on, Mephistophilis; what shall we do?

MEPHIST. Nay, I know not: we shall be cursed with bell, book,
and candle.

FAUSTUS. How! bell, book, and candle,—candle, book, and bell,—
Forward and backward, to curse Faustus to hell!
Anon you shall hear a hog grunt, a calf bleat, and an ass bray,
Because it is Saint Peter's holiday.

Re-enter all the FRIARS to sing the Dirge.

FIRST FRIAR.
Come, brethren, let's about our business with good devotion.

They sing.

CURSED BE HE THAT STOLE AWAY HIS HOLINESS' MEAT FROM THE
TABLE! maledicat Dominus!
CURSED BE HE THAT STRUCK HIS HOLINESS A BLOW ON THE FACE!
maledicat Dominus!
CURSED BE HE THAT TOOK FRIAR SANDELO A BLOW ON THE PATE!
maledicat Dominus!
CURSED BE HE THAT DISTURBETH OUR HOLY DIRGE! maledicat
Dominus!
CURSED BE HE THAT TOOK AWAY HIS HOLINESS' WINE! maledicat
Dominus? ['? sic]
Et omnes Sancti! Amen!

[MEPHISTOPHILIS and FAUSTUS beat the FRIARS, and fling
fire-works among them; and so exeunt.]

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS. When Faustus had with pleasure ta'en the view
Of rarest things, and royal courts of kings,
He stay'd his course, and so returned home;
Where such as bear his absence but with grief,
I mean his friends and near'st companions,
Did gratulate his safety with kind words,
And in their conference of what befell,
Touching his journey through the world and air,
They put forth questions of astrology,
Which Faustus answer'd with such learned skill
As they admir'd and wonder'd at his wit.
Now is his fame spread forth in every land:
Amongst the rest the Emperor is one,
Carolus the Fifth, at whose palace now
Faustus is feasted 'mongst his noblemen.
What there he did, in trial of his art,
I leave untold; your eyes shall see['t] perform'd.
[Exit.]

Enter ROBIN (Note: Enter ROBIN, &c.-- Scene, near an inn.) the Ostler, with a book in his hand.

ROBIN. O, this is admirable! here I ha' stolen one of Doctor Faustus' conjuring-books, and, i'faith, I mean to search some circles for my own use. Now will I make all the maidens in our parish dance at my pleasure, stark naked, before me; and so by that means I shall see more than e'er I felt or saw yet.

Enter RALPH, calling ROBIN.

RALPH. Robin, prithee, come away; there's a gentleman tarries to have his horse, and he would have his things rubbed and made clean: he keeps such a chafing with my mistress about it; and she has sent me to look thee out; prithee, come away.

ROBIN. Keep out, keep out, or else you are blown up, you are dismembered, Ralph: keep out, for I am about a roaring piece of work.

RALPH. Come, what doest thou with that same book? thou canst not read?

ROBIN. Yes, my master and mistress shall find that I can read, he for his forehead, she for her private study; she's born to bear with me, or else my art fails.

RALPH. Why, Robin, what book is that?

ROBIN. What book! why, the most intolerable book for conjuring that e'er was invented by any brimstone devil.

RALPH. Canst thou conjure with it?

ROBIN. I can do all these things easily with it; first, I can make thee drunk with ippocras (Note: ippocras-- Or HIPPOCRAS,--a medicated drink composed of wine (usually red) with spices and sugar. It is generally supposed to have been so called from HIPPOCRATES (contracted by our earliest writers to HIPPOCRAS); perhaps because it was strained.--the woollen bag used by apothecaries to strain syrups and decoctions for clarification being termed HIPPOCRATES' SLEEVE.) at any tabern (Note: tabern-- i.e. tavern.) in Europe for nothing; that's one of my conjuring works.

RALPH. Our Master Parson says that's nothing.

ROBIN. True, Ralph: and more, Ralph, if thou hast any mind to Nan Spit, our kitchen-maid, then turn her and wind her to thy own use, as often as thou wilt, and at midnight.

RALPH. O, brave, Robin! shall I have Nan Spit, and to mine own use? On that condition I'll feed thy devil with horse-bread as long as he lives, of free cost.
ROBIN. No more, sweet Ralph: let’s go and make clean our boots, which lie foul upon our hands, and then to our conjuring in the devil’s name.

[Exeunt.]

Enter ROBIN and RALPH (Note: Exeunt. Enter ROBIN and RALPH, &c.-- A scene is evidently wanting after the Exeunt of Robin and Ralph.) with a silver goblet.

ROBIN. Come, Ralph: did not I tell thee, we were for ever made by this Doctor Faustus’ book? ecce, signum! here’s a simple purchase (Note: purchase-- i.e. booty--gain, acquisition.) for horse-keepers: our horses shall eat no hay as long as this lasts.

RALPH. But, Robin, here comes the Vintner.

ROBIN. Hush! I’ll gull him supernaturally.

Enter VINTNER.

Drawer. (Note: Drawer-- There is an inconsistency here: the Vintner cannot properly be addressed as "Drawer." The later 4tos are also inconsistent in the corresponding passage: Dick says, "THE VINTNER’S BOY follows us at the hard heels," and immediately the "VINTNER" enters.) I hope all is paid; God be with you!–Come, Ralph.

VINTNER. Soft, sir; a word with you. I must yet have a goblet paid from you, ere you go.

ROBIN. I a goblet, Ralph, I a goblet!–I scorn you; and you are but a, &c. I a goblet! search me.

VINTNER. I mean so, sir, with your favour.

[Searches ROBIN.]

ROBIN. How say you now?

VINTNER. I must say somewhat to your fellow.–You, sir!

RALPH. Me, sir! me, sir! search your fill. [VINTNER searches him.]

Now, sir, you may be ashamed to burden honest men with a matter of truth.

VINTNER. Well, tone (Note: tone-- i.e. the one.) of you hath this goblet about you.

ROBIN. You lie, drawer, ’tis afore me [Aside].–Sirrah you, I’ll teach you to impeach honest men;–stand by;–I’ll scour you for a goblet;–stand aside you had best, I charge you in the name of Belzebub.–Look to the goblet, Ralph [Aside to RALPH].

VINTNER. What mean you, sirrah?


Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS, sets squibs at their backs, and then exit. They run about.

VINTNER. O, nomine Domini! what meanest thou, Robin? thou hast no goblet.

RALPH. Peccatum peccatorum!–Here’s thy goblet, good Vintner. [Gives the goblet to VINTNER, who exit.]
ROBIN. Misericordia pro nobis! what shall I do? Good devil, forgive me now, and I'll never rob thy library more.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.

MEPHIST. Monarch of Hell, (Note: MEPHIST-- Monarch of hell, &c.-- Old ed. thus:--) "MEPHIST. Vanish vilaines, th' one like an Ape, an other like a Beare, the third an Asse, for doing this enterprise. Monarch of hell, vnder whose blacke survey," &c. What follows, shews that the words which I have omitted ought to have no place in the text; nor is there any thing equivalent to them in the corresponding passage of the play as given in the later 4tos.)
under whose black survey
Great potentates do kneel with awful fear,
Upon whose altars thousand souls do lie,
How am I vexed with these villains’ charms?
From Constantinople am I hither come,
Only for pleasure of these damned slaves.

ROBIN. How, from Constantinople! you have had a great journey: will you take sixpence in your purse to pay for your supper, and be gone?

MEPHIST. Well, villains, for your presumption, I transform thee into an ape, and thee into a dog; and so be gone!
[Exit.]

ROBIN. How, into an ape! that's brave: I'll have fine sport with the boys; I'll get nuts and apples enow.

RALPH. And I must be a dog.

ROBIN. I'faith, thy head will never be out of the pottage-pot.
[Exeunt.]

Enter EMPEROR, (Note: Enter EMPEROR, &c.-- Scene--An apartment in the Emperor's Palace. According to THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS, the Emperor "was personally, with the rest of the nobles and gentlemen, at the towne of Inzbrack, where he kept his court." Sig. G, ed. 1648.) FAUSTUS, and a KNIGHT, with ATTENDANTS.

EMPEROR. Master Doctor Faustus, (Note: Master Doctor Faustus, &c-- The greater part of this scene is closely borrowed from the history just cited: e.g. "Faustus, I have heard much of thee, that thou art excellent in the black art, and none like thee in mine empire; for men say that thou hast a familiar spirit with thee, and that thou canst doe what thou list; it is therefore (said the Emperor) my request of thee, that thou let me see a proofe of thy experience: and I vow unto thee, by the honour of my emperiall crowne, none evill shall happen unto thee for so doing," &c. Ibid.) I have heard strange report of thy knowledge in the black art, how that none in my empire nor in the whole world can compare with thee for the rare effects of magic: they say thou hast a familiar spirit, by whom thou canst accomplish what thou list. This, therefore, is my request, that thou let me see some proof of thy skill, that mine eyes may be witnesses to confirm what mine ears have heard reported: and here I swear to thee, by the honour of mine imperial crown, that, whatever thou doest, thou shalt be no ways prejudiced or endamaged.

KNIGHT. I'faith, he looks much like a conjurer.
[Aside.]

FAUSTUS. My gracious sovereign, though I must confess myself far inferior to the report men have published, and nothing answerable to the honour of your imperial majesty, yet, for that love and duty binds me thereunto, I am content to do whatsoever your majesty shall command me.
EMPEROR. Then, Doctor Faustus, mark what I shall say.
As I was sometime solitary set
Within my closet, sundry thoughts arose
About the honour of mine ancestors,
How they had won (Note: won-- May be right: but qy. "done"?) by prowess such exploits,
Got such riches, subdu’d so many kingdoms,
As we that do succeed, (Note: As we that do succeed, &c.-- A corrupted passage (not found in the later 4tos).) or they that shall
Hereafter possess our throne, shall
(I fear me) ne’er attain to that degree
Of high renown and great authority:
Amongst which kings is Alexander the Great,
Chief spectacle of the world’s pre-eminence,
The bright (Note: The bright, &c.-- See note II, p. 18.)

[Note II, from page 18 (The First Part of Tamburlaine The Great):

Barbarous-- Qy. “O Barbarous”? in the next line but one,
“O treacherous”? and in the last line of the speech,
“O bloody”? But we occasionally find in our early dramatists
lines which are defective in the first syllable; and in
some of these instances at least it would almost seem that
nothing has been omitted by the transcriber or printer.--] shining of whose glorious acts
Lightens the world with his reflecting beams,
As when I hear but motion made of him,
It grieves my soul I never saw the man:
If, therefore, thou, by cunning of thine art,
Canst raise this man from hollow vaults below,
Where lies entomb’d this famous conqueror,
And bring with him his beauteous paramour,
Both in their right shapes, gesture, and attire
They us’d to wear during their time of life,
Thou shalt both satisfy my just desire,
And give me cause to praise thee whilst I live.

FAUSTUS. My gracious lord, I am ready to accomplish your request,
so far forth as by art and power of my spirit I am able to perform.

KNIGHT. I’faith, that’s just nothing at all.
[Aside.]

FAUSTUS. But, if it like your grace, it is not in my ability (Note: But, if it like your grace, it is not in my ability, &c.]
"D. Faustus answered, My most excellent lord, I am ready to accomplish your request in all things, so farre forth
as I and my spirit are able to performe: yet your majesty shall know that their dead bodies are not able
substantially to be brought before you; but such spirits as have seene Alexander and his Paramour alive shall
appeare unto you, in manner and form as they both lived in their most flourishing time; and herewith I hope to
please your Imperiall Majesty. Then Faustus went a little aside to speake to his spirit; but he returned againe
presently, saying, Now, if it please your Majesty, you shall see them; yet, upon this condition, that you demand no
question of them, nor speake unto them; which the Emperor agreed unto. Wherewith Doctor Faustus opened the
privy-chamber doore, where presently entered the great and mighty emperor Alexander Magnus, in all things to
looke upon as if he had beene alive; in proportion, a strong set thicke man, of a middle stature, blacke haire, and
that both thicke and curled, head and beard, red cheekes, and a broad face, with eyes like a basiliske; he had a
compleat harnesse (i.e. suit of armour) burnished and graven, exceeding rich to look upon: and so, passing
towards the Emperor Carolus, he made low and reverend courtesie: whereat the Emperour Carolus would have
stood up to receive and greet him with the like reverence; but Faustus tooke hold on him, and would not permit
him to doe it. Shortly after, Alexander made humble reverence, and went out againe; and comming to the doore,
his paramour met him. She comming in made the Emperor likewise reverence: she was cloathed in blew velvet,
 wrought and embroidered with pearls and gold; she was also excellent faire, like milke and blood mixed, tall and
slender, with a face round as an apple. And thus passed [she-- certaine times up and downe the house; which the
Emperor marking, said to himselfe, Now have I seene two persons which my heart hath long wished to behold;
and sure it cannot otherwise be (said he to himselfe) but that the spirits have changed themselves into these formes, and have but deceived me, calling to minde the woman that raised the prophet Samuel: and for that the Emperor would be the more satisfied in the matter, he said, I have often heard that behind, in her neck, she had a great wart or wen; wherefore he tooke Faustus by the hand without any words, and went to see if it were also to be seene on her or not; but she, perceiving that he came to her, bowed downe her neck, when he saw a great wart; and hereupon she vanished, leaving the Emperor and the rest well contented." THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS, Sig. G, ed. 1648.]

to present before your eyes the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes, which long since are consumed to dust.

KNIGHT. Ay, marry, Master Doctor, now there's a sign of grace in you, when you will confess the truth.

[Aside.]

FAUSTUS. But such spirits as can lively resemble Alexander and his paramour shall appear before your grace, in that manner that they both (Note: both-- Old ed. "best.") lived in, in their most flourishing estate; which I doubt not shall sufficiently content your imperial majesty.

EMPEROR. Go to, Master Doctor; let me see them presently.

KNIGHT. Do you hear, Master Doctor? you bring Alexander and his paramour before the Emperor!

FAUSTUS. How then, sir?

KNIGHT. I'faith, that's as true as Diana turned me to a stag.

FAUSTUS. No, sir; but, when Actaeon died, he left the horns for you.–Mephistophilis, be gone.

[Exit MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

KNIGHT. Nay, an you go to conjuring, I'll be gone.

[Exit.]

FAUSTUS. I'll meet with you anon for interrupting me so.

–Here they are, my gracious lord.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with SPIRITS in the shapes of ALEXANDER and his PARAMOUR.

EMPEROR. Master Doctor, I heard this lady, while she lived, had a wart or mole in her neck: how shall I know whether it be so or no?

FAUSTUS. Your highness may boldly go and see.

EMPEROR. Sure, these are no spirits, but the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes.

[Exeunt Spirits.]

FAUSTUS. Wilt please your highness now to send for the knight that was so pleasant with me here of late?

EMPEROR. One of you call him forth.

[Exit ATTENDANT.]

Re-enter the KNIGHT with a pair of horns on his head.
How now, sir knight! why, I had thought thou hadst been a bachelor, but now I see thou hast a wife, that not only gives thee horns, but makes thee wear them. Feel on thy head.

KNIGHT. Thou damned wretch and execrable dog, Bred in the concave of some monstrous rock, How dar'st thou thus abuse a gentleman? Villain, I say, undo what thou hast done!

FAUSTUS. O, not so fast, sir! there's no haste: but, good, are you remembered how you crossed me in my conference with the Emperor? I think I have met with you for it.

EMPEROR. Good Master Doctor, at my entreaty release him: he hath done penance sufficient.

FAUSTUS. My gracious lord, not so much for the injury he offered me here in your presence, as to delight you with some mirth, hath Faustus worldly requited this injurious knight; which being all I desire, I am content to release him of his horns:—and, sir knight, hereafter speak well of scholars.—Mephistophilis, transform him straight. (Note: Mephistophilis, transform him straight—According to THE HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS, the knight was not present during Faustus's "conference" with the Emperor; nor did he offer the doctor any insult by doubting his skill in magic. We are there told that Faustus happening to see the knight asleep, "leaning out of a window of the great hall," fixed a huge pair of hart's horns on his head; "and, as the knight awaked, thinking to pull in his head, he hit his horns against the glasse, that the panes thereof flew about his eares: thinke here how this good gentleman was vexed, for he could neither get backward nor forward." After the emperor and the courtiers, to their great amusement, had beheld the poor knight in this condition, Faustus removed the horns. When Faustus, having taken leave of the emperor, was a league and a half from the city, he was attacked in a wood by the knight and some of his companions: they were in armour, and mounted on fair palfreys; but the doctor quickly overcame them by turning all the bushes into horsemen, and "so charmed them, that every one, knight and other, for the space of a whole moneth, did weare a paire of goates hornes on their browes, and every palfry a paire of oxe hornes on his head; and this was their penance appointed by Faustus." A second attempt of the knight to revenge himself on Faustus proved equally unsuccessful. Sigs. G 2, I 3, ed. 1648.) [MEPHISTOPHILIS removes the horns.]

—Now, my good lord, having done my duty, I humbly take my leave.

EMPEROR. Farewell, Master Doctor: yet, ere you go, Expect from me a bounteous reward. [Exeunt EMPEROR, KNIGHT, and ATTENDANTS.]

FAUSTUS. Now, Mephistophilis, (Note: FAUSTUS. Now Mephistophilis, &c.—Here the scene is supposed to be changed to the "fair and pleasant green" which Faustus presently mentions.) the restless course That time doth run with calm and silent foot, Shortening my days and thread of vital life, Calls for the payment of my latest years: Therefore, sweet Mephistophilis, let us Make haste to Wertenberg.

MEPHIST. What, will you go on horse-back or on foot[?]?

FAUSTUS. Nay, till I'm past this fair and pleasant green, I'll walk on foot.

Enter a HORSE-COURSER. (Note: Horse-courser—i.e. Horse-dealer.—We are now to suppose the scene to be near the home of Faustus, and presently that it is the interior of his house, for he falls asleep in his chair.—"How Doctor Faustus deceived a Horse-courser" is related in a short chapter (the 34th) of THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS: "After this manner he served a horse-courser at a faire called Pheiffering," &c.)
HORSE-COURSER. I have been all this day seeking one Master Fustian: mass, see where he is!—God save you, Master Doctor!

FAUSTUS. What, horse-courser! you are well met.

HORSE-COURSER. Do you hear, sir? I have brought you forty dollars for your horse.

FAUSTUS. I cannot sell him so: if thou likest him for fifty, take him.

HORSE-COURSER. Alas, sir, I have no more!—I pray you, speak for me.

MEPHIST. I pray you, let him have him: he is an honest fellow, and he has a great charge, neither wife nor child.

FAUSTUS. Well, come, give me your money [HORSE-COURSER gives FAUSTUS the money]: my boy will deliver him to you. But I must tell you one thing before you have him; ride him not into the water, at any hand.

HORSE-COURSER. Why, sir, will he not drink of all waters?

FAUSTUS. O, yes, he will drink of all waters; but ride him not into the water: ride him over hedge or ditch, or where thou wilt, but not into the water.

HORSE-COURSER. Well, sir.—Now am I made man for ever: I'll not leave my horse for forty: (Note: for forty—Qy. "for TWICE forty DOLLARS"?) if he had but the quality of hey-ding-ding, hey-ding-ding, I'd make a brave living on him: he has a buttock as slick as an eel [Aside].—Well, God b'wi'ye, sir: your boy will deliver him me: but, hark you, sir; if my horse be sick or ill at ease, if I bring his water to you, you'll tell me what it is?

FAUSTUS. Away, you villain! what, dost think I am a horse-doctor?
[Exit HORSE-COURSER.]

What art thou, Faustus, but a man condemn'd to die? Thy fatal time doth draw to final end; Despair doth drive distrust into (Note: into—So the later 4tos.—2to 1604 "vnto.") my thoughts: Confound these passions with a quiet sleep: Tush, Christ did call the thief upon the Cross; Then rest thee, Faustus, quiet in conceit. [Sleeps in his chair.]

Re-enter HORSE-COURSER, all wet, crying.

HORSE-COURSER. Alas, alas! Doctor Fustian, quoth a? mass, Doctor Lopus (Note: Doctor Lopus-- i.e. Doctor Lopez, domestic physician to Queen Elizabeth, who was put to death for having received a bribe from the court of Spain to destroy her. He is frequently mentioned in our early dramas: see my note on Middleton's WORKS, iv. 384.) was never such a doctor: has given me a purgation, has purged me of forty dollars; I shall never see them more. But yet, like an ass as I was, I would not be ruled by him, for he bade me I should ride him into no water: now I, thinking my horse had had some rare quality that he would not have had me know of, (Note: know of-- The old ed. has "KNOWNE of"; which perhaps is right, meaning—acquainted with.) I, like a venturous youth, rid him into the deep pond at the town's end. I was no sooner in the middle of the pond, but my horse vanished away, and I sat upon a bottle of hay, never so near drowning in my life. But I'll seek out my doctor, and have my
forty dollars again, or I'll make it the dearest horse!–O, yonder is his snipper-snapper.–Do you hear? you, hey-pass, (Note: hey-pass-- Equivalent to--juggler.) where's your master?

MEPHIST. Why, sir, what would you? you cannot speak with him.

HORSE-COURSER. But I will speak with him.

MEPHIST. Why, he's fast asleep: come some other time.

HORSE-COURSER. I'll speak with him now, or I'll break his glass-windows about his ears.

MEPHIST. I tell thee, he has not slept this eight nights.

HORSE-COURSER. An he have not slept this eight weeks, I'll speak with him.

MEPHIST. See, where he is, fast asleep.

HORSE-COURSER. Ay, this is he.–God save you, Master Doctor, Master Doctor, Master Doctor Fustian! forty dollars, forty dollars for a bottle of hay!

MEPHIST. Why, thou seest he hears thee not.

HORSE-COURSER. So-ho, ho! so-ho, ho! [Hollows in his ear.] No, will you not wake? I'll make you wake ere I go. [Pulls FAUSTUS by the leg, and pulls it away.] Alas, I am undone! what shall I do?

FAUSTUS. O, my leg, my leg!–Help, Mephistophilis! call the officers.–My leg, my leg!

MEPHIST. Come, villain, to the constable.

HORSE-COURSER. O Lord, sir, let me go, and I'll give you forty dollars more!

MEPHIST. Where be they?

HORSE-COURSER. I have none about me: come to my ostry, (Note: ostry-- i.e. inn,--lodging.) and I'll give them you.

MEPHIST. Be gone quickly.

[EXEUNT.

FAUSTUS. What, is he gone? farewell he! Faustus has his leg again, and the Horse-courser, I take it, a bottle of hay for his labour: well, this trick shall cost him forty dollars more.

Enter WAGNER.

How now, Wagner! what's the news with thee?

WAGNER. Sir, the Duke of Vanholt doth earnestly entreat your company.

FAUSTUS. The Duke of Vanholt! an honourable gentleman, to whom I must be no niggard of my cunning. (Note: cunning-- i.e. skill.)–Come, Mephistophilis, let's away to him. 

[Exeunt.]
Enter the DUKE OF VANHOLT, the DUCHESS, and FAUSTUS. (Note: Exeunt. Enter the DUKE OF VANHOLT, the DUCHESS, and FAUSTUS-- Old ed.; "Exeunt. Enter to them the DUKE, the DUTCHESS, the DUKE speakes." In the later 4tos a scene intervenes between the "Exeunt" of Faustus, Mephistophilis, and Wagner, and the entrance of the Duke of Vanholt, &c.--We are to suppose that Faustus is now at the court of the Duke of Vanholt: this is plain, not only from the later 4tos, --in which Wagner tells Faustus that the Duke "hath sent some of his men to attend him, with provision fit for his journey,"--but from THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS, the subjoined portion of which is closely followed in the present scene. "Chap. xxxix. HOW DOCTOR FAUSTUS PLAYED A MERRY JEST WITH THE DUKE OF ANHOLT IN HIS COURT. Doctor Faustus on a time went to the Duke of Anholt, who welcommed him very courteously; this was the moneth of January; where sitting at the table, he perceived the dutchess to be with child; and forbearing himselfe untill the meat was taken from the table, and that they brought in the banqueting dishes [i.e. the dessert--], Doctor Faustus said to the dutchesse, Gratious lady, I have alwayes heard that great-bellied women doe alwayes long for some dainties; I beseech therefore your grace, hide not your minde from me, but tell me what you desire to eat. She answered him, Doctor Faustus, now truly I will not hide from you what my heart doth most desire; namely, that, if it were now harvest, I would eat my bellyfull of grapes and other dainty fruit. Doctor Faustus answered hereupon, Gracious lady, this is a small thing for me to doe, for I can doe more than this. Wherefore he tooke a plate, and set open one of the casements of the window, holding it forth; where incontinent he had his dish full of all manner of fruit, as red and white grapes, peares, and apples, the which came from out of strange countries: all these he presented the dutchesse, saying, Madam, I pray you vouchsafe to taste of this dainty fruit, the which came from a farre countrey, for there the summer is not yet ended. The dutchesse thanked Faustus highly, and she fell to her fruit with full appetite. The Duke of Anholt notwithstanding could not withhold to ask Faustus with what reason there were such young fruit to be had at that time of the yeare. Doctor Faustus told him, May it please your grace to understand that the year is divided into two circles of the whole world, that when with us it is winter, in the contrary circle it is notwithstanding summer; for in India and Saba there falleth or setteth the sunne, so that it is so warm that they have twice a yeare fruit; and, gracious lord, I have a swift spirit, the which can in the twinkling of an eye fulfill my desire in any thing; wherefore I sent him into those countries, who hath brought this fruit as you see: whereat the duke was in great admiration.")

DUKE. Believe me, Master Doctor, this merriment hath much pleased me.

FAUSTUS. My gracious lord, I am glad it contents you so well. --But it may be, madam, you take no delight in this. I have heard that great-bellied women do long for some dainties or other: what is it, madam? tell me, and you shall have it.

DUCHESS. Thanks, good Master Doctor: and, for I see your courteous intent to pleasure me, I will not hide from you the thing my heart desires; and, were it now summer, as it is January and the dead time of the winter, I would desire no better meat than a dish of ripe grapes.

FAUSTUS. Alas, madam, that's nothing!--Mephistophilis, be gone. [Exit MEPHISTOPHILIS.] Were it a greater thing than this, so it would content you, you should have it.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with grapes.

Here they be, madam: wilt please you taste on them?

DUKE. Believe me, Master Doctor, this makes me wonder above the rest, that being in the dead time of winter and in the month of January, how you should come by these grapes.

FAUSTUS. If it like your grace, the year is divided into two circles over the whole world, that, when it is here winter with us, in the contrary circle it is summer with them, as in India, Saba, (Note: Saba-- i.e. Sabaea.) and farther countries in the east; and by means of a swift spirit that I have, I had them brought hither, as you see. --How do you like them, madam? be they good?
DUCHESS. Believe me, Master Doctor, they be the best grapes that e’er I tasted in my life before.

FAUSTUS. I am glad they content you so, madam.

DUKE. Come, madam, let us in, where you must well reward this learned man for the great kindness he hath shewed to you.

DUCHESS. And so I will, my lord; and, whilst I live, rest beholding (Note: beholding-- i.e. beholden.) for this courtesy.

FAUSTUS. I humbly thank your grace.

DUKE. Come, Master Doctor, follow us, and receive your reward.

[Exeunt.]

Enter WAGNER. (Note: Enter WAGNER-- Scene, a room in the house of Faustus.)

WAGNER. I think my master means to die shortly, For he hath given to me all his goods: (Note: he hath given to me all his goods-- Compare chap. lvi. of THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS,--"How Doctor Faustus made his will, in which he named his servant Wagner to be his heire.") And yet, methinks, if that death were near, He would not banquet, and carouse, and swill Amongst the students, as even now he doth, Who are at supper with such belly-cheer As Wagner ne’er beheld in all his life. See, where they come! belike the feast is ended. [Exit.]

Enter FAUSTUS with two or three SCHOLARS, and MEPHISTOPHILIS.

FIRST SCHOLAR. Master Doctor Faustus, since our conference about fair ladies, which was the beautifulest in all the world, we have determined with ourselves that Helen of Greece was the admirablest lady that ever lived: therefore, Master Doctor, if you will do us that favour, as to let us see that peerless dame of Greece, whom all the world admires for majesty, we should think ourselves much beholding unto you.

FAUSTUS. Gentlemen, For that I know your friendship is unfeign’d, And Faustus’ custom is not to deny The just requests of those that wish him well, You shall behold that peerless dame of Greece, No otherways for pomp and majesty Than when Sir Paris cross’d the seas with her, And brought the spoils to rich Dardania. Be silent, then, for danger is in words. [Music sounds, and HELEN passeth over the stage. (Note: HELEN passeth over the stage-- In THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS we have the following description of Helen. "This lady appeared before them in a most rich gowne of purple velvet, costly imbrodered; her haire hanged downe loose, as faire as the beaten gold, and of such length that it reached downe to her hammes; having most amorous cole-black eyes, a sweet and pleasant round face, with lips as red as a cherry; her cheekes of a rose colour, her mouth small, her neck white like a swan; tall and slender of personage; in summe, there was no imperfect place in her: she looked round about with a rolling hawkes eye, a smiling and wanton countenance, which neere-hand inflamed the hearts of all the students; but that they persuaded themselves she was a spirit, which made them lightly passe away such fancies." Sig. H 4, ed. 1648.)]

SECOND SCHOLAR. Too simple is my wit to tell her praise, Whom all the world admires for majesty.
THIRD SCHOLAR. No marvel though the angry Greeks pursu'd
With ten years' war the rape of such a queen,
Whose heavenly beauty passeth all compare.

FIRST SCHOLAR. Since we have seen the pride of Nature's works,
And only paragon of excellence,
Let us depart; and for this glorious deed
Happy and blest be Faustus evermore!

FAUSTUS. Gentlemen, farewell: the same I wish to you.
[Exeunt SCHOLARS.]

Enter an OLD MAN. (Note: Enter an OLD MAN-- See chap. xlvi of THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS,--
"How an old man, the neighbour of Faustus, sought to persuade him to amend his evil life and to fall into
repentance," --according to which history, the Old Man's exhortation is delivered at his own house, whither he had
invited Faustus to supper.)

OLD MAN. Ah, Doctor Faustus, that I might prevail
To guide thy steps unto the way of life,
By which sweet path thou mayst attain the goal
That shall conduct thee to celestial rest!
Break heart, drop blood, and mingle it with tears,
Tears falling from repentant heaviness
Of thy most vile
(To note: vild-- Old ed. "vild." See note ||, p. 68. [Note || from page 68 (The Second Part of
Tamburlaine the Great): Vile-- The 8vo "Vild"; the 4to "Wild" (Both eds. a little before, have "VILE monster, born of
some infernal hag", and, a few lines after, "To VILE and ignominious servitude:"--the fact is, our early writers (or
rather transcribers), with their usual inconsistency of spelling, give now the one form, and now the other: compare
the folio SHAKESPEARE, 1623, where we sometimes find "vild" and sometimes "VILE."|--]) and loathsome
filthiness,
The stench whereof corrupts the inward soul
With such flagitious crimes of heinous sin
(To note: sin-- Old ed. "sinnes" (This is not in the later 4tos).)
As no commiseration may expel,
But mercy, Faustus, of thy Saviour sweet,
Whose blood alone must wash away thy guilt.

FAUSTUS. Where art thou, Faustus? wretch, what hast thou done?
Damn'd art thou, Faustus, damn'd; despair and die!
Hell calls for right, and with a roaring voice
Says, "Faustus, come; thine hour is almost
And Faustus now
(To note: now-- So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) will come to do thee right.
[MEPHISTOPHILIS gives him a dagger.]

OLD MAN. Ah, stay, good Faustus, stay thy desperate steps!
I see an angel hovers o'er thy head,
And, with a vial full of precious grace,
Offers to pour the same into thy soul:
Then call for mercy, and avoid despair.

FAUSTUS. Ah, my sweet friend, I feel
Thy words to comfort my distressed soul!
Leave me a while to ponder on my sins.

OLD MAN. I go, sweet Faustus; but with heavy cheer,
Fearing the ruin of thy hopeless soul.
[Exit.]

FAUSTUS. Accursed Faustus, where is mercy now?
I do repent; and yet I do despair:
Hell strives with grace for conquest in my breast:
What shall I do to shun the snares of death?
MEPHIST. Thou traitor, Faustus, I arrest thy soul
For disobedience to my sovereign lord:
Revolt, or I'll in piece-meal tear thy flesh.

FAUSTUS. Sweet Mephistophilis, entreat thy lord
To pardon my unjust presumption,
And with my blood again I will confirm
My former vow I made to Lucifer.

MEPHIST. Do it, then, quickly, (Note: MEPHIST. Do it, then, quickly, &c.-- After this speech, most probably, there ought to be a stage-direction, "FAUSTUS STABS HIS ARM, AND Writes ON A PAPER WITH HIS BLOOD.
Compare THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS, chap. xlix.--"How Doctor Faustus wrote the second time with his owne blood, and gave it to the Devill.") with unfeigned heart,
Lest greater danger do attend thy drift.

FAUSTUS. Torment, sweet friend, that base and crooked age,
That durst dissuade me from thy Lucifer,
With greatest torments that our hell affords.

MEPHIST. His faith is great; I cannot touch his soul;
But what I may afflict his body with
I will attempt, which is but little worth.

FAUSTUS. One thing, good servant, (Note: One thing, good servant, &c.-- "To the end that this miserable Faustus might fill the lust of his flesh and live in all manner of voluptuous pleasure, it came in his mind, after he had slept his first sleepe, and in the 23 year past of his time, that he had a great desire to lye with faire Helena of Greece, especially her whom he had seen and shewed unto the students at Wittenberg: wherefore he called unto his spirit Mephostophiles, commanding him to bring to him the faire Helena; which he also did. Whereupon he fell in love with her, and made her his common concubine and bed-fellow; for she was so beautifull and delightfull a piece, that he could not be one houre from her, if he should therefore have suffered death, she had so stoln away his heart: and, to his seeming, in time she was with childe, whom Faustus named Justus Faustus. The childe told Doctor Faustus many things which were don in forraign countrys; but in the end, when Faustus lost his life, the mother and the childe vanished away both together." THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS, Sig. I 4, ed. 1648.)
let me crave of thee,
To glut the longing of my heart's desire,--
That I might have unto my paramour
That heavenly Helen which I saw of late,
Whose sweet embracings may extinguish clean
Those (Note: Those-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "These.") thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow,
And keep mine oath I made to Lucifer.

MEPHIST. Faustus, this, (Note: Faustus, this-- Qy. "This, Faustus"?) or what else thou shalt desire,
Shall be perform'd in twinkling of an eye.

Re-enter HELEN.

FAUSTUS. Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless (Note: topless-- i.e. not exceeded in height by any.) towers of Ilium--
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.--
[Kisses her.]
Her lips suck forth my soul: see, where it flies!--
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven is (Note: is-- So the later 4tos.--2to 1604 "be.") in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy, shall Wertenberg be sack'd;
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colours on my plumed crest;
Yea, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss.
O, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;  
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter  
When he appear'd to hapless Semele;  
More lovely than the monarch of the sky  
In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms;  
And none but thou shalt (Note: shalt-- So all the 4tos; and so I believe Marlowe wrote, though the grammar requires "shalt.") be my paramour!

[Exeunt.]

Enter the OLD MAN. (Note: Enter the OLD MAN-- Scene, a room in the Old Man's house. --In THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS the Old Man makes himself very merry with the attempts of the evil powers to hurt him. "About two dayes after that he had exhorted Faustus, as the poore man lay in his bed, suddenly there was a mighty rumbling in the chamber, the which he was never wont to heare, and he heard as it had beene the groaning of a sow, which lasted long: whereupon the good old man began to jest and mocke, and said, Oh, what a barbarian cry is this? Oh faire bird, what foul musick is this? A[h--, faire angell, that could not tarry two dayes in his place! beginnest thou now to runne into a poore mans house, where thou hast no power, and wert not able to keepe thy owne two dayes? With these and such like words the spirit departed," &c. Sig. I 2, ed. 1648.)

OLD MAN. Accursed Faustus, miserable man,  
That from thy soul exclud'st the grace of heaven,  
And fly'st the throne of his tribunal-seat!

Enter DEVILS.

Satan begins to sift me with his pride:  
As in this furnace God shall try my faith,  
My faith, vile hell, shall triumph over thee.  
Ambitious fiends, see how the heavens smile  
At your repulse, and laugh your state to scorn!  
Hence, hell! for hence I fly unto my God.  
[Exeunt.--on one side, DEVILS, on the other, OLD MAN.]

Enter FAUSTUS, (Note: Enter Faustus, &c.-- Scene, a room in the house of Faustus.) with SCHOLARS.

FAUSTUS. Ah, gentlemen!

FIRST SCHOLAR. What ails Faustus?

FAUSTUS. Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow, had I lived with thee, then had I lived still! but now I die eternally. Look, comes he not? comes he not?

SECOND SCHOLAR. What means Faustus?

THIRD SCHOLAR. Belike he is grown into some sickness by being over-solitary.

FIRST SCHOLAR. If it be so, we'll have physicians to cure him. --'Tis but a surfeit; never fear, man.

FAUSTUS. A surfeit of deadly sin, that hath damned both body and soul.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Yet, Faustus, look up to heaven; remember God's mercies are infinite.

FAUSTUS. But Faustus' offence can ne'er be pardoned: the serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus. Ah, gentlemen, hear me with patience, and tremble not at my speeches! Though my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years, O, would I had never seen Wertenberg, never read book! and what wonders I have done, all Germany can
witness, yea, all the world; for which Faustus hath lost both Germany and the world, yea, heaven itself, heaven, the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy; and must remain in hell for ever, hell, ah, hell, for ever! Sweet friends, what shall become of Faustus, being in hell for ever?

THIRD SCHOLAR. Yet, Faustus, call on God.

FAUSTUS. On God, whom Faustus hath abjured! on God, whom Faustus hath blasphemed! Ah, my God, I would weep! but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth blood, instead of tears! yea, life and soul! O, he stays my tongue! I would lift up my hands; but see, they hold them, they hold them!

ALL. Who, Faustus?

FAUSTUS. Lucifer and Mephistophilis. Ah, gentlemen, I gave them my soul for my cunning! (Note: cunning-- i.e. knowledge, skill.)

ALL. God forbid!

FAUSTUS. God forbade it, indeed; but Faustus hath done it: for vain pleasure of twenty-four years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I writ them a bill with mine own blood: the date is expired; the time will come, and he will fetch me.

FIRST SCHOLAR. Why did not Faustus tell us of this before, (Note: Why did not Faustus tell us of this before, &c.-- "Wherefore one of them said unto him, Ah, friend Faustus, what have you done to conceale this matter so long from us? We would, by the helpe of good divines and the grace of God, have brought you out of this net, and have torne you out of the bondage and chaines of Satan; whereas now we feare it is too late, to the utter ruine both of your body and soule. Doctor Faustus answered, I durst never doe it, although I often minded to settle my life [myself?-- to godly people to desire counsell and helpe; and once mine old neighbour counselled me that I should follow his learning and leave all my conjurations: yet, when I was minded to amend and to follow that good mans counsell, then came the Devill and would have had me away, as this night he is like to doe, and said, so soone as I turned againe to God, he would dispatch me altogether." THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS, Sig. K 3, ed. 1648.)

that divines might have prayed for thee?

FAUSTUS. Oft have I thought to have done so; but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces, if I named God, to fetch both body and soul, if I once gave ear to divinity: and now 'tis too late. Gentlemen, away, lest you perish with me.

SECOND SCHOLAR. O, what shall we do to save (Note: save-- So the later 4tos.--Not in 4to 1604.) Faustus?

FAUSTUS. Talk not of me, but save yourselves, and depart.

THIRD SCHOLAR. God will strengthen me; I will stay with Faustus.

FIRST SCHOLAR. Tempt not God, sweet friend; but let us into the next room, and there pray for him.

FAUSTUS. Ay, pray for me, pray for me; and what noise soever ye hear, (Note: and what noise soever ye hear, &c.-- "Lastly, to knit up my troubled oration, this is my friendly request, that you would go to rest, and let nothing trouble you; also, if you chance heare any noyse or rumbling about the house, be not therewith afraid, for there shall no evil happen unto you," &c. THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS, ubi supra.) come not unto me, for nothing can rescue me.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Pray thou, and we will pray that God may have mercy upon thee.
FAUSTUS. Gentlemen, farewell: if I live till morning, I'll visit you; if not, Faustus is gone to hell.

ALL. Faustus, farewell.
[Exeunt SCHOLARS.--The clock strikes eleven.]

FAUSTUS. Ah, Faustus,
Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,
And thou must be damn'd perpetually!
Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,
That time may cease, and midnight never come;
Fair Nature's eye, rise, rise again, and make
Perpetual day; or let this hour be but
A year, a month, a week, a natural day,
That Faustus may repent and save his soul!
O lente, (Note: O lente, &c. "At si, quem malles, Cephalum complexa teneres, Clamares, LENTE CURRITE, NOCTIS EQUI." Ovid,--AMOR. i. xiii. 39.) lente currite, noctis equi!
The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
The devil will come, and Faustus must be damn'd.
O, I'll leap up to my God!--Who pulls me down?--
See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
One drop would save my soul, half a drop: ah, my Christ!--
Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ!
Yet will I call on him: O, spare me, Lucifer!--
Where is it now? 'tis gone: and see, where God
Stretches out his arm, and bends his ireful brows!
Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me,
And hide me from the heavy wrath of God!
No, no!
Then will I headlong run into the earth:
Earth, gape! O, no, it will not harbour me!
You stars that reign'd at my nativity,
Whose influence hath allotted death and hell,
Now draw up Faustus, like a foggy mist.
Into the entrails of yon labouring cloud[s],
That, when you (Note: That, when you, &c.-- So all the old eds.; and it is certain that awkward changes of person are sometimes found in passages of our early poets: but qy.,"That, when THEY vomit forth into the air,
My limbs may issue from THEIR smoky mouths," &c.?) vomit forth into the air,
My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths,
So that my soul may but ascend to heaven!
[The clock strikes the half-hour.]
Ah, half the hour is past! 'twill all be past anon
O God,
If thou wilt not have mercy on my soul,
Yet for Christ's sake, whose blood hath ransom'd me,
Impose some end to my incessant pain;
Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,
A hundred thousand, and at last be sav'd!
O, no end is limited to damned souls!
Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul?
Or why is this immortal that thou hast?
Ah, Pythagoras' metempsychosis, were that true,
This soul should fly from me, and I be chang'd
Unto some brutish beast! (Note: and I be chang'd Unto some brutish beast-- "Now, thou Faustus, damned wretch, how happy wert thou, if, as an unreasonable beast, thou mightest dye without [a-- soule! so shouldst thou not feele any more doubts," &c. THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS, Sig. K. ed. 1648.) all beasts are happy, For, when they die,
Their souls are soon dissolv'd in elements;
But mine must live still to be plagu'd in hell.
Curs'd be the parents that engender'd me!
No, Faustus, curse thyself, curse Lucifer
That hath depriv\'d thee of the joys of heaven.

[The clock strikes twelve.]
O, it strikes, it strikes! Now, body, turn to air,
Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell!

[Thunder and lightning.]
O soul, be chang\'d into little water-drops,
And fall into the ocean, ne\'er be found!

Enter DEVILS.

My God, my god, look not so fierce on me!
Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while!
Ugly hell, gape not! come not, Lucifer!
I\'ll burn my books!--Ah, Mephistophilis!

[Exeunt DEVILS with FAUSTUS.] (Note: Exeunt DEVILS with FAUSTUS-- In THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS, his "miserable and lamentable end" is described as follows: it took place, we are informed, at "the village called Rimlich, halfe a mile from Wittenberg."--"The students and the other that were there, when they had prayed for him, they wept, and so went forth; but Faustus tarried in the hall; and when the gentlemen were laid in bed, none of them could sleepe, for that they att[e--nded to heare if they might be privy of his end. It happened that betweene twelve and one a clocke at midnight, there blew a mighty storme of winde against the house, as though it would have blowne the foundation thereof out of his place. Hereupon the students began to feare and goe out of their beds, comforting one another; but they would not stirre out of the chamber; and the host of the house ran out of doores, thinking the house would fall. The students lay neere unto the hall wherein Doctor Faustus lay, and they heard a mighty noyse and hissing, as if the hall had beene full of snakes and adders. With that, the hall-doore flew open, wherein Doctor Faustus was, that he began to cry for helpe, saying, Murther, murther! but it came forth with halfe a voyce, hollowly: shortly after, they heard him no more. But when it was day, the students, that had taken no rest that night, arose and went into the hall, in the which they left Doctor Faustus; where notwithstanding they found not Faustus, but all the hall lay sprinkled with blood, his braines cleaving to the wall, for the devill had beaten him from one wall against another; in one corner lay his eyes, in another his teeth; a pittifull and fearefull sight to behold. Then began the students to waile and weepe for him, and sought for his body in many places. Lastly, they came into the yard, where they found his body lying on the horse-dung, most monstrously torne and fearefull to behold, for his head and all his joynts were dashed in peeces. The fore-named students and masters that were at his death, have obtained so much, that they buried him in the village where he was so grievously tormented. After the which they returned to Wittenberg; and comming into the house of Faustus, they found the servant of Faustus very sad, unto whom they opened all the matter, who toke it exceeding heavily. There found they also this history of Doctor Faustus noted and of him written, as is before declared, all save only his end, the which was after by the students thereto annexed; further, what his servant had noted thereof, was made in another booke. And you have heard that he held by him in his life the spirit of faire Helena, the which had by him one sonne, the which he named Justus Faustus: even the same day of his death they vanished away, both mother and sonne. The house before was so darke that scarce any body could abide therein. The same night Doctor Faustus appeared unto his servant lively, and shewed unto him many secret things, the which he had done and hidden in his lifetime. Likewise there were certaine which saw Doctor Faustus looke out of the window by night, as they passed by the house." Sig. K 3, ed. 1648.)

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS. Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
And burned is Apollo\'s laurel-bough,
That sometime grew within this learned man.
Faustus is gone: regard his hellish fall,
Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise,
Only to wonder at unlawful things,
Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits
To practice more than heavenly power permits.
[Exit.]
Original Comments on the preparation of the E-Text:

SQUARE BRACKETS:

The square brackets, i.e. [ ] are copied from the printed book, without change. The open [Exit brackets use in the book have been closed [by mh].

For this E-Text version of the book, the footnotes have been consolidated at the end of the play.

Numbering of the footnotes has been changed, and each footnote is given a unique identity in the form [XXX].

CHANGES TO THE TEXT:

Character names were expanded. For Example, SECOND SCHOLAR was SEC. SCHOL.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This section moves us from the Medieval period of literature to the Renaissance. The Renaissance in England started later than the Renaissance in Italy (which is the place most people think about when they hear the term “Renaissance”). The resource reading from the Encyclopaedia Brittanica provides a good overview of the European Renaissance.

This module’s play, The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, shares some roots with morality plays (such as Everyman, which we read a few weeks ago), but as you’ll see from the from the resource readings, the view of religion and its central role in society has changed. The resource reading from Dartmouth addresses this.

In terms of literary style, the play is written in blank verse, a verse style also used by Shakespeare. For many, Shakespeare is assumed to be the only English Renaissance playwright, but as you can see, others also existed.

According to one definition: “Blank verse is a literary device defined as un-rhyming verse written in iambic pentameter. In poetry and prose, it has a consistent meter with 10 syllables in each line (pentameter); where, unstressed syllables are followed by stressed ones and five of which are stressed but do not rhyme. It is also known as un-rhymed iambic pentameter.” (See http://literarydevices.net/blank-verse/ for further elaboration of the definition and to access the hyperlinks in the definition.)

You can test the meter by counting the syllables in a line. Normally there will be 10 in each line with every other syllable stressed (meaning accented, or pronounced with more emphasis). Occasional exceptions can happen in the line length and stress patterns, but if it varies significantly or makes a new pattern (such as suddenly using much shorter lines or switching to rhymed lines), you can assume this is done for some literary reason, such as highlighting something about a character or the plot.
Background and Interpretation

**Encyclopedia Brittanica’s article on the “Renaissance: European History”**

Read this overview of the Renaissance from the *Encyclopedia Brittanica*, keeping in mind that our class’s focus is on the Renaissance in Britain. It did not happen in a vacuum, however, so knowing more about the overall Renaissance in Europe puts the English Renaissance into perspective.

**Dartmouth College’s article on “Christopher Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus”**

This is a good introductory note from Dartmouth about Marlowe’s *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus* (which sometimes may be referred to by the shortened title of *Dr. Faustus*).

**Luminarium’s article on “Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593)”**

This is a detailed and useful biography of Marlowe and an overview of his works from Luminarium.org. Marlowe had a colorful life, as you will see, and some of the information in the biography may shed some light on some of the ideas in the play.

**Audio/Video Files**

Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/V97pMacSp-0

Full length video of a stage production of *Dr. Faustus* from the Oxford Theatre Guild. Just as with movies, stage productions represent the director’s and other artists’ interpretation of the written play. Keep this in mind as you watch any stage production of any play. Our focus is on the content of the text; the staging, sets, casting, music, or other aspects of the performance in a production are not intrinsic to the text we are studying. Suggestion: In order to better follow along, have a copy of the play with you while you watch the video.

Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/ILwZmZdk28Y

Clip of a stage production from Shakespeare’s Globe Theater (you’ll notice the difference in costumes, sets, casting, and staging compared with the Oxford video).

Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/ZF3o-svLH5o

Full length audio recording of the play by LibraVox/GreenAudioBooks (follow along with the print text).
The English Renaissance was a cultural and artistic movement in England dating from the late 15th to the early 17th century. It is associated with the pan-European Renaissance that is usually regarded as beginning in Italy in the late 14th century. Like most of northern Europe, England saw little of these developments until more than a century later. The beginning of the English Renaissance is often taken, as a convenience, to be 1485, when the Battle of Bosworth Field ended the Wars of the Roses and inaugurated the Tudor Dynasty. Renaissance style and ideas, however, were slow to penetrate England, and the Elizabethan era in the second half of the 16th century is usually regarded as the height of the English Renaissance.

The English Renaissance is different from the Italian Renaissance in several ways. The dominant art forms of the English Renaissance were literature and music. Visual arts in the English Renaissance were much less significant than in the Italian Renaissance. The English period began far later than the Italian, which is usually considered to begin in the late 14th century, and was moving into Mannerism and the Baroque by the 1550s or earlier. In contrast, the English Renaissance can only be said to begin, shakily, in the 1520s, and continued until perhaps 1620.

Literature

England had a strong tradition of literature in the English vernacular, which gradually increased as English use of the printing press became common by the mid 16th century. By the time of Elizabethan literature a vigorous literary culture in both drama and poetry included poets such as Edmund Spenser, whose verse epic *The Faerie Queene* had a strong influence on English literature but was eventually overshadowed by the lyrics of William Shakespeare, Thomas Wyatt and others. Typically, the works of these playwrights and poets circulated in manuscript form for some time before they were published, and above all the plays of English Renaissance theatre were the outstanding legacy of the period.

The English theatre scene, which performed both for the court and nobility in private performances, and a very wide public in the theatres, was the most crowded in Europe, with a host of other playwrights as well as the giant figures of Christopher Marlowe, Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. Elizabeth herself was a product of Renaissance humanism trained by Roger Ascham, and wrote occasional poems such as *On Monsieur's Departure* at critical moments of her life. Philosophers and intellectuals included Thomas More and Francis Bacon. All the 16th century Tudor monarchs were highly educated, as was much of the nobility, and Italian literature had a considerable following, providing the sources for many of Shakespeare's plays. English thought advanced towards modern science with the Baconian Method, a forerunner of the Scientific Method. The language of the
Criticism of the idea of the English Renaissance

The notion of calling this period “The Renaissance” is a modern invention, having been popularized by the historian Jacob Burckhardt in the 19th century. The idea of the Renaissance has come under increased criticism by many cultural historians, and some have contended that the “English Renaissance” has no real tie with the artistic achievements and aims of the Italian artists (Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Donatello) who are closely identified with Renaissance visual art. Whereas from the perspective of literary history, England had already experienced a flourishing of literature over 200 years before the time of Shakespeare, during the last decades of the fourteenth century. Geoffrey Chaucer’s popularizing of English as a medium of literary composition rather than Latin occurred only 50 years after Dante had started using Italian for serious poetry, and Chaucer translated works by both Boccaccio and Petrarch into Middle English. At the same time William Langland, author of *Piers Plowman*, and John Gower were also writing in English. In the fifteenth century, Thomas Malory, author of *Le Morte D’Arthur*, was a notable figure. For this reason, scholars find the singularity of the period called the English Renaissance questionable; C. S. Lewis, a professor of Medieval and Renaissance literature at Oxford and Cambridge, famously remarked to a colleague that he had “discovered” that there was no English Renaissance, and that if there had been one, it had “no effect whatsoever.”

Historians have also begun to consider the word “Renaissance” as an unnecessarily loaded word that implies an unambiguously positive “rebirth” from the supposedly more primitive Middle Ages. Some historians have asked the question “a renaissance for whom?,” pointing out, for example, that the status of women in society arguably declined during the Renaissance. Many historians and cultural historians now prefer to use the term “early modern” for this period, a term that highlights the period as a transitional one that led to the modern world, but attempts to avoid positive or negative connotations.

Other cultural historians have countered that, regardless of whether the name “renaissance” is apt, there was undeniably an artistic flowering in England under the Tudor monarchs, culminating in Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

Major English Renaissance authors

The major literary figures in the English Renaissance include:

- Francis Bacon
- Francis Beaumont
- George Chapman
- Thomas Dekker
- John Donne
- John Fletcher
- John Ford
- Ben Jonson
- Thomas Kyd
- Christopher Marlowe
- Philip Massinger
- Thomas Middleton
- Thomas More
- Thomas Nashe
- William Rowley
Renaissance sonnets traditionally come in two types:

1. The **Italian** (or *Petrarchan*) sonnet contains the following features:
   - An **octave** (eight lines) rhyming **abbaabba**
   - A **sestet** (six lines) of varying rhyme patterns, such as **cdecde** or **cdccdc**
   - Sir Thomas Wyatt in the early 1500s first introduced the Italian sonnet into English. It rapidly became all the rage.

2. The **English** (or *Shakespearean*) sonnet contains the following features:
   - Three **quatrains** (sections of four lines, also called “staves”): **abab cdcd efef**
   - A concluding **couplet** (two rhyming lines): **gg**. Sometimes, the concluding couplet after the turn is called the **gemel**.

Note that, though this type of sonnet is called “Shakespearean,” Shakespeare did not invent it. It was actually introduced by the Earl of Surrey and other English experimenters in the 1500s. Normally, the first part of the sonnet introduces a problem or question of some sort, which is developed in the first octave (in Italian sonnets) or the first three quatrains (in English sonnets). Then, there is a change in direction, thought, or emotion called a **volta** or a **turn**. The last sestet (in Italian sonnets) or the final couplet (in English sonnets) illustrates this change in direction, thought, or emotion.

**ITALIAN SONNET**

```
A
B
B
A   (Octave)
A
B
B
A
--- --- --- (Volta, or Turn)
```
ENGLISH SONNET

(Quatrain #1)

(Quatrain #2)

(Quatrain #3)

(Volta, or Turn)

(Couplet)

SONNET #1

1. From fairest creatures we desire increase, (a)
2. That thereby beauty’s rose might never die, (b)
3. But as the riper should by time decrease (a)
4. His tender heir might bear his memory (b) (quatrain 1)
5. But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes (c)
6. Feed’st thy light’s flame with self-substantial fuel, (d)
7. Making a famine where abundance lies, (c)
8. Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel. (d) (quatrain 2)
9. Thou that art now the world’s fresh ornament, (e)
10. And only herald to the gaudy spring, (f)
11. Within thine own bud buriest thy content, (e)
12. And, tender chorl, mak’st waste in niggarding: (f) (quatrain 3)
13. Pity the world, or else this glutton be, (g) (turn/volta)
14. To eat the world’s due, by the grave and thee. (g)

SONNET #29

1. When, in disgrace with Fortune and men’s eyes (a)
2. I all alone beweep my outcast state, (b)
3. And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries, (a)
4. And look upon myself, and curse my fate, (b) (quatrain 1)
5. Wishing me like to one more rich in hope, (c)
6. Featured like him, like him with friends possessed, (d)
7. Desiring this man’s art, and that man’s scope, (c)
8. With what I most enjoy contented least; (d) (quatrain 2)
9. Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising, (e)
10. Haply, I think on thee, and then my state, (f)
11. Like to the lark at break of day arising (e)
12. From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven’s gate; (f) (quatrain 3)
13. For thy sweet love rememb’red such wealth brings, (g) (turn/volta)
14. That then I scorn to change my state with kings. (g)

WHOSO LIST TO HUNT

By Sir Thomas Wyatt

Whoso list to hunt? I know where is an hind!
But as for me, alas! I may no more,
The vain travail hath wearied me so sore;
I am of them that furthest come behind.
Yet may I by no means my wearied mind
Draw from the deer; but as she fleeth afore
Fainting I follow; I leave off therefore,
Since in a net I seek to hold the wind.
Who list her hunt, I put him out of doubt
As well as I, may spend his time in vain!
And graven with diamonds in letters plain,
There is written her fair neck round about;
"Noli me tangere; for Cæsar’s I am,
And wild for to hold, though I seem tame."
THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE.

Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and vallies, dales and fields,
Woods or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cup of flowers and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the finest wooll
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair-linèd slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy-buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs;
An if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

The shepherd-swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me, and be my love.

THE FLEA

By John Donne

MARKE but this flea, and marke in this,
How little that which thou deny’st me is;
It suck’d me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea, our two bloods mingled bee;
Thou know'st that this cannot be said
A sinne, nor shame, nor losse of maidenhead,
   Yet this enjoyes before it woee,
   And pamper'd swells with one blood made of two,
   And this, alas, is more then wee would doe.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where wee almost, yea more then maryed are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;
Though parents grudge, and you, w'are met,
15And cloysterd in these living walls of Jet.
   Though use make you apt to kill mee,
   Let not to that, selfe murder added bee,
   And sacrilege, three sinnes in killing three.

Cruell and sodaine, hast thou since
Purpled thy naile, in blood of innocence?
Wherein could this flea guilty bee,
Except in that drop which it suckt from thee?
Yet thou triumph'st, and saist that thou
Find'st not thy selfe, nor mee the weaker now;
   'Tis true, then learne how false, feares bee;
   Just so much honor, when thou yeeld'st to mee,
   Will wast, as this flea's death tooke life from thee.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Background and Interpretation

*Poets.org* article on “How to Read a Poem”
This article provides useful insights about how to approach reading a poem.

*Luminarium’s article on “The Life of Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542)”
A brief biography of Sir Thomas Wyatt from luminarium.org.

*Luminarium’s article on “Thomas Campion (1567-1620)”
A brief biography of Thomas Campion from luminarium.org.

*Luminarium’s article on “John Donne (1572-1631)”
A brief biography of John Donne from luminarium.org.

Audio Files

Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/rLfNieHfJrg

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- Christopher Marlowe - The Passionate Shepherd to His Love. Authored by: Daniel Tinsley. Located at: https://youtu.be/h_F59JL75aQ. License: All Rights Reserved. License Terms: Standard YouTube License
William Shakespeare (26 April 1564 (baptised) – 23 April 1616) was an English poet, playwright, and actor, widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's pre-eminent dramatist. He is often called England's national poet and the “Bard of Avon”. His extant works, including some collaborations, consist of around 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems, and a few other verses, of which the authorship of some is uncertain. His plays have been translated into every major living language and are performed more often than those of any other playwright.

Shakespeare was born and brought up in Stratford-upon-Avon. At the age of 18, he married Anne Hathaway, with whom he had three children: Susanna, and twins Hamnet and Judith. Between 1585 and 1592, he began a successful career in London as an actor, writer, and part-owner of a playing company called the Lord Chamberlain’s Men, later known as the King’s Men. He appears to have retired to Stratford around 1613 at age 49, where he died three years later. Few records of Shakespeare’s private life survive, and there has been considerable speculation about such matters as his physical appearance, sexuality, religious beliefs, and whether the works attributed to him were written by others.

Shakespeare produced most of his known work between 1589 and 1613. His early plays were mainly comedies and histories and these works remain regarded as some of the best work produced in these genres. He then wrote mainly tragedies until about 1608, including Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, and Macbeth, considered some of the finest works in the English language. In his last phase, he wrote tragicomedies, also known as romances, and collaborated with other playwrights.

Many of his plays were published in editions of varying quality and accuracy during his lifetime. In 1623, John Heminges and Henry Condell, two friends and fellow actors of Shakespeare, published the First Folio, a collected edition of his dramatic works that included all but two of the plays now recognised as Shakespeare’s. It was prefaced with a poem by Ben Jonson, in which Shakespeare is hailed, presciently, as “not of an age, but for all time”. In the 20th and 21st centuries, his work has been repeatedly adopted and rediscovered by new movements in scholarship and performance. His plays remain highly popular today and are constantly studied, performed, and reinterpreted in diverse cultural and political contexts throughout the world.

Additional information on Shakespeare’s life, work, and influence can be found here.
ACT I

DUKE ORSINO's palace.

[Enter DUKE ORSINO, CURIO, and other Lords; Musicians attending]

**Orsino.** If music be the food of love, play on;
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.
That strain again! it had a dying fall: 5
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour! Enough; no more:
'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.
O spirit of love! how quick and fresh art thou, 10
That, notwithstanding thy capacity
Receiveth as the sea, nought enters there,
Of what validity and pitch soe'er,
But falls into abatement and low price,
Even in a minute: so full of shapes is fancy 15
That it alone is high fantastical.

**Curio.** Will you go hunt, my lord?

**Orsino.** What, Curio?

**Curio.** The hart.

**Orsino.** Why, so I do, the noblest that I have: 20
O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first,
Methought she purged the air of pestilence!
That instant was I turn’d into a hart;
And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
E’er since pursue me. 25

[Enter VALENTINE]

How now! what news from her?

Valentine. So please my lord, I might not be admitted;
But from her handmaid do return this answer:
The element itself, till seven years’ heat, 30
Shall not behold her face at ample view;
But, like a cloistress, she will veiled walk
And water once a day her chamber round
With eye-offending brine: all this to season
A brother’s dead love, which she would keep fresh 35
And lasting in her sad remembrance.

Orsino. O, she that hath a heart of that fine frame
To pay this debt of love but to a brother,
How will she love, when the rich golden shaft
Hath kill’d the flock of all affections else 40
That live in her; when liver, brain and heart,
These sovereign thrones, are all supplied, and fill’d
Her sweet perfections with one self king!
Away before me to sweet beds of flowers:
Love-thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers.45

Act I, Scene 2

The sea-coast.

[Enter VIOLA, a Captain, and Sailors]

Viola. What country, friends, is this?

Captain. This is Illyria, lady.

Viola. And what should I do in Illyria? 50
My brother he is in Elysium.
Perchance he is not drown’d: what think you, sailors?

Captain. It is perchance that you yourself were saved.

Viola. O my poor brother! and so perchance may he be.

Captain. True, madam: and, to comfort you with chance, 55
Assure yourself, after our ship did split,
When you and those poor number saved with you
Hung on our driving boat, I saw your brother,
Most provident in peril, bind himself,
Courage and hope both teaching him the practise, 60
To a strong mast that lived upon the sea;
Where, like Arion on the dolphin’s back,
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves
So long as I could see.

Viola. For saying so, there’s gold: 65
Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope,
Where to thy speech serves for authority,
The like of him. Know'st thou this country?

_Captain._ Ay, madam, well; for I was bred and born
Not three hours' travel from this very place. 70

_Viola._ Who governs here?

_Captain._ A noble duke, in nature as in name.

_Viola._ What is the name?

_Captain._ Orsino.

_Viola._ Orsino! I have heard my father name him: 75
He was a bachelor then.

_Captain._ And so is now, or was so very late;
For but a month ago I went from hence,
And then 'twas fresh in murmur,—as, you know,
What great ones do the less will prattle of,— 80
That he did seek the love of fair Olivia.

_Viola._ What's she?

_Captain._ A virtuous maid, the daughter of a count
That died some twelvemonth since, then leaving her
In the protection of his son, her brother, 85
Who shortly also died: for whose dear love,
They say, she hath abjured the company
And sight of men.

_Viola._ O that I served that lady
And might not be delivered to the world, 90
Till I had made mine own occasion mellow,
What my estate is!

_Captain._ That were hard to compass;
Because she will admit no kind of suit,
No, not the duke's. 95

_Viola._ There is a fair behavior in thee, captain;
And though that nature with a beauteous wall
Doth oft close in pollution, yet of thee
I will believe thou hast a mind that suits
With this thy fair and outward character. 100
I prithee, and I'll pay thee bounteously,
Conceal me what I am, and be my aid
For such disguise as haply shall become
The form of my intent. I'll serve this duke:
Thou shalt present me as an eunuch to him: 105
It may be worth thy pains; for I can sing
And speak to him in many sorts of music
That will allow me very worth his service.
What else may hap to time I will commit;
Only shape thou thy silence to my wit. 110

_Captain._ Be you his eunuch, and your mute I'll be:
When my tongue blabs, then let mine eyes not see.

_Viola._ I thank thee: lead me on.
OLIVIA’S house.

[Enter SIR TOBY BELCH and MARIA]

Sir Toby Belch. What a plague means my niece, to take the death of her brother thus? I am sure care’s an enemy to life.

Maria. By my troth, Sir Toby, you must come in earlier o’ nights: your cousin, my lady, takes great exceptions to your ill hours.  

Sir Toby Belch. Why, let her except, before excepted.

Maria. Ay, but you must confine yourself within the modest limits of order.

Sir Toby Belch. Confine! I’ll confine myself no finer than I am: these clothes are good enough to drink in; and so be these boots too: an they be not, let them hang themselves in their own straps.

Maria. That quaffing and drinking will undo you: I heard my lady talk of it yesterday; and of a foolish knight that you brought in one night here to be her wooer.

Sir Toby Belch. Who, Sir Andrew Aguecheek?

Maria. Ay, he.

Sir Toby Belch. He’s as tall a man as any’s in Illyria.

Maria. What’s that to the purpose?

Sir Toby Belch. Why, he has three thousand ducats a year.

Maria. Ay, but he’ll have but a year in all these ducats: he’s a very fool and a prodigal.

Sir Toby Belch. Fie, that you’ll say so! he plays o’ the viol-de-gamboys, and speaks three or four languages word for word without book, and hath all the good gifts of nature.

Maria. He hath indeed, almost natural: for besides that he’s a fool, he’s a great quarreller: and but that he hath the gift of a coward to allay the gust he hath in quarrelling, ’tis thought among the prudent he would quickly have the gift of a grave.

Sir Toby Belch. By this hand, they are scoundrels and subtractors that say so of him. Who are they?

Maria. They that add, moreover, he’s drunk nightly in your company.
Sir Toby Belch. With drinking healths to my niece: I'll drink to 150
her as long as there is a passage in my throat and
drink in Illyria: he's a coward and a coystrill
that will not drink to my niece till his brains turn
o’ the toe like a parish-top. What, wench!
Castiliano vulgo! for here comes Sir Andrew Agueface.155

[Enter SIR ANDREW]

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Sir Toby Belch! how now, Sir Toby Belch!

Sir Toby Belch. Sweet Sir Andrew!

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Bless you, fair shrew.

Maria. And you too, sir.160

Sir Toby Belch. Accost, Sir Andrew, accost.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. What’s that?

Sir Toby Belch. My niece’s chambermaid.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Good Mistress Accost, I desire better acquaintance.

Maria. My name is Mary, sir.165

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Good Mistress Mary Accost,—

Sir Toby Belch. You mistake, knight; 'accost' is front her, board
her, woo her, assail her.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. By my troth, I would not undertake her in this
company. Is that the meaning of 'accost'?170

Maria. Fare you well, gentlemen.

Sir Toby Belch. An thou let part so, Sir Andrew, would thou mightst
never draw sword again.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. An you part so, mistress, I would I might never
draw sword again. Fair lady, do you think you have 175
fools in hand?

Maria. Sir, I have not you by the hand.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Marry, but you shall have; and here’s my hand.

Maria. Now, sir, ‘thought is free.’ I pray you, bring
your hand to the buttery-bar and let it drink.180

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Wherefore, sweet-heart? what’s your metaphor?

Maria. It’s dry, sir.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Why, I think so: I am not such an ass but I can
keep my hand dry. But what’s your jest?

Maria. A dry jest, sir.185

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Are you full of them?
Maria. Ay, sir, I have them at my fingers’ ends: marry, now I let go your hand, I am barren.

[Exit]

Sir Toby Belch. O knight thou lackest a cup of canary: when did I see thee so put down?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Never in your life, I think; unless you see canary put me down. Methinks sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has: but I am a great eater of beef and I believe that does harm to my wit.

Sir Toby Belch. No question.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. An I thought that, I‘ld forswear it. I’ll ride home to-morrow, Sir Toby.

Sir Toby Belch. Pourquoi, my dear knight?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. What is ‘Pourquoi’? do or not do? I would I had bestowed that time in the tongues that I have in fencing, dancing and bear-baiting: O, had I but followed the arts!

Sir Toby Belch. Then hadst thou had an excellent head of hair.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Why, would that have mended my hair?

Sir Toby Belch. Past question; for thou seest it will not curl by nature.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. But it becomes me well enough, does’t not?

Sir Toby Belch. Excellent; it hangs like flax on a distaff; and I hope to see a housewife take thee between her legs and spin it off.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Faith, I’ll home to-morrow, Sir Toby: your niece will not be seen; or if she be, it’s four to one she’ll none of me: the count himself here hard by woos her.

Sir Toby Belch. She’ll none o’ the count: she’ll not match above her degree, neither in estate, years, nor wit; I have heard her swear’t. Tut, there’s life in’t, man.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. I’ll stay a month longer. I am a fellow o’ the strangest mind i’ the world; I delight in masques and revels sometimes altogether.

Sir Toby Belch. Art thou good at these kickshawses, knight?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. As any man in Illyria, whatsoever he be, under the degree of my betters; and yet I will not compare with an old man.

Sir Toby Belch. What is thy excellence in a galliard, knight?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Faith, I can cut a caper.

Sir Toby Belch. And I can cut the mutton to’ t.
Sir Andrew Aguecheek. And I think I have the back-trick simply as strong as any man in Illyria.

Sir Toby Belch. Wherefore are these things hid? wherefore have 230 these gifts a curtain before 'em? are they like to take dust, like Mistress Mall’s picture? why dost thou not go to church in a galliard and come home in a coranto? My very walk should be a jig; I would not so much as make water but in a sink-a-pace. What 235 dost thou mean? Is it a world to hide virtues in? I did think, by the excellent constitution of thy leg, it was formed under the star of a galliard.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Ay, ’tis strong, and it does indifferent well in a flame-coloured stock. Shall we set about some revels?240

Sir Toby Belch. What shall we do else? were we not born under Taurus?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Taurus! That’s sides and heart.

Sir Toby Belch. No, sir; it is legs and thighs. Let me see the caper; ha! higher: ha, ha! excellent!

[Exeunt]

Act I, Scene 4

DUKE ORSINO’s palace.

[Enter VALENTINE and VIOLA in man’s attire]

Valentine. If the duke continue these favours towards you, Cesario, you are like to be much advanced: he hath known you but three days, and already you are no stranger.

Viola. You either fear his humour or my negligence, that 250 you call in question the continuance of his love: is he inconstant, sir, in his favours?

Valentine. No, believe me.

Viola. I thank you. Here comes the count.

[Enter DUKE ORSINO, CURIO, and Attendants]

Orsino. Who saw Cesario, ho?

Viola. On your attendance, my lord; here.

Orsino. Stand you a while aloof, Cesario, Thou know’st no less but all; I have unclasp’d To thee the book even of my secret soul: 260 Therefore, good youth, address thy gait unto her; Be not denied access, stand at her doors, And tell them, there thy fixed foot shall grow Till thou have audience.
Viola. Sure, my noble lord, 265
If she be so abandon’d to her sorrow
As it is spoke, she never will admit me.

Orsino. Be clamorous and leap all civil bounds
Rather than make unprofited return.

Viola. Say I do speak with her, my lord, what then?270

Orsino. O, then unfold the passion of my love,
Surprise her with discourse of my dear faith:
It shall become thee well to act my woes;
She will attend it better in thy youth
Than in a nuncio’s of more grave aspect.275

Viola. I think not so, my lord.

Orsino. Dear lad, believe it;
For they shall yet belie thy happy years,
That say thou art a man: Diana’s lip
Is not more smooth and rubious; thy small pipe 280
Is as the maiden’s organ, shrill and sound,
And all is semblative a woman’s part.
I know thy constellation is right apt
For this affair. Some four or five attend him;
All, if you will; for I myself am best 285
When least in company. Prosper well in this,
And thou shalt live as freely as thy lord,
To call his fortunes thine.

Viola. I’ll do my best
To woo your lady: 290
[Aside]
yet, a barful strife!
Whoe’er I woo, myself would be his wife.

[Exeunt]

Act I, Scene 5

OLIVIA’S house.

[Enter MARIA and Clown]

Maria. Nay, either tell me where thou hast been, or I will
not open my lips so wide as a bristle may enter in
way of thy excuse: my lady will hang thee for thy absence.

Feste. Let her hang me: he that is well hanged in this
world needs to fear no colours.300

Maria. Make that good.

Feste. He shall see none to fear.

Maria. A good lenten answer: I can tell thee where that
saying was born, of ‘I fear no colours.’

Feste. Where, good Mistress Mary?305
Maria. In the wars; and that may you be bold to say in your foolery.

Feste. Well, God give them wisdom that have it; and those that are fools, let them use their talents.

Maria. Yet you will be hanged for being so long absent; or, to be turned away, is not that as good as a hanging to you?310

Feste. Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage; and, for turning away, let summer bear it out.

Maria. You are resolute, then?

Feste. Not so, neither; but I am resolved on two points.

Maria. That if one break, the other will hold; or, if both 315 break, your gaskins fall.

Feste. Apt, in good faith; very apt. Well, go thy way; if Sir Toby would leave drinking, thou wert as witty a piece of Eve’s flesh as any in Illyria.

Maria. Peace, you rogue, no more o’ that. Here comes my 320 lady: make your excuse wisely, you were best.

[Exit]

Feste. Wit, an’t be thy will, put me into good fooling! Those wits, that think they have thee, do very oft prove fools; and I, that am sure I lack thee, may 325 pass for a wise man: for what says Quinapalus? ‘Better a witty fool, than a foolish wit.’

[Enter OLIVIA with MALVOLIO]

God bless thee, lady!

Olivia. Take the fool away.330

Feste. Do you not hear, fellows? Take away the lady.

Olivia. Go to, you’re a dry fool; I’ll no more of you: besides, you grow dishonest.

Feste. Two faults, madonna, that drink and good counsel will amend: for give the dry fool drink, then is 335 the fool not dry: bid the dishonest man mend himself; if he mend, he is no longer dishonest; if he cannot, let the botcher mend him. Any thing that’s mended is but patched: virtue that transgresses is but patched with sin; and sin that 340 amends is but patched with virtue. If that this simple syllogism will serve, so; if it will not, what remedy? As there is no true cuckold but calamity, so beauty’s a flower. The lady bade take away the fool; therefore, I say again, take her away.345

Olivia. Sir, I bade them take away you.

Feste. Misprision in the highest degree! Lady, cucullus non facit monachum; that’s as much to say as I wear not motley in my brain. Good madonna, give me leave to prove you a fool.350
Olivia. Can you do it?

Feste. Dexterously, good madonna.

Olivia. Make your proof.

Feste. I must catechise you for it, madonna: good my mouse of virtue, answer me.355

Olivia. Well, sir, for want of other idleness, I'll bide your proof.

Feste. Good madonna, why mournest thou?

Olivia. Good fool, for my brother's death.

Feste. I think his soul is in hell, madonna.

Olivia. I know his soul is in heaven, fool.360

Feste. The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul being in heaven. Take away the fool, gentlemen.

Olivia. What think you of this fool, Malvolio? doth he not mend?

Malvolio. Yes, and shall do till the pangs of death shake him: infirmity, that decays the wise, doth ever make the 365 better fool.

Feste. God send you, sir, a speedy infirmity, for the better increasing your folly! Sir Toby will be sworn that I am no fox; but he will not pass his word for two pence that you are no fool.370

Olivia. How say you to that, Malvolio?

Malvolio. I marvel your ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal: I saw him put down the other day with an ordinary fool that has no more brain than a stone. Look you now, he's out of his guard 375 already; unless you laugh and minister occasion to him, he is gagged. I protest, I take these wise men, that crow so at these set kind of fools, no better than the fools' zanies.

Olivia. Oh, you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and taste 380 with a distempered appetite. To be generous, guiltless and of free disposition, is to take those things for bird-bolts that you deem cannon-bullets: there is no slander in an allowed fool, though he do nothing but rail; nor no railing in a known discreet 385 man, though he do nothing but reprove.

Feste. Now Mercury endue thee with leasing, for thou speakest well of fools!

[Re-enter MARIA]

Maria. Madam, there is at the gate a young gentleman much 390 desires to speak with you.

Olivia. From the Count Orsino, is it?
Maria. I know not, madam: 'tis a fair young man, and well attended.

Olivia. Who of my people hold him in delay?

Maria. Sir Toby, madam, your kinsman.395

Olivia Fetch him off, I pray you; he speaks nothing but madman: fie on him! [Exit MARIA]

Go you, Malvolio: if it be a suit from the count, I am sick, or not at home; what you will, to dismiss it. 400 [Exit MALVOLIO]

Now you see, sir, how your fooling grows old, and people dislike it.

Feste. Thou hast spoke for us, madonna, as if thy eldest son should be a fool; whose skull Jove cram with 405 brains! for,—here he comes,—one of thy kin has a most weak pia mater.

[Enter SIR TOBY BELCH]

Olivia. By mine honour, half drunk. What is he at the gate, cousin?

Sir Toby Belch. A gentleman.410

Olivia. A gentleman! what gentleman?

Sir Toby Belch. 'Tis a gentle man here—a plague o' these pickle-herring! How now, sot!

Feste. Good Sir Toby!

Olivia. Cousin, cousin, how have you come so early by this lethargy?415

Sir Toby Belch. Lechery! I defy lechery. There's one at the gate.

Olivia. Ay, marry, what is he?

Sir Toby Belch. Let him be the devil, an he will, I care not: give me faith, say I. Well, it's all one.

[Exit]

Olivia. What's a drunken man like, fool?

Feste. Like a drowned man, a fool and a mad man: one draught above heat makes him a fool; the second mads him; and a third drowns him.

Olivia. Go thou and seek the crowner, and let him sit o' my 425 coz; for he's in the third degree of drink, he's drowned: go, look after him.

Feste. He is but mad yet, madonna; and the fool shall look to the madman.

[Exit]

[Re-enter MALVOLIO]

Malvolio. Madam, yond young fellow swears he will speak with you. I told him you were sick; he takes on him to
understand so much, and therefore comes to speak with you. I told him you were asleep; he seems to 435 have a foreknowledge of that too, and therefore comes to speak with you. What is to be said to him, lady? he’s fortified against any denial.

**Olivia.** Tell him he shall not speak with me.

**Malvolio.** Has been told so; and he says, he’ll stand at your 440 door like a sheriff’s post, and be the supporter to a bench, but he’ll speak with you.

**Olivia.** What kind o’ man is he?

**Malvolio.** Why, of mankind.

**Olivia.** What manner of man?445

**Malvolio.** Of very ill manner; he’ll speak with you, will you or no.

**Olivia.** Of what personage and years is he?

**Malvolio.** Not yet old enough for a man, nor young enough for a boy; as a squash is before ’tis a peascod, or a cooling when ’tis almost an apple; ’tis with him 450 in standing water, between boy and man. He is very well-favoured and he speaks very shrewishly; one would think his mother’s milk were scarce out of him.

**Olivia.** Let him approach: call in my gentlewoman.

**Malvolio.** Gentlewoman, my lady calls.455

[Exit]

[Re-enter MARIA]

**Olivia.** Give me my veil: come, throw it o’er my face. We’ll once more hear Orsino’s embassy.

[Enter VIOLA, and Attendants]

**Viola.** The honourable lady of the house, which is she?

**Olivia.** Speak to me; I shall answer for her. Your will?

**Viola.** Most radiant, exquisite and unmatchable beauty,—I pray you, tell me if this be the lady of the house, 465 for I never saw her: I would be loath to cast away my speech, for besides that it is excellently well penned, I have taken great pains to con it. Good beauties, let me sustain no scorn; I am very comptible, even to the least sinister usage.470

**Olivia.** Whence came you, sir?

**Viola.** I can say little more than I have studied, and that question’s out of my part. Good gentle one, give me modest assurance if you be the lady of the house, that I may proceed in my speech.475

**Olivia.** Are you a comedian?
Viola. No, my profound heart: and yet, by the very fangs of malice I swear, I am not that I play. Are you the lady of the house?

Olivia. If I do not usurp myself, I am.480

Viola. Most certain, if you are she, you do usurp yourself; for what is yours to bestow is not yours to reserve. But this is from my commission: I will on with my speech in your praise, and then show you the heart of my message.485

Olivia. Come to what is important in't: I forgive you the praise.

Viola. Alas, I took great pains to study it, and 'tis poetical.

Olivia. It is the more like to be feigned: I pray you, keep it in. I heard you were saucy at my gates, and allowed your approach rather to wonder at you 490 than to hear you. If you be not mad, be gone; if you have reason, be brief: 'tis not that time of moon with me to make one in so skipping a dialogue.

Maria. Will you hoist sail, sir? here lies your way.

Viola. No, good swabber; I am to hull here a little 495 longer. Some mollification for your giant, sweet lady. Tell me your mind: I am a messenger.

Olivia. Sure, you have some hideous matter to deliver, when the courtesy of it is so fearful. Speak your office.

Viola. It alone concerns your ear. I bring no overture of 500 war, no taxation of homage: I hold the olive in my hand; my words are as fun of peace as matter.

Olivia. Yet you began rudely. What are you? what would you?

Viola. The rudeness that hath appeared in me have I learned from my entertainment. What I am, and what I 505 would, are as secret as maidenhead; to your ears, divinity, to any other's, profanation.

Olivia. Give us the place alone: we will hear this divinity. [Exeunt MARIA and Attendants]

Now, sir, what is your text?510

Viola. Most sweet lady,—

Olivia. A comfortable doctrine, and much may be said of it. Where lies your text?

Viola. In Orsino's bosom.

Olivia. In his bosom! In what chapter of his bosom?515

Viola. To answer by the method, in the first of his heart.

Olivia. O, I have read it: it is heresy. Have you no more to say?

Viola. Good madam, let me see your face.
Olivia. Have you any commission from your lord to negotiate with my face? You are now out of your text: but we will draw the curtain and show you the picture. Look you, sir, such a one I was this present: is't not well done?

[Unveiling]

Viola. Excellently done, if God did all.

Olivia. 'Tis in grain, sir; 'twill endure wind and weather.

Viola. 'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on: Lady, you are the cruellest she alive, If you will lead these graces to the grave And leave the world no copy.

Olivia. O, sir, I will not be so hard-hearted; I will give out divers schedules of my beauty: it shall be inventoried, and every particle and utensil labelled to my will: as, item, two lips, indifferent red; item, two grey eyes, with lids to them; item, one neck, one chin, and so forth. Were you sent hither to praise me?

Viola. I see you what you are, you are too proud; But, if you were the devil, you are fair. My lord and master loves you: O, such love Could be but recompensed, though you were crown'd The nonpareil of beauty!

Olivia. How does he love me?

Viola. With adorations, fertile tears, With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire.

Olivia. Your lord does know my mind; I cannot love him: Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble, Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth; In voices well divulged, free, learn'd and valiant; And in dimension and the shape of nature A gracious person: but yet I cannot love him; He might have took his answer long ago.

Viola. If I did love you in my master's flame, With such a suffering, such a deadly life, In your denial I would find no sense; I would not understand it.

Olivia. Why, what would you?

Viola. Make me a willow cabin at your gate, And call upon my soul within the house: Write loyal cantons of contemned love And sing them loud even in the dead of night; Halloo your name to the reverberate hills And make the babbling gossip of the air Cry out 'Olivia!' O, You should not rest Between the elements of air and earth, But you should pity me!
Olivia. You might do much.
What is your parentage?

Viola. Above my fortunes, yet my state is well: 570
I am a gentleman.

Olivia. Get you to your lord;
I cannot love him: let him send no more;
Unless, per chance, you come to me again,
To tell me how he takes it. Fare you well: 575
I thank you for your pains: spend this for me.

Viola. I am no fee’d post, lady; keep your purse:
My master, not myself, lacks recompense.
Love make his heart of flint that you shall love;
And let your fervor, like my master’s, be 580
Placed in contempt! Farewell, fair cruelty.

[Exit]

Olivia. ‘What is your parentage?’
‘Above my fortunes, yet my state is well:
I am a gentleman.’ I’ll be sworn thou art; 585
Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions and spirit,
Do give thee five-fold blazon: not too fast:
soft, soft!
Unless the master were the man. How now!
Even so quickly may one catch the plague? 590
Methinks I feel this youth’s perfections
With an invisible and subtle stealth
To creep in at mine eyes. Well, let it be.
What ho, Malvolio!

[Re-enter MALVOLIO]

Malvolio. Here, madam, at your service.

Olivia. Run after that same peevish messenger,
The county’s man: he left this ring behind him,
Would I or not: tell him I’ll none of it.
Desire him not to flatter with his lord, 600
Nor hold him up with hopes; I am not for him:
If that the youth will come this way to-morrow,
I’ll give him reasons for’t: hie thee, Malvolio.

Malvolio. Madam, I will.

[Exit]

Olivia. I do I know not what, and fear to find
Mine eye too great a flatterer for my mind.
Fate, show thy force: ourselves we do not owe;
What is decreed must be, and be this so.

[Exit]
ACT II

Twelfth Night, Act II, Scene IV, 1850

Act II, Scene 1

The sea-coast.

[Enter ANTONIO and SEBASTIAN]

Antonio. Will you stay no longer? nor will you not that I go with you?

Sebastian. By your patience, no. My stars shine darkly over me: the malignancy of my fate might perhaps distemper yours; therefore I shall crave of you your leave that I may bear my evils alone: it were a bad recompense for your love, to lay any of them on you.

Sebastian. No, sooth, sir: my determinate voyage is mere extravagancy. But I perceive in you so excellent a touch of modesty, that you will not extort from me what I am willing to keep in; therefore it charges me in manners the rather to express myself. You must know of me then, Antonio, my name is Sebastian, which I called Roderigo. My father was that Sebastian of Messaline, whom I know you have heard of. He left behind him myself and a sister, both born in an hour: if the heavens had been pleased, would we had so ended! but you, sir, altered that; for some hour before you took me from the breach of the sea was my sister drowned.

Antonio. Alas the day!

Sebastian. A lady, sir, though it was said she much resembled me, was yet of many accounted beautiful: but, though I could not with such estimable wonder overfar believe that, yet thus far I will boldly publish her; she bore a mind that envy could not but
call fair. She is drowned already, sir, with salt
water, though I seem to drown her remembrance again with more.

Antonio. Pardon me, sir, your bad entertainment.640

Sebastian. O good Antonio, forgive me your trouble.

Antonio. If you will not murder me for my love, let me be
your servant.

Sebastian. If you will not undo what you have done, that is,
killed him whom you have recovered, desire it not. 645
Fare ye well at once: my bosom is full of kindness,
and I am yet so near the manners of my mother, that
upon the least occasion more mine eyes will tell
tales of me. I am bound to the Count Orsino’s court: farewell.

[Exit]

Antonio. The gentleness of all the gods go with thee!
I have many enemies in Orsino’s court,
Else would I very shortly see thee there.
But, come what may, I do adore thee so,
That danger shall seem sport, and I will go.655

[Exit]

Act II, Scene 2

A street.

[Enter VIOLA, MALVOLIO following]

Malvolio. Were not you even now with the Countess Olivia?

Viola. Even now, sir; on a moderate pace I have since
arrived but hither.660

Malvolio. She returns this ring to you, sir: you might have
saved me my pains, to have taken it away yourself.
She adds, moreover, that you should put your lord
into a desperate assurance she will none of him:
and one thing more, that you be never so hardy to 665
come again in his affairs, unless it be to report
your lord’s taking of this. Receive it so.

Viola. She took the ring of me: I’ll none of it.

Malvolio. Come, sir, you peevishly threw it to her; and her
will is, it should be so returned: if it be worth 670
stooping for, there it lies in your eye; if not, be
it his that finds it.

[Exit]

Viola. I left no ring with her: what means this lady?
Fortune forbid my outside have not charm’d her! 675
She made good view of me; indeed, so much,
That sure methought her eyes had lost her tongue,
For she did speak in starts distractedly.
She loves me, sure; the cunning of her passion
Invites me in this churlish messenger. 680
None of my lord’s ring! why, he sent her none.
I am the man: if it be so, as ’tis,
Poor lady, she were better love a dream.
Disguise, I see, thou art a wickedness,
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much. 685
How easy is it for the proper-false
In women’s waxy hearts to set their forms!
Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we!
For such as we are made of, such we be.
How will this fadge? my master loves her dearly; 690
And I, poor monster, fond as much on him;
And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me.
What will become of this? As I am man,
My state is desperate for my master’s love;
As I am woman,—now alas the day!— 695
What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe!
O time! thou must untangle this, not I;
It is too hard a knot for me to untie!

[Exit]

Act II, Scene 3

OLIVIA’s house.

[Enter SIR TOBY BELCH and SIR ANDREW]

Sir Toby Belch. Approach, Sir Andrew: not to be abed after midnight is to be up betimes; and ‘diluculo surgere,’ thou know’st,—

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Nay, my troth, I know not: but I know, to be up late is to be up late.705

Sir Toby Belch. A false conclusion: I hate it as an unfilled can.
To be up after midnight and to go to bed then, is early: so that to go to bed after midnight is to go to bed betimes. Does not our life consist of the four elements?710

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Faith, so they say; but I think it rather consists of eating and drinking.

Sir Toby Belch. Thou’rt a scholar; let us therefore eat and drink.
Marian, I say! a stoup of wine!

[Enter Clown]

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Here comes the fool, i’ faith.

Feste. How now, my hearts! did you never see the picture of ’we three’?

Sir Toby Belch. Welcome, ass. Now let’s have a catch.
Sir Andrew Aguecheek. By my troth, the fool has an excellent breast. I had rather than forty shillings I had such a leg, and so sweet a breath to sing, as the fool has. In sooth, thou wast in very gracious fooling last night, when thou spokest of Pigrogromitus, of the Vapians passing the equinoctial of Queubus: 'twas very good, i' faith. I sent thee sixpence for thy leman: hadst it?

Feste. I did impeticos thy gratility; for Malvolio's nose is no whipstock: my lady has a white hand, and the Myrmidons are no bottle-ale houses.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Excellent! why, this is the best fooling, when all is done. Now, a song.

Sir Toby Belch. Come on; there is sixpence for you: let's have a song.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. There's a testril of me too: if one knight give a—

Feste. Would you have a love-song, or a song of good life?

Sir Toby Belch. A love-song, a love-song.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Ay, ay: I care not for good life.

Feste. [Sings]
O mistress mine, where are you roaming? O, stay and hear; your true love's coming, That can sing both high and low: Trip no further, pretty sweeting; Journeys end in lovers meeting, Every wise man's son doth know.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Excellent good, i' faith.

Sir Toby Belch. Good, good.

Feste. [Sings]
What is love? 'tis not hereafter; Present mirth hath present laughter; What's to come is still unsure: In delay there lies no plenty; Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty, Youth's a stuff will not endure.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. A mellifluous voice, as I am true knight.

Sir Toby Belch. A contagious breath.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Very sweet and contagious, i' faith.

Sir Toby Belch. To hear by the nose, it is dulcet in contagion. But shall we make the welkin dance indeed? shall we rouse the night-owl in a catch that will draw three souls out of one weaver? shall we do that?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. An you love me, let's do't: I am dog at a catch.

Feste. By'r lady, sir, and some dogs will catch well.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Most certain. Let our catch be, 'Thou knave.'
Feste. 'Hold thy peace, thou knave,' knight? I shall be constrained in't to call thee knave, knight.765

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. 'Tis not the first time I have constrained one to call me knave. Begin, fool: it begins ‘Hold thy peace.’

Feste. I shall never begin if I hold my peace.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Good, i’ faith. Come, begin.

[Catch sung]

[Enter MARIA]

Maria. What a caterwauling do you keep here! If my lady have not called up her steward Malvolio and bid him turn you out of doors, never trust me.

Sir Toby Belch. My lady's a Cataian, we are politicians, Malvolio's 775 a Peg-a-Ramsey, and 'Three merry men be we.' Am not I consanguineous? am I not of her blood?

Tillyvally. Lady!

[Sings]

‘There dwelt a man in Babylon, lady, lady!’780

Feste. Beshrew me, the knight's in admirable fooling.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Ay, he does well enough if he be disposed, and so do I too: he does it with a better grace, but I do it more natural.

Sir Toby Belch. [Sings] 'O, the twelfth day of December,'—785

Maria. For the love o’ God, peace!

[Enter MALVOLIO]

Malvolio. My masters, are you mad? or what are you? Have ye no wit, manners, nor honesty, but to gabble like tinkers at this time of night? Do ye make an 790 alehouse of my lady’s house, that ye squeak out your coziers' catches without any mitigation or remorse of voice? Is there no respect of place, persons, nor time in you?

Sir Toby Belch. We did keep time, sir, in our catches. Sneck up!795

Malvolio. Sir Toby, I must be round with you. My lady bade me tell you, that, though she harbours you as her kinsman, she's nothing allied to your disorders. If you can separate yourself and your misdemeanors, you are welcome to the house; if not, an it would please 800 you to take leave of her, she is very willing to bid you farewell.

Sir Toby Belch. 'Farewell, dear heart, since I must needs be gone.'

Maria. Nay, good Sir Toby.

Feste. 'His eyes do show his days are almost done.'805

Malvolio. Is't even so?
Sir Toby Belch. ‘But I will never die.’

Feste. Sir Toby, there you lie.

Malvolio. This is much credit to you.

Sir Toby Belch. ‘Shall I bid him go?’

Feste. ‘What an if you do?’

Sir Toby Belch. ‘Shall I bid him go, and spare not?’

Feste. ‘O no, no, no, no, you dare not.’

Sir Toby Belch. Out o’ tune, sir: ye lie. Art any more than a steward? Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?

Feste. Yes, by Saint Anne, and ginger shall be hot i’ the mouth too.

Sir Toby Belch. Thou’rt i’ the right. Go, sir, rub your chain with crumbs. A stoup of wine, Maria!

Malvolio. Mistress Mary, if you prized my lady’s favour at any thing more than contempt, you would not give means for this uncivil rule: she shall know of it, by this hand.

[Exit]

Maria. Go shake your ears.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. ’Twere as good a deed as to drink when a man’s a-hungry, to challenge him the field, and then to break promise with him and make a fool of him.

Sir Toby Belch. Do’t, knight: I’ll write thee a challenge: or I’ll deliver thy indignation to him by word of mouth.

Maria. Sweet Sir Toby, be patient for tonight: since the youth of the count’s was today with thy lady, she is much out of quiet. For Monsieur Malvolio, let me alone with him: if I do not gull him into a nayword, and make him a common recreation, do not think I have wit enough to lie straight in my bed: I know I can do it.

Sir Toby Belch. Possess us, possess us; tell us something of him.

Maria. Marry, sir, sometimes he is a kind of puritan.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. O, if I thought that I’d beat him like a dog!

Sir Toby Belch. What, for being a puritan? thy exquisite reason, dear knight?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. I have no exquisite reason for’t, but I have reason good enough.

Maria. The devil a puritan that he is, or any thing constantly, but a time-pleaser; an affectioned ass, that cons state without book and utters it by great swarths: the best persuaded of himself, so
crammed, as he thinks, with excellencies, that it is
his grounds of faith that all that look on him love 850
him; and on that vice in him will my revenge find
notable cause to work.

\textbf{Sir Toby Belch.} What wilt thou do?

\textbf{Maria.} I will drop in his way some obscure epistles of
love; wherein, by the colour of his beard, the shape 855
of his leg, the manner of his gait, the expressure
of his eye, forehead, and complexion, he shall find
himself most feelingly personated. I can write very
like my lady your niece: on a forgotten matter we
can hardly make distinction of our hands.860

\textbf{Sir Toby Belch.} Excellent! I smell a device.

\textbf{Sir Andrew Aguecheek.} I have't in my nose too.

\textbf{Sir Toby Belch.} He shall think, by the letters that thou wilt drop,
that they come from my niece, and that she's in
love with him.865

\textbf{Maria.} My purpose is, indeed, a horse of that colour.

\textbf{Sir Andrew Aguecheek.} And your horse now would make him an ass.

\textbf{Maria.} Ass, I doubt not.

\textbf{Sir Andrew Aguecheek.} O, 'twill be admirable!

\textbf{Maria.} Sport royal, I warrant you: I know my physic will 870
work with him. I will plant you two, and let the
fool make a third, where he shall find the letter:
observe his construction of it. For this night, to
bed, and dream on the event. Farewell.

\textit{[Exit]}

\textbf{Sir Toby Belch.} Good night, Penthesilea.

\textbf{Sir Andrew Aguecheek.} Before me, she's a good wench.

\textbf{Sir Toby Belch.} She's a beagle, true-bred, and one that adores me:
what o' that?

\textbf{Sir Andrew Aguecheek.} I was adored once too.880

\textbf{Sir Toby Belch.} Let's to bed, knight. Thou hadst need send for
more money.

\textbf{Sir Andrew Aguecheek.} If I cannot recover your niece, I am a foul way out.

\textbf{Sir Toby Belch.} Send for money, knight: if thou hast her not i'
the end, call me cut.885

\textbf{Sir Andrew Aguecheek.} If I do not, never trust me, take it how you will.

\textbf{Sir Toby Belch.} Come, come, I'll go burn some sack; 'tis too late
to go to bed now: come, knight; come, knight.

\textit{[Exeunt]}

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Act II, Scene 4

DUKE ORSINO’s palace.

[Enter DUKE ORSINO, VIOLA, CURIO, and others]

Orsino. Give me some music. Now, good morrow, friends.
Now, good Cesario, but that piece of song,
That old and antique song we heard last night:
Methought it did relieve my passion much,
More than light airs and recollected terms 895
Of these most brisk and giddy-paced times:
Come, but one verse.

Curio. He is not here, so please your lordship that should sing it.

Orsino. Who was it?

Curio. Feste, the jester, my lord; a fool that the lady 900
Olivia’s father took much delight in. He is about the house.

Orsino. Seek him out, and play the tune the while.
[Exit CURIO. Music plays]
Come hither, boy: if ever thou shalt love,
In the sweet pangs of it remember me; 905
For such as I am all true lovers are,
Unstaid and skittish in all motions else,
Save in the constant image of the creature
That is beloved. How dost thou like this tune?

Viola. It gives a very echo to the seat 910
Where Love is throned.

Orsino. Thou dost speak masterly:
My life upon’t, young though thou art, thine eye
Hath stay’d upon some favour that it loves:
Hath it not, boy?915

Viola. A little, by your favour.

Orsino. What kind of woman is’t?

Viola. Of your complexion.

Orsino. She is not worth thee, then. What years, i’ faith?

Viola. About your years, my lord.920

Orsino. Too old by heaven: let still the woman take
An elder than herself: so wears she to him,
So sways she level in her husband’s heart:
For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,
Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm, 925
More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn,
Than women’s are.

Viola. I think it well, my lord.
Orsino. Then let thy love be younger than thyself, 
Or thy affection cannot hold the bent; 930
For women are as roses, whose fair flower 
Being once display’d, doth fall that very hour.

Viola. And so they are: alas, that they are so;
To die, even when they to perfection grow!

[Re-enter CURIO and Clown]

Orsino. O, fellow, come, the song we had last night. 
Mark it, Cesario, it is old and plain; 
The spinsters and the knitters in the sun 
And the free maids that weave their thread with bones 
Do use to chant it; it is silly sooth, 940
And dallies with the innocence of love, 
Like the old age.

Feste. Are you ready, sir?

Orsino. Ay; prithee, sing. 
[Music] 945

SONG.

Feste. Come away, come away, death, 
And in sad cypress let me be laid; 
Fly away, fly away breath; 
I am slain by a fair cruel maid. 950
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew, 
O, prepare it!
My part of death, no one so true 
Did share it.
Not a flower, not a flower sweet 955
On my black coffin let there be strown; 
Not a friend, not a friend greet 
My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown:
A thousand thousand sighs to save, 
Lay me, O, where 960
Sad true lover never find my grave, 
To weep there!

Orsino. There’s for thy pains.

Feste. No pains, sir: I take pleasure in singing, sir.

Orsino. I’ll pay thy pleasure then.965

Feste. Truly, sir, and pleasure will be paid, one time or another.

Orsino. Give me now leave to leave thee.

Feste. Now, the melancholy god protect thee; and the 
tailor make thy doublet of changeable taffeta, for 
thy mind is a very opal. I would have men of such 970
constancy put to sea, that their business might be 
every thing and their intent every where; for that’s 
it that always makes a good voyage of nothing. Farewell.

[Exit]
Orsino. Let all the rest give place. 975
[CURIO and Attendants retire]
Once more, Cesario,
Get thee to yond same sovereign cruelty:
Tell her, my love, more noble than the world,
Prizes not quantity of dirty lands: 980
The parts that fortune hath bestow’d upon her,
Tell her, I hold as giddily as fortune;
But 'tis that miracle and queen of gems
That nature pranks her in attracts my soul.

Viola. But if she cannot love you, sir?985

Orsino. I cannot be so answer’d.

Viola. Sooth, but you must.
Say that some lady, as perhaps there is,
Hath for your love a great a pang of heart
As you have for Olivia: you cannot love her;
You tell her so; must she not then be answer’d?

Orsino. There is no woman’s sides
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion
As love doth give my heart; no woman’s heart
So big, to hold so much; they lack retention 995
Alas, their love may be call’d appetite,
No motion of the liver, but the palate,
That suffer surfeit, cloyment and revolt;
But mine is all as hungry as the sea,
And can digest as much: make no compare 1000
Between that love a woman can bear me
And that I owe Olivia.

Viola. Ay, but I know—

Orsino. What dost thou know?

Viola. Too well what love women to men may owe: 1005
In faith, they are as true of heart as we.
My father had a daughter loved a man,
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,
I should your lordship.

Orsino. And what’s her history?1010

Viola. A blank, my lord. She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i’ the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek: she pined in thought,
And with a green and yellow melancholy
She sat like patience on a monument, 1015
Smiling at grief. Was not this love indeed?
We men may say more, swear more: but indeed
Our shows are more than will; for still we prove
Much in our vows, but little in our love.

Orsino. But died thy sister of her love, my boy?1020

Viola. I am all the daughters of my father’s house,
And all the brothers too: and yet I know not.
Sir, shall I to this lady?
Orsino. Ay, that’s the theme.
To her in haste; give her this jewel; say, 1025
My love can give no place, bide no denay.

[Exeunt]

Act II, Scene 5

OLIVIA’s garden.

[Enter SIR TOBY BELCH, SIR ANDREW, and FABIAN]

Sir Toby Belch. Come thy ways, Signior Fabian.

Fabian. Nay, I’ll come: if I lose a scruple of this sport, 1030
let me be boiled to death with melancholy.

Sir Toby Belch. Wouldst thou not be glad to have the niggardly
rascally sheep-biter come by some notable shame?

Fabian. I would exult, man: you know, he brought me out o’
favour with my lady about a bear-baiting here.1035

Sir Toby Belch. To anger him we’ll have the bear again; and we will
fool him black and blue: shall we not, Sir Andrew?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. An we do not, it is pity of our lives.

Sir Toby Belch. Here comes the little villain.
[Enter MARIA] 1040
How now, my metal of India!

Maria. Get ye all three into the box-tree: Malvolio’s
coming down this walk: he has been yonder i’ the
sun practising behavior to his own shadow this half
hour: observe him, for the love of mockery; for I 1045
know this letter will make a contemplative idiot of
him. Close, in the name of jesting! Lie thou there,
[Throws down a letter]
for here comes the trout that must be caught with tickling.

[Exit]

[Enter MALVOLIO]

Malvolio. ’Tis but fortune; all is fortune. Maria once told
me she did affect me: and I have heard herself come
thus near, that, should she fancy, it should be one
of my complexion. Besides, she uses me with a more 1055
exalted respect than any one else that follows her.
What should I think on’t?

Sir Toby Belch. Here’s an overweening rogue!

Fabian. O, peace! Contemplation makes a rare turkey-cock
of him: how he jets under his advanced plumes!1060

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. ‘Slight, I could so beat the rogue!
Sir Toby Belch. Peace, I say.

Malvolio. To be Count Malvolio!

Sir Toby Belch. Ah, rogue!

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Pistol him, pistol him.1065

Sir Toby Belch. Peace, peace!

Malvolio. There is example for't; the lady of the Strachy married the yeoman of the wardrobe.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Fie on him, Jezebel!

Fabian. O, peace! now he’s deeply in: look how 1070 imagination blows him.

Malvolio. Having been three months married to her, sitting in my state,—

Sir Toby Belch. O, for a stone-bow, to hit him in the eye!

Malvolio. Calling my officers about me, in my branched velvet 1075 gown; having come from a day-bed, where I have left Olivia sleeping,—

Sir Toby Belch. Fire and brimstone!

Fabian. O, peace, peace!

Malvolio. And then to have the humour of state; and after a 1080 demure travel of regard, telling them I know my place as I would they should do theirs, to for my kinsman Toby,—

Sir Toby Belch. Bolts and shackles!

Fabian. O peace, peace, peace! now, now.1085

Malvolio. Seven of my people, with an obedient start, make out for him: I frown the while; and perchance wind up watch, or play with my—some rich jewel. Toby approaches; courtesies there to me,—

Sir Toby Belch. Shall this fellow live?1090

Fabian. Though our silence be drawn from us with cars, yet peace.

Malvolio. I extend my hand to him thus, quenching my familiar smile with an austere regard of control,—

Sir Toby Belch. And does not Toby take you a blow o’ the lips then?

Malvolio. Saying, ‘Cousin Toby, my fortunes having cast me on 1095 your niece give me this prerogative of speech,’—

Sir Toby Belch. What, what?

Malvolio. ‘You must amend your drunkenness.’

Sir Toby Belch. Out, scab!
Fabian. Nay, patience, or we break the sinews of our plot.1100

Malvolio. 'Besides, you waste the treasure of your time with a foolish knight,'—

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. That's me, I warrant you.

Malvolio. 'One Sir Andrew,'—

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. I knew 'twas I; for many do call me fool.1105

Malvolio. What employment have we here?

[Taking up the letter]

Fabian. Now is the woodcock near the gin.

Sir Toby Belch. O, peace! and the spirit of humour intimate reading aloud to him!1110

Malvolio. By my life, this is my lady's hand these be her very C's, her U's and her T's and thus makes she her great P's. It is, in contempt of question, her hand.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Her C's, her U's and her T's: why that?

Malvolio. [Reads] 'To the unknown beloved, this, and my good wishes:'—her very phrases! By your leave, wax. Soft! and the impressure her Lucrece, with which she uses to seal: 'tis my lady. To whom should this be?

Fabian. This wins him, liver and all.

Malvolio. [Reads] 1120

Jove knows I love: But who?
Lips, do not move;
No man must know.
'No man must know.' What follows? the numbers altered! 'No man must know:' if this should be thee, Malvolio?

Sir Toby Belch. Marry, hang thee, brock!

Malvolio. [Reads] I may command where I adore;
But silence, like a Lucrece knife, 1130
With bloodless stroke my heart doth gore:
M, O, A, I, doth sway my life.

Fabian. A fustian riddle!

Sir Toby Belch. Excellent wench, say I.

Malvolio. 'M, O, A, I, doth sway my life.' Nay, but first, let me see, let me see, let me see.

Fabian. What dish o' poison has she dressed him!

Sir Toby Belch. And with what wing the staniel cheques at it!

Malvolio. 'I may command where I adore.' Why, she may command me: I serve her; she is my lady. Why, this is evident to any formal capacity; there is no
obstruction in this: and the end,—what should that alphabetical position portend? If I could make that resemble something in me,—Softly! M, O, A, I,—

_1145_

**Sir Toby Belch.** O, ay, make up that: he is now at a cold scent.

**Fabian.** Sowter will cry upon’t for all this, though it be as rank as a fox.

**Malvolio.** M,—Malvolio; M,—why, that begins my name.

**Fabian.** Did not I say he would work it out? the cur is _1150_ excellent at faults.

**Malvolio.** M,—but then there is no consonancy in the sequel; that suffers under probation A should follow but O does.

**Fabian.** And O shall end, I hope.

**Sir Toby Belch.** Ay, or I’ll cudgel him, and make him cry O! _1155_

**Malvolio.** And then I comes behind.

**Fabian.** Ay, an you had any eye behind you, you might see more detraction at your heels than fortunes before you.

**Malvolio.** M, O, A, I; this simulation is not as the former: and _1160_ yet, to crush this a little, it would bow to me, for every one of these letters are in my name. Soft! here follows prose.

_[Reads]_

'If this fall into thy hand, revolve. In my stars I _1165_ am above thee; but be not afraid of greatness: some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon ‘em. Thy Fates open their hands; let thy blood and spirit embrace them; and, to inure thyself to what thou art like to be, _1170_ cast thy humble slough and appear fresh. Be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants; let thy tongue tang arguments of state; put thyself into the trick of singularity: she thus advises thee that sighs for thee. Remember who commended thy _1175_ yellow stockings, and wished to see thee ever cross-gartered: I say, remember. Go to, thou art made, if thou desirest to be so; if not, let me see thee a steward still, the fellow of servants, and not worthy to touch Fortune’s fingers. Farewell. _1180_ She that would alter services with thee, THE FORTUNATE-UNHAPPY.’

Daylight and champaign discovers not more: this is open. I will be proud, I will read politic authors, I will baffle Sir Toby, I will wash off gross _1185_ acquaintance, I will be point-devise the very man. I do not now fool myself, to let imagination jade me; for every reason excites to this, that my lady loves me. She did commend my yellow stockings of late, she did praise my leg being cross-gartered; _1190_ and in this she manifests herself to my love, and with a kind of injunction drives me to these habits
of her liking. I thank my stars I am happy. I will
be strange, stout, in yellow stockings, and
cross-gartered, even with the swiftness of putting 1195
on. Jove and my stars be praised! Here is yet a
postscript.

[Reads]
‘Thou canst not choose but know who I am. If thou
entertainest my love, let it appear in thy smiling; 1200
thy smiles become thee well; therefore in my
presence still smile, dear my sweet, I prithee.’
Jove, I thank thee: I will smile; I will do
everything that thou wilt have me.

[Exit]

Fabian. I will not give my part of this sport for a pension
of thousands to be paid from the Sophy.

Sir Toby Belch. I could marry this wench for this device.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. So could I too.

Sir Toby Belch. And ask no other dowry with her but such another jest.1210
Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Nor I neither.

Fabian. Here comes my noble gull-catcher.

[Re-enter MARY]

Sir Toby Belch. Wilt thou set thy foot o’ my neck?
Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Or o’ mine either?1215
Sir Toby Belch. Shall I play my freedom at traytrip, and become thy
bond-slave?
Sir Andrew Aguecheek. I’ faith, or I either?
Sir Toby Belch. Why, thou hast put him in such a dream, that when
the image of it leaves him he must run mad.1220
Maria. Nay, but say true; does it work upon him?
Sir Toby Belch. Like aqua-vitae with a midwife.

Maria. If you will then see the fruits of the sport, mark
his first approach before my lady: he will come to
her in yellow stockings, and ‘tis a colour she 1225
abhors, and cross-gartered, a fashion she detests;
and he will smile upon her, which will now be so
unsuitable to her disposition, being addicted to a
melancholy as she is, that it cannot but turn him
into a notable contempt. If you will see it, follow 1230
me.

Sir Toby Belch. To the gates of Tartar, thou most excellent devil of wit!
Sir Andrew Aguecheek. I’ll make one too.

[Exeunt]
Scene from "Twelfth Night," Act III, Scene 1, where Fabian (far left) encourages Viola/Cesario (second left) to fight Sir Andrew Aguecheek (second right), encouraged by Sir Toby Belch (far right), because Viola is accused of wooing Olivia, whereas Andrew wishes to woo her instead.

**Act III**

OLIVIA's garden.

[Enter VIOLA, and Clown with a tabour]

Viola. Save thee, friend, and thy music: dost thou live by thy tabour?

Feste. No, sir, I live by the church.

Viola. Art thou a churchman?

Feste. No such matter, sir: I do live by the church; for I do live at my house, and my house doth stand by the church.

Viola. So thou mayst say, the king lies by a beggar, if a beggar dwell near him; or, the church stands by thy tabour, if thy tabour stand by the church.

Feste. You have said, sir. To see this age! A sentence is but a cheveril glove to a good wit: how quickly the wrong side may be turned outward!
Viola. Nay, that’s certain; they that dally nicely with words may quickly make them wanton. 1250

Feste. I would, therefore, my sister had had no name, sir.

Viola. Why, man?

Feste. Why, sir, her name’s a word; and to dally with that word might make my sister wanton. But indeed words are very rascals since bonds disgraced them. 1255

Viola. Thy reason, man?

Feste. Troth, sir, I can yield you none without words; and words are grown so false, I am loath to prove reason with them.

Viola. I warrant thou art a merry fellow and carest for nothing. 1260

Feste. Not so, sir, I do care for something; but in my conscience, sir, I do not care for you: if that be to care for nothing, sir, I would it would make you invisible.

Viola. Art not thou the Lady Olivia’s fool?

Feste. No, indeed, sir; the Lady Olivia has no folly: she will keep no fool, sir, till she be married; and fools are as like husbands as pilchards are to herrings; the husband’s the bigger: I am indeed not her fool, but her corrupter of words.

Viola. I saw thee late at the Count Orsino’s. 1270

Feste. Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb like the sun, it shines every where. I would be sorry, sir, but the fool should be as oft with your master as with my mistress: I think I saw your wisdom there.

Viola. Nay, an thou pass upon me, I’ll no more with thee. 1275

Hold, there’s expenses for thee.

Feste. Now Jove, in his next commodity of hair, send thee a beard!

Viola. By my troth, I’ll tell thee, I am almost sick for one;

[Aside] 1280

though I would not have it grow on my chin. Is thy lady within?

Feste. Would not a pair of these have bred, sir?

Viola. Yes, being kept together and put to use.

Feste. I would play Lord Pandarus of Phrygia, sir, to bring a Cressida to this Troilus.

Viola. I understand you, sir; ’tis well begged.

Feste. The matter, I hope, is not great, sir, begging but a beggar: Cressida was a beggar. My lady is within, sir. I will construe to them whence you 1290
come; who you are and what you would are out of my welkin, I might say ‘element,’ but the word is over-worn.

[Exit]

**Viola.** This fellow is wise enough to play the fool; And to do that well craves a kind of wit: 1295
He must observe their mood on whom he jests,
The quality of persons, and the time,
And, like the haggard, cheque at every feather
That comes before his eye. This is a practise
As full of labour as a wise man’s art 1300
For folly that he wisely shows is fit;
But wise men, folly-fall’n, quite taint their wit.

[Enter SIR TOBY BELCH, and SIR ANDREW]

**Sir Toby Belch.** Save you, gentleman.

**Viola.** And you, sir.1305

**Sir Andrew Aguecheek.** Dieu vous garde, monsieur.

**Viola.** Et vous aussi; votre serviteur.

**Sir Andrew Aguecheek.** I hope, sir, you are; and I am yours.

**Sir Toby Belch.** Will you encounter the house? my niece is desirous
you should enter, if your trade be to her.1310

**Viola.** I am bound to your niece, sir; I mean, she is the list of my voyage.

**Sir Toby Belch.** Taste your legs, sir; put them to motion.

**Viola.** My legs do better understand me, sir, than I understand what you mean by bidding me taste my legs.1315

**Sir Toby Belch.** I mean, to go, sir, to enter.

**Viola.** I will answer you with gait and entrance. But we are prevented.

[Enter OLIVIA and MARIA]

Most excellent accomplished lady, the heavens rain 1320
odours on you!

**Sir Andrew Aguecheek.** That youth’s a rare courtier: ‘Rain odours;’ well.

**Viola.** My matter hath no voice, to your own most pregnant and vouchsafed ear.

**Sir Andrew Aguecheek.** ‘Odours,’ ‘pregnant’ and ‘vouchsafed:’ I’ll get ’em 1325
all three all ready.

**Olivia.** Let the garden door be shut, and leave me to my hearing.

[Exeunt SIR TOBY BELCH, SIR ANDREW, and MARIA]

Give me your hand, sir.

**Viola.** My duty, madam, and most humble service.1330

**Olivia.** What is your name?

**Viola.** Cesario is your servant’s name, fair princess.
Olivia. My servant, sir! 'Twas never merry world
Since lowly feigning was call'd compliment:
You're servant to the Count Orsino, youth. 1335

Viola. And he is yours, and his must needs be yours:
Your servant's servant is your servant, madam.

Olivia. For him, I think not on him: for his thoughts,
Would they were blanks, rather than fill'd with me!

Viola. Madam, I come to whet your gentle thoughts 1340
On his behalf.

Olivia. O, by your leave, I pray you,
I bade you never speak again of him:
But, would you undertake another suit,
I had rather hear you to solicit that 1345
Than music from the spheres.

Viola. Dear lady,—

Olivia. Give me leave, beseech you. I did send,
After the last enchantment you did here,
A ring in chase of you: so did I abuse 1350
Myself, my servant and, I fear me, you:
Under your hard construction must I sit, To force that on you, in a shameful cunning,
Which you knew none of yours: what might you think?
Have you not set mine honour at the stake
And baited it with all the unmuzzled thoughts 1355
That tyrannous heart can think? To one of your receiving
Enough is shown: a cypress, not a bosom,
Hideth my heart. So, let me hear you speak.

Viola. I pity you.

Olivia. That's a degree to love. 1360

Viola. No, not a grize; for 'tis a vulgar proof,
That very oft we pity enemies.

Olivia. Why, then, methinks 'tis time to smile again.
O, world, how apt the poor are to be proud!
If one should be a prey, how much the better 1365
To fall before the lion than the wolf!

[Clock strikes]
The clock upbraids me with the waste of time.
Be not afraid, good youth, I will not have you:
And yet, when wit and youth is come to harvest, 1370
Your were is alike to reap a proper man:
There lies your way, due west.

Viola. Then westward-ho! Grace and good disposition
Attend your ladyship!
You'll nothing, madam, to my lord by me? 1375

Olivia. Stay:
I prithee, tell me what thou thinkest of me.

Viola. That you do think you are not what you are.

Olivia. If I think so, I think the same of you.
Viola. Then think you right: I am not what I am. 1380

Olivia. I would you were as I would have you be!

Viola. Would it be better, madam, than I am? 1385
I wish it might, for now I am your fool.

Olivia. O, what a deal of scorn looks beautiful
In the contempt and anger of his lip! 1385
A murderous guilt shows not itself more soon
Than love that would seem hid: love’s night is noon.
Cesario, by the roses of the spring,
By maidhood, honour, truth and every thing,
I love thee so, that, maugre all thy pride, 1390
Nor wit nor reason can my passion hide.
Do not extort thy reasons from this clause,
For that I woo, thou therefore hast no cause,
But rather reason thus with reason fetter,
Love sought is good, but given unsought better. 1395

Viola. By innocence I swear, and by my youth
I have one heart, one bosom and one truth,
And that no woman has; nor never none
Shall mistress be of it, save I alone.
And so adieu, good madam: never more 1400
Will I my master’s tears to you deplore.

Olivia. Yet come again; for thou perhaps mayst move
That heart, which now abhors, to like his love.

[Exeunt]

Act III, Scene 2

OLIVIA’s house.

[Enter SIR TOBY BELCH, SIR ANDREW, and FABIAN]

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. No, faith, I’ll not stay a jot longer.

Sir Toby Belch. Thy reason, dear venom, give thy reason.

Fabian. You must needs yield your reason, Sir Andrew.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Marry, I saw your niece do more favours to the count’s serving-man than ever she bestowed upon me; 1410
I saw’t i’ the orchard.

Sir Toby Belch. Did she see thee the while, old boy? tell me that.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. As plain as I see you now.

Fabian. This was a great argument of love in her toward you.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. ‘Slight, will you make an ass o’ me? 1415

Fabian. I will prove it legitimate, sir, upon the oaths of judgment and reason.
Sir Toby Belch. And they have been grand-jury-men since before Noah was a sailor.

Fabian. She did show favour to the youth in your sight only to exasperate you, to awake your dormouse valour, to put fire in your heart and brimstone in your liver. You should then have accosted her; and with some excellent jests, fire-new from the mint, you should have banged the youth into dumbness. This was looked for at your hand, and this was balked: the double gilt of this opportunity you let time wash off, and you are now sailed into the north of my lady's opinion; where you will hang like an icicle on a Dutchman's beard, unless you do redeem it by some laudable attempt either of valour or policy.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. An't be any way, it must be with valour; for policy I hate: I had as lief be a Brownist as a politician.

Sir Toby Belch. Why, then, build me thy fortunes upon the basis of valour. Challenge me the count's youth to fight with him; hurt him in eleven places: my niece shall take note of it; and assure thyself, there is no love-broker in the world can more prevail in man's commendation with woman than report of valour.

Fabian. There is no way but this, Sir Andrew.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Will either of you bear me a challenge to him?

Sir Toby Belch. Go, write it in a martial hand; be curt and brief; it is no matter how witty, so it be eloquent and fun of invention: taunt him with the licence of ink: if thou thou'st him some thrice, it shall not be amiss; and as many lies as will lie in thy sheet of paper, although the sheet were big enough for the bed of Ware in England, set 'em down: go, about it. Let there be gall enough in thy ink, though thou write with a goose-pen, no matter: about it.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Where shall I find you?

Sir Toby Belch. We'll call thee at the cubiculo: go.

[Exit SIR ANDREW]

Fabian. This is a dear manikin to you, Sir Toby.

Sir Toby Belch. I have been dear to him, lad, some two thousand strong, or so.

Fabian. We shall have a rare letter from him: but you'll not deliver't?

Sir Toby Belch. Never trust me, then; and by all means stir on the youth to an answer. I think oxen and wainropes cannot hale them together. For Andrew, if he were opened, and you find so much blood in his liver as will clog the foot of a flea, I'll eat the rest of the anatomy.
Fabian. And his opposite, the youth, bears in his visage no great presage of cruelty.

[Enter MARIA]

Sir Toby Belch. Look, where the youngest wren of nine comes.

Maria. If you desire the spleen, and will laugh yourself into stitches, follow me. Yond gull Malvolio is turned heathen, a very renegado; for there is no Christian, that means to be saved by believing rightly, can ever believe such impossible passages of grossness. He’s in yellow stockings.

Sir Toby Belch. And cross-gartered?

Maria. Most villanously; like a pedant that keeps a school i’ the church. I have dogged him, like his murderer. He does obey every point of the letter that I dropped to betray him: he does smile his face into more lines than is in the new map with the augmentation of the Indies: you have not seen such a thing as 'tis. I can hardly forbear hurling things at him. I know my lady will strike him: if she do, he'll smile and take't for a great favour.

Sir Toby Belch. Come, bring us, bring us where he is.

[Exeunt]

Act III, Scene 3

A street.

[Enter SEBASTIAN and ANTONIO]

Sebastian. I would not by my will have troubled you; But, since you make your pleasure of your pains, I will no further chide you.

Antonio. I could not stay behind you: my desire, More sharp than filed steel, did spur me forth; And not all love to see you, though so much As might have drawn one to a longer voyage, But jealousy what might befall your travel, Being skilless in these parts; which to a stranger, Unguided and unfriended, often prove Rough and unhospitable: my willing love, The rather by these arguments of fear, Set forth in your pursuit.

Sebastian. My kind Antonio, I can no other answer make but thanks, And thanks; and ever thanks; and oft good turns Are shuffled off with such uncurrent pay: But, were my worth as is my conscience firm, You should find better dealing. What's to do? Shall we go see the reliques of this town?
Antonio. To-morrow, sir: best first go see your lodging.

Sebastian. I am not weary, and 'tis long to night: 1510
I pray you, let us satisfy our eyes
With the memorials and the things of fame
That do renown this city.

Antonio. Would you'ld pardon me;
I do not without danger walk these streets: 1515
Once, in a sea-fight, 'gainst the count his galleys
I did some service; of such note indeed,
That were I ta'en here it would scarce be answer'd.

Sebastian. Belike you slew great number of his people.

Antonio. The offence is not of such a bloody nature; 1520
Albeit the quality of the time and quarrel
Might well have given us bloody argument.
It might have since been answer'd in repaying
What we took from them; which, for traffic's sake,
Most of our city did: only myself stood out; 1525
For which, if I be lapsed in this place,
I shall pay dear.

Sebastian. Do not then walk too open.

Antonio. It doth not fit me. Hold, sir, here's my purse.
In the south suburbs, at the Elephant, 1530
Is best to lodge: I will bespeak our diet,
Whiles you beguile the time and feed your knowledge
With viewing of the town: there shall you have me.

Sebastian. Why I your purse?

Antonio. Haply your eye shall light upon some toy 1535
You have desire to purchase; and your store,
I think, is not for idle markets, sir.

Sebastian. I'll be your purse-bearer and leave you
For an hour.

Antonio. To the Elephant.1540

Sebastian. I do remember.

[Exeunt]

Act III, Scene 4

OLIVIA's garden.

[Enter OLIVIA and MARIA]

Olivia. I have sent after him: he says he'll come;
How shall I feast him? what bestow of him? 1545
For youth is bought more oft than begg'd or borrow'd.
I speak too loud.
Where is Malvolio? he is sad and civil,
And suits well for a servant with my fortunes:
Where is Malvolio? 1550

Maria. He’s coming, madam; but in very strange manner. He
is, sure, possessed, madam.

Olivia. Why, what’s the matter? does he rave?

Maria. No, madam, he does nothing but smile: your ladyship were best to have some guard about you, if 1555 he come; for, sure, the man is tainted in’s wits.

Olivia. Go call him hither.
[Exit MARIA]
I am as mad as he,
If sad and merry madness equal be. 1560
[Re-enter MARIA, with MALVOLIO]
How now, Malvolio!

Malvolio. Sweet lady, ho, ho.

Olivia. Smilet thou?
I sent for thee upon a sad occasion. 1565

Malvolio. Sad, lady! I could be sad: this does make some obstruction in the blood, this cross-gartering; but what of that? if it please the eye of one, it is with me as the very true sonnet is, ‘Please one, and please all.’ 1570

Olivia. Why, how dost thou, man? what is the matter with thee?

Malvolio. Not black in my mind, though yellow in my legs. It did come to his hands, and commands shall be executed: I think we do know the sweet Roman hand.

Olivia. Wilt thou go to bed, Malvolio? 1575

Malvolio. To bed! ay, sweet-heart, and I’ll come to thee.

Olivia. God comfort thee! Why dost thou smile so and kiss thy hand so oft?

Maria. How do you, Malvolio?

Malvolio. At your request! yes; nightingales answer daws. 1580

Maria. Why appear you with this ridiculous boldness before my lady?

Malvolio. ‘Be not afraid of greatness:’ ’twas well writ.

Olivia. What meanest thou by that, Malvolio?

Malvolio. ‘Some are born great,’—

Olivia. Hal! 1585

Malvolio. ‘Some achieve greatness,’—

Olivia. What sayest thou?

Malvolio. ‘And some have greatness thrust upon them.’
Olivia. Heaven restore thee!

Malvolio. 'Remember who commended thy yellow stockings,'—1590

Olivia. Thy yellow stockings!

Malvolio. 'And wished to see thee cross-gartered.'

Olivia. Cross-gartered!

Malvolio. 'Go to thou art made, if thou desirest to be so;'—

Olivia. Am I made?1595

Malvolio. 'If not, let me see thee a servant still.'

Olivia. Why, this is very midsummer madness.

[Enter Servant]

Servant. Madam, the young gentleman of the Count Orsino's is returned: I could hardly entreat him back: he 1600 attends your ladyship's pleasure.

Olivia. I'll come to him.

[Exit Servant]

Good Maria, let this fellow be looked to. Where's my cousin Toby? Let some of my people have a special 1605 care of him: I would not have him miscarry for the half of my dowry.

[Exeunt OLIVIA and MARIA]

Malvolio. O, ho! do you come near me now? no worse man than Sir Toby to look to me! This concurs directly with 1610 the letter: she sends him on purpose, that I may appear stubborn to him; for she incites me to that in the letter. 'Cast thy humble slough,' says she; 'be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants; let thy tongue tang with arguments of state; put 1615 thyself into the trick of singularity;' and consequently sets down the manner how; as, a sad face, a reverend carriage, a slow tongue, in the habit of some sir of note, and so forth. I have limed her; but it is Jove's doing, and Jove make me 1620 thankful! And when she went away now, 'Let this fellow be looked to:' fellow! not Malvolio, nor after my degree, but fellow. Why, every thing adheres together, that no dram of a scruple, no scruple of a scruple, no obstacle, no incredulous 1625 or unsafe circumstance—What can be said? Nothing that can be can come between me and the full prospect of my hopes. Well, Jove, not I, is the doer of this, and he is to be thanked.

[Re-enter MARIA, with SIR TOBY BELCH and FABIAN]

Sir Toby Belch. Which way is he, in the name of sanctity? If all the devils of hell be drawn in little, and Legion himself possessed him, yet I'll speak to him.
Fabian. Here he is, here he is. How is't with you, sir? how is't with you, man? 1635

Malvolio. Go off; I discard you: let me enjoy my private: go off.

Maria. Lo, how hollow the fiend speaks within him! did not I tell you? Sir Toby, my lady prays you to have a care of him. 1640

Malvolio. Ah, ha! does she so?

Sir Toby Belch. Go to, go to; peace, peace; we must deal gently with him: let me alone. How do you, Malvolio? how is't with you? What, man! defy the devil: consider, he's an enemy to mankind. 1645

Malvolio. Do you know what you say?

Maria. La you, an you speak ill of the devil, how he takes it at heart! Pray God, he be not bewitched!

Fabian. Carry his water to the wise woman.

Maria. Marry, and it shall be done to-morrow morning, if I live. My lady would not lose him for more than I'll say.

Malvolio. How now, mistress!

Maria. O Lord!

Sir Toby Belch. Prithee, hold thy peace; this is not the way: do you not see you move him? let me alone with him. 1655

Fabian. No way but gentleness; gently, gently: the fiend is rough, and will not be roughly used.

Sir Toby Belch. Why, how now, my bawcock! how dost thou, chuck?

Malvolio. Sir!

Sir Toby Belch. Ay, Biddy, come with me. What, man! 'tis not for gravity to play at cherry-pit with Satan: hang him, foul collier!

Maria. Get him to say his prayers, good Sir Toby, get him to pray.

Malvolio. My prayers, minx!

Maria. No, I warrant you, he will not hear of godliness. 1665

Malvolio. Go, hang yourselves all! you are idle shallow things: I am not of your element: you shall know more hereafter.

[Exit]

Sir Toby Belch. Is't possible? 1670

Fabian. If this were played upon a stage now, I could condemn it as an improbable fiction.

Sir Toby Belch. His very genius hath taken the infection of the device, man.
Maria. Nay, pursue him now, lest the device take air and taint.

Fabian. Why, we shall make him mad indeed.1675

Maria. The house will be the quieter.

Sir Toby Belch. Come, we'll have him in a dark room and bound. My niece is already in the belief that he's mad: we may carry it thus, for our pleasure and his penance, till our very pastime, tired out of breath, prompt 1680 us to have mercy on him: at which time we will bring the device to the bar and crown thee for a finder of madmen. But see, but see.

[Enter SIR ANDREW]

Fabian. More matter for a May morning.1685

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Here's the challenge, read it: warrant there's vinegar and pepper in't.

Fabian. Is't so saucy?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Ay, is't, I warrant him: do but read.

Sir Toby Belch. Give me. 1690 [Reads] 'Youth, whatsoever thou art, thou art but a scurvy fellow.'

Fabian. Good, and valiant.

Sir Toby Belch. [Reads] 'Wonder not, nor admire not in thy mind, why I do call thee so, for I will show thee no reason for't.'1695

Fabian. A good note; that keeps you from the blow of the law.

Sir Toby Belch. [Reads] 'Thou comest to the lady Olivia, and in my sight she uses thee kindly: but thou liest in thy throat; that is not the matter I challenge thee for.'

Fabian. Very brief, and to exceeding good sense—less.1700

Sir Toby Belch. [Reads] 'I will waylay thee going home; where if it be thy chance to kill me,'—

Fabian. Good.

Sir Toby Belch. [Reads] 'Thou killest me like a rogue and a villain.'

Fabian. Still you keep o' the windy side of the law: good.1705

Sir Toby Belch. [Reads] 'Fare thee well; and God have mercy upon one of our souls! He may have mercy upon mine; but my hope is better, and so look to thyself. Thy friend, as thou usest him, and thy sworn enemy, ANDREW AGUECHEEK. 1710

If this letter move him not, his legs cannot: I'll give't him.

Maria. You may have very fit occasion for't: he is now in some commerce with my lady, and will by and by depart.
Sir Toby Belch. Go, Sir Andrew: scout me for him at the corner the 1715 orchard like a bum-baily: so soon as ever thou seest him, draw; and, as thou drawest swear horrible; for it comes to pass oft that a terrible oath, with a swaggering accent sharply twanged off, gives manhood more approbation than ever proof itself would have 1720 earned him. Away!

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Nay, let me alone for swearing.

[Exit]

Sir Toby Belch. Now will not I deliver his letter: for the behavior of the young gentleman gives him out to be of good 1725 capacity and breeding; his employment between his lord and my niece confirms no less: therefore this letter, being so excellently ignorant, will breed no terror in the youth: he will find it comes from a clodpole. But, sir, I will deliver his challenge by 1730 word of mouth; set upon Aguecheek a notable report of valour; and drive the gentleman, as I know his youth will aptly receive it, into a most hideous opinion of his rage, skill, fury and impetuosity. This will so fright them both that they will kill 1735 one another by the look, like cockatrice's.

[Re-enter OLIVIA, with VIOLA]

Fabian. Here he comes with your niece: give them way till he take leave, and presently after him.

Sir Toby Belch. I will meditate the while upon some horrid message 1740 for a challenge.

[Exeunt SIR TOBY BELCH, FABIAN, and MARIA]

Olivia. I have said too much unto a heart of stone And laid mine honour too unchary out: There's something in me that reproves my fault; 1745 But such a headstrong potent fault it is, That it but mocks reproof.

Viola. With the same 'havior that your passion bears Goes on my master's grief.

Olivia. Here, wear this jewel for me, 'tis my picture; 1750 Refuse it not; it hath no tongue to vex you; And I beseech you come again to-morrow. What shall you ask of me that I'll deny, That honour saved may upon asking give?

Viola. Nothing but this; your true love for my master.1755

Olivia. How with mine honour may I give him that Which I have given to you?

Viola. I will acquit you.

Olivia. Well, come again to-morrow: fare thee well: A fiend like thee might bear my soul to hell.1760

[Exit]
[Re-enter SIR TOBY BELCH and FABIAN]

Sir Toby Belch. Gentleman, God save thee.

Viola. And you, sir.

Sir Toby Belch. That defence thou hast, betake thee to't: of what nature the wrongs are thou hast done him, I know not; but thy intercepter, full of despite, bloody as the hunter, attends thee at the orchard-end: dismount thy tuck, be yare in thy preparation, for thy assailant is quick, skilful and deadly.1770

Viola. You mistake, sir; I am sure no man hath any quarrel to me: my remembrance is very free and clear from any image of offence done to any man.

Sir Toby Belch. You'll find it otherwise, I assure you: therefore, if you hold your life at any price, betake you to your guard; for your opposite hath in him what youth, strength, skill and wrath can furnish man withal.

Viola. I pray you, sir, what is he?

Sir Toby Belch. He is knight, dubbed with unhatched rapier and on carpet consideration; but he is a devil in private brawl: souls and bodies hath he divorced three; and his incensement at this moment is so implacable, that satisfaction can be none but by pangs of death and sepulchre. Hob, nob, is his word; give't or take't.

Viola. I will return again into the house and desire some conduct of the lady. I am no fighter. I have heard of some kind of men that put quarrels purposely on others, to taste their valour: belike this is a man of that quirk.

Sir Toby Belch. Sir, no; his indignation derives itself out of a very competent injury: therefore, get you on and give him his desire. Back you shall not to the house, unless you undertake that with me which with as much safety you might answer him: therefore, on, or strip your sword stark naked; for meddle you must, that's certain, or forswear to wear iron about you.

Viola. This is as uncivil as strange. I beseech you, do me this courteous office, as to know of the knight what my offence to him is: it is something of my negligence, nothing of my purpose.1800

Sir Toby Belch. I will do so. Signior Fabian, stay you by this gentleman till my return.

[Exit]

Viola. Pray you, sir, do you know of this matter?

Fabian. I know the knight is incensed against you, even to a mortal arbitrement; but nothing of the circumstance more.

Viola. I beseech you, what manner of man is he?
Fabian. Nothing of that wonderful promise, to read him by his form, as you are like to find him in the proof of his valour. He is, indeed, sir, the most skilful, bloody and fatal opposite that you could possibly have found in any part of Illyria. Will you walk towards him? I will make your peace with him if I can.

Viola. I shall be much bound to you for’t: I am one that had rather go with sir priest than sir knight: I care not who knows so much of my mettle.

[Exeunt]

[Re-enter SIR TOBY BELCH, with SIR ANDREW]

Sir Toby Belch. Why, man, he’s a very devil; I have not seen such a firago. I had a pass with him, rapier, scabbard and all, and he gives me the stuck in with such a mortal motion, that it is inevitable; and on the answer, he pays you as surely as your feet hit the ground they step on. They say he has been fencer to the Sophy.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Pox on’t, I’ll not meddle with him.

Sir Toby Belch. Ay, but he will not now be pacified: Fabian can scarce hold him yonder.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Plague on’t, an I thought he had been valiant and so cunning in fence, I’ld have seen him damned ere I’ld have challenged him. Let him let the matter slip, and I’ll give him my horse, grey Caplet.

Sir Toby Belch. I’ll make the motion: stand here, make a good show on’t: this shall end without the perdition of souls.

[Aside] Marry, I’ll ride your horse as well as I ride you.

[Re-enter FABIAN and VIOLA]

[To FABIAN]

I have his horse to take up the quarrel: I have persuaded him the youth’s a devil.

Fabian. He is as horribly conceited of him; and pants and looks pale, as if a bear were at his heels.

Sir Toby Belch. [To VIOLA] There’s no remedy, sir; he will fight with you for’s oath sake: marry, he hath better bethought him of his quarrel, and he finds that now scarce to be worth talking of: therefore draw, for the supportance of his vow; he protests he will not hurt you.

Viola. [Aside] Pray God defend me! A little thing would make me tell them how much I lack of a man.

Fabian. Give ground, if you see him furious.

Sir Toby Belch. Come, Sir Andrew, there’s no remedy; the gentleman will, for his honour’s sake, have one bout with you; he cannot by the duello avoid it: but he has promised me, as he is a gentleman and a soldier, he will not hurt you. Come on; to’t.
Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Pray God, he keep his oath!

Viola. I do assure you, 'tis against my will.

[They draw]

[Enter ANTONIO]

Antonio. Put up your sword. If this young gentleman 1860
Have done offence, I take the fault on me: If you offend him, I for him defy you.

Sir Toby Belch. You, sir! why, what are you?

Antonio. One, sir, that for his love dares yet do more Than you have heard him brag to you he will.1865

Sir Toby Belch. Nay, if you be an undertaker, I am for you.

[They draw]

[Enter Officers]

Fabian. O good Sir Toby, hold! here come the officers.

Sir Toby Belch. I'll be with you anon.1870

Viola. Pray, sir, put your sword up, if you please.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Marry, will I, sir; and, for that I promised you, I'll be as good as my word: he will bear you easily and reins well.

First Officer. This is the man; do thy office.1875

Second Officer. Antonio, I arrest thee at the suit of Count Orsino.

Antonio. You do mistake me, sir.

First Officer. No, sir, no jot; I know your favour well, Though now you have no sea-cap on your head. Take him away: he knows I know him well.1880

Antonio. I must obey. 

[To VIOLA]

This comes with seeking you: But there's no remedy; I shall answer it. What will you do, now my necessity 1885 Makes me to ask you for my purse? It grieves me Much more for what I cannot do for you Than what befalls myself. You stand amazed; But be of comfort.

Second Officer. Come, sir, away.1890

Antonio. I must entreat of you some of that money.

Viola. What money, sir? For the fair kindness you have show'd me here, And, part, being prompted by your present trouble, Out of my lean and low ability 1895 I'll lend you something: my having is not much;
I'll make division of my present with you:
Hold, there's half my coffer.

**Antonio.** Will you deny me now?
Is't possible that my deserts to you 1900
Can lack persuasion? Do not tempt my misery,
Lest that it make me so unsound a man
As to upbraid you with those kindnesses
That I have done for you.

**Viola.** I know of none; 1905
Nor know I you by voice or any feature:
I hate ingratitude more in a man
Than lying, vainness, babbling, drunkenness,
Or any taint of vice whose strong corruption
Inhabits our frail blood.1910

**Antonio.** O heavens themselves!

**Second Officer.** Come, sir, I pray you, go.

**Antonio.** Let me speak a little. This youth that you see here
I snatch'd one half out of the jaws of death,
Relieved him with such sanctity of love, 1915
And to his image, which methought did promise
Most venerable worth, did I devotion.

**First Officer.** What's that to us? The time goes by: away!

**Antonio.** But O how vile an idol proves this god
Thou hast, Sebastian, done good feature shame. 1920
In nature there's no blemish but the mind;
None can be call'd deform'd but the unkind:
Virtue is beauty, but the beauteous evil
Are empty trunks o'erflourish'd by the devil.

**First Officer.** The man grows mad: away with him! Come, come, sir.1925

**Antonio.** Lead me on.

[Exit with Officers]

**Viola.** Methinks his words do from such passion fly,
That he believes himself: so do not I.
Prove true, imagination, O, prove true, 1930
That I, dear brother, be now ta'en for you!

**Sir Toby Belch.** Come hither, knight; come hither, Fabian: we'll
whisper o'er a couplet or two of most sage saws.

**Viola.** He named Sebastian: I my brother know
Yet living in my glass; even such and so 1935
In favour was my brother, and he went
Still in this fashion, colour, ornament,
For him I imitate: O, if it prove,
Tempests are kind and salt waves fresh in love.

[Exit]

**Sir Toby Belch.** A very dishonest paltry boy, and more a coward than
a hare: his dishonesty appears in leaving his
friend here in necessity and denying him; and for his cowardship, ask Fabian.

**Fabian.** A coward, a most devout coward, religious in it.1945

**Sir Andrew Aguecheek.** ‘Slid, I'll after him again and beat him.

**Sir Toby Belch.** Do; cuff him soundly, but never draw thy sword.

**Sir Andrew Aguecheek.** An I do not,—

**Fabian.** Come, let's see the event.

**Sir Toby Belch.** I dare lay any money 'twill be nothing yet.1950

[Exeunt]

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**ACT IV**

![Viola and the Countess, 1859](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Scene_from_Twelfth_Night_-_Francis_Wheatley.jpg)

**Viola and the Countess, 1859**

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**Act IV, Scene 1**

Before OLIVIA’s house.

[Enter SEBASTIAN and Clown]

**Feste.** Will you make me believe that I am not sent for you?
Sebastian. Go to, go to, thou art a foolish fellow:
Let me be clear of thee.1955

Feste. Well held out, i' faith! No, I do not know you; nor
I am not sent to you by my lady, to bid you come
speak with her; nor your name is not Master Cesario;
nor this is not my nose neither. Nothing that is so is so.

Sebastian. I prithee, vent thy folly somewhere else: Thou 1960
know'st not me.

Feste. Vent my folly! he has heard that word of some
great man and now applies it to a fool. Vent my
folly! I am afraid this great lubber, the world,
will prove a cockney. I prithee now, ungird thy 1965
strangeness and tell me what I shall vent to my
lady: shall I vent to her that thou art coming?

Sebastian. I prithee, foolish Greek, depart from me: There's
money for thee: if you tarry longer, I shall give
worse payment.1970

Feste. By my troth, thou hast an open hand. These wise men
that give fools money get themselves a good
report—after fourteen years' purchase.

[Enter SIR ANDREW, SIR TOBY BELCH, and FABIAN]

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Now, sir, have I met you again? there's for you.1975

Sebastian. Why, there's for thee, and there, and there. Are all
the people mad?

Sir Toby Belch. Hold, sir, or I'll throw your dagger o'er the house.

Feste. This will I tell my lady straight: I would not be
in some of your coats for two pence.1980

[Exit]

Sir Toby Belch. Come on, sir; hold.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Nay, let him alone: I'll go another way to work
with him; I'll have an action of battery against
him, if there be any law in Illyria: though I 1985
struck him first, yet it's no matter for that.

Sebastian. Let go thy hand.

Sir Toby Belch. Come, sir, I will not let you go. Come, my young
soldier, put up your iron: you are well fleshed; come on.

Sebastian. I will be free from thee. What wouldst thou now? If 1990
thou darest tempt me further, draw thy sword.

Sir Toby Belch. What, what? Nay, then I must have an ounce or two
of this malapert blood from you.

[Enter OLIVIA]

Olivia. Hold, Toby; on thy life I charge thee, hold!1995

Sir Toby Belch. Madam!
Olivia. Will it be ever thus? Ungracious wretch,
Fit for the mountains and the barbarous caves,
Where manners ne'er were preach'd! out of my sight!
Be not offended, dear Cesario. 2000
Rudesby, be gone!
[Exeunt SIR TOBY BELCH, SIR ANDREW, and FABIAN]
I prithee, gentle friend,
Let thy fair wisdom, not thy passion, sway
In this uncivil and thou unjust extent 2005
Against thy peace. Go with me to my house,
And hear thou there how many fruitless pranks
This ruffian hath botch’d up, that thou thereby
Mayst smile at this: thou shalt not choose but go:
Do not deny. Beshrew his soul for me, 2010
He started one poor heart of mine in thee.

Sebastian. What relish is in this? how runs the stream?
Or I am mad, or else this is a dream:
Let fancy still my sense in Lethe steep;
If it be thus to dream, still let me sleep! 2015

Olivia. Nay, come, I prithee; would thou’ldst be ruled by me!

Sebastian. Madam, I will.

Olivia. O, say so, and so be!

[Exeunt]

Act IV, Scene 2

OLIVIA’s house.

[Enter MARIA and Clown]

Maria. Nay, I prithee, put on this gown and this beard;
make him believe thou art Sir Topas the curate: do
it quickly; I’ll call Sir Toby the whilst.

[Exit]

Feste. Well, I’ll put it on, and I will dissemble myself 2025
in’t; and I would I were the first that ever
dissembled in such a gown. I am not tall enough to
become the function well, nor lean enough to be
thought a good student; but to be said an honest man
and a good housekeeper goes as fairly as to say a 2030
careful man and a great scholar. The competitors enter.

[Enter SIR TOBY BELCH and MARIA]

Sir Toby Belch. Jove bless thee, master Parson.

Feste. Bonos dies, Sir Toby: for, as the old hermit of
Prague, that never saw pen and ink, very wittily 2035
said to a niece of King Gorboduc, ‘That that is is;’
so I, being Master Parson, am Master Parson; for,
what is ‘that’ but ‘that,’ and ‘is’ but ‘is’?
**Sir Toby Belch.** To him, Sir Topas.

**Feste.** What, ho, I say! peace in this prison!

**Sir Toby Belch.** The knave counterfeits well; a good knave.

**Malvolio.** [Within] Who calls there?

**Feste.** Sir Topas the curate, who comes to visit Malvolio the lunatic.

**Malvolio.** Sir Topas, Sir Topas, good Sir Topas, go to my lady.

**Feste.** Out, hyperbolical fiend! how vexest thou this man! talkest thou nothing but of ladies?

**Sir Toby Belch.** Well said, Master Parson.

**Malvolio.** Sir Topas, never was man thus wronged: good Sir Topas, do not think I am mad: they have laid me here in hideous darkness.

**Feste.** Fie, thou dishonest Satan! I call thee by the most modest terms; for I am one of those gentle ones that will use the devil himself with courtesy: sayest thou that house is dark?

**Malvolio.** As hell, Sir Topas.

**Feste.** Why it hath bay windows transparent as barricadoes, and the clearstores toward the south north are as lustrous as ebony; and yet complainest thou of obstruction?

**Malvolio.** I am not mad, Sir Topas: I say to you, this house is dark.

**Feste.** Madman, thou errest: I say, there is no darkness but ignorance; in which thou art more puzzled than the Egyptians in their fog.

**Malvolio.** I say, this house is as dark as ignorance, though ignorance were as dark as hell; and I say, there was never man thus abused. I am no more mad than you are: make the trial of it in any constant question.

**Feste.** What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl?

**Malvolio.** That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.

**Feste.** What thinkest thou of his opinion?

**Malvolio.** I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve his opinion.

**Feste.** Fare thee well. Remain thou still in darkness: thou shalt hold the opinion of Pythagoras ere I will allow of thy wits, and fear to kill a woodcock, lest thou dispossess the soul of thy grandam. Fare thee well.

**Malvolio.** Sir Topas, Sir Topas!

**Sir Toby Belch.** My most exquisite Sir Topas!

**Feste.** Nay, I am for all waters.
**Maria.** Thou mightst have done this without thy beard and **2080** gown: he sees thee not.

**Sir Toby Belch.** To him in thine own voice, and bring me word how thou findest him: I would we were well rid of this knavery. If he may be conveniently delivered, I would he were, for I am now so far in offence with **2085** my niece that I cannot pursue with any safety this sport to the upshot. Come by and by to my chamber.

*Exeunt SIR TOBY BELCH and MARIA*

**Feste.** [Singing]

‘Hey, Robin, jolly Robin, **2090**
Tell me how thy lady does.’

**Malvolio.** Fool!

**Feste.** ‘My lady is unkind, perdy.’

**Malvolio.** Fool!

**Feste.** ‘Alas, why is she so?’**2095**

**Malvolio.** Fool, I say!

**Feste.** ‘She loves another’—Who calls, ha?

**Malvolio.** Good fool, as ever thou wilt deserve well at my hand, help me to a candle, and pen, ink and paper: as I am a gentleman, I will live to be thankful to **2100** thee for’t.

**Feste.** Master Malvolio?

**Malvolio.** Ay, good fool.

**Feste.** Alas, sir, how fell you besides your five wits?

**Malvolio.** Fool, there was never a man so notoriously abused: I **2105** am as well in my wits, fool, as thou art.

**Feste.** But as well? then you are mad indeed, if you be no better in your wits than a fool.

**Malvolio.** They have here propertied me; keep me in darkness, send ministers to me, asses, and do all they can to **2110** face me out of my wits.

**Feste.** Advise you what you say; the minister is here. Malvolio, Malvolio, thy wits the heavens restore! endeavour thyself to sleep, and leave thy vain bibble babble.**2115**

**Malvolio.** Sir Topas!

**Feste.** Maintain no words with him, good fellow. Who, I, sir? not I, sir. God be wi’ you, good Sir Topas. Merry, amen. I will, sir, I will.

**Malvolio.** Fool, fool, fool, I say! **2120**
Feste. Alas, sir, be patient. What say you sir? I am shent for speaking to you.

Malvolio. Good fool, help me to some light and some paper: I tell thee, I am as well in my wits as any man in Illyria.

Feste. Well-a-day that you were, sir

Malvolio. By this hand, I am. Good fool, some ink, paper and light; and convey what I will set down to my lady: it shall advantage thee more than ever the bearing of letter did.

Feste. I will help you to't. But tell me true, are you not mad indeed? or do you but counterfeit?

Malvolio. Believe me, I am not; I tell thee true.

Feste. Nay, I'll ne'er believe a madman till I see his brains. I will fetch you light and paper and ink.

Malvolio. Fool, I'll requite it in the highest degree: I prithee, be gone.

Feste. [Singing]
I am gone, sir,
And anon, sir,
I'll be with you again, 2140
In a trice,
Like to the old Vice,
Your need to sustain;
Who, with dagger of lath,
In his rage and his wrath, 2145
Cries, ah, ha! to the devil:
Like a mad lad,
Pare thy nails, dad;
Adieu, good man devil.

[Exit]

Act IV, Scene 3

OLIVIA's garden.

[Enter SEBASTIAN]

Sebastian. This is the air; that is the glorious sun; This pearl she gave me, I do feel't and see't; And though 'tis wonder that enwraps me thus, Yet 'tis not madness. Where's Antonio, then? 2155 I could not find him at the Elephant: Yet there he was; and there I found this credit, That he did range the town to seek me out. His counsel now might do me golden service; For though my soul disputes well with my sense, 2160 That this may be some error, but no madness, Yet doth this accident and flood of fortune So far exceed all instance, all discourse,
That I am ready to distrust mine eyes
And wrangle with my reason that persuades me 2165
To any other trust but that I am mad
Or else the lady’s mad; yet, if ’twere so,
She could not sway her house, command her followers,
Take and give back affairs and their dispatch
With such a smooth, discreet and stable bearing 2170
As I perceive she does: there’s something in’t
That is deceiveable. But here the lady comes.

[Enter OLIVIA and Priest]

**Olivia.** Blame not this haste of mine. If you mean well,
Now go with me and with this holy man 2175
Into the chantry by: there, before him,
And underneath that consecrated roof,
Plight me the full assurance of your faith;
That my most jealous and too doubtful soul
May live at peace. He shall conceal it 2180
While you are willing it shall come to note,
What time we will our celebration keep
According to my birth. What do you say?

**Sebastian.** I’ll follow this good man, and go with you;
And, having sworn truth, ever will be true.2185

**Olivia.** Then lead the way, good father; and heavens so shine,
That they may fairly note this act of mine!

[Exeunt]
Act V, Scene 1

Before OLIVIA’s house.

[Enter Clown and FABIAN]

**Fabian.** Now, as thou lovest me, let me see his letter.2190

**Feste.** Good Master Fabian, grant me another request.

**Fabian.** Any thing.

**Feste.** Do not desire to see this letter.

**Fabian.** This is, to give a dog, and in recompense desire my dog again.2195

[Enter DUKE ORSINO, VIOLA, CURIO, and Lords]

**Orsino.** Belong you to the Lady Olivia, friends?

**Feste.** Ay, sir; we are some of her trappings.

**Orsino.** I know thee well; how dost thou, my good fellow?

**Feste.** Truly, sir, the better for my foes and the worse 2200 for my friends.

**Orsino.** Just the contrary; the better for thy friends.

**Feste.** No, sir, the worse.

**Orsino.** How can that be?

**Feste.** Marry, sir, they praise me and make an ass of me; 2205 now my foes tell me plainly I am an ass: so that by my foes, sir I profit in the knowledge of myself, and by my friends, I am abused: so that, conclusions to be as kisses, if your four negatives make your two affirmatives why then, the worse for 2210 my friends and the better for my foes.

**Orsino.** Why, this is excellent.

**Feste.** By my troth, sir, no; though it please you to be one of my friends.

**Orsino.** Thou shalt not be the worse for me: there’s gold.2215

**Feste.** But that it would be double-dealing, sir, I would you could make it another.

**Orsino.** O, you give me ill counsel.

**Feste.** Put your grace in your pocket, sir, for this once, and let your flesh and blood obey it.2220

**Orsino.** Well, I will be so much a sinner, to be a double-dealer: there’s another.

**Feste.** Primo, secundo, tertio, is a good play; and the old saying is, the third pays for all: the triplex,
sir, is a good tripping measure; or the bells of Saint Bennet, sir, may put you in mind; one, two, three.

**Orsino.** You can fool no more money out of me at this throw: if you will let your lady know I am here to speak with her, and bring her along with you, it may awake my bounty further. 

**Feste.** Marry, sir, lullaby to your bounty till I come again. I go, sir; but I would not have you to think that my desire of having is the sin of covetousness: but, as you say, sir, let your bounty take a nap, I will awake it anon.

[Exit]

**Viola.** Here comes the man, sir, that did rescue me.

[Enter ANTONIO and Officers]

**Orsino.** That face of his I do remember well; Yet, when I saw it last, it was besmear’d As black as Vulcan in the smoke of war: A bawbling vessel was he captain of, For shallow draught and bulk unprizable; With which such scathful grapple did he make With the most noble bottom of our fleet, That very envy and the tongue of loss Cried fame and honour on him. What’s the matter?

**First Officer.** Orsino, this is that Antonio That took the Phoenix and her fraught from Candy; And this is he that did the Tiger board, When your young nephew Titus lost his leg: Here in the streets, desperate of shame and state, In private brabble did we apprehend him.

**Viola.** He did me kindness, sir, drew on my side; But in conclusion put strange speech upon me: I know not what ’twas but distraction.

**Orsino.** Notable pirate! thou salt-water thief! What foolish boldness brought thee to their mercies, Whom thou, in terms so bloody and so dear, Hast made thine enemies?

**Antonio.** Orsino, noble sir, Be pleased that I shake off these names you give me: Antonio never yet was thief or pirate, Though I confess, on base and ground enough, Orsino’s enemy. A witchcraft drew me hither: That most ingrateful boy there by your side, From the rude sea’s enraged and foamy mouth Did I redeem; a wreck past hope he was: His life I gave him and did thereto add My love, without retention or restraint, All his in dedication; for his sake Did I expose myself, pure for his love, Into the danger of this adverse town; Drew to defend him when he was beset: Where being apprehended, his false cunning,
Not meaning to partake with me in danger,
Taught him to face me out of his acquaintance,
And grew a twenty years removed thing
While one would wink; denied me mine own purse,
Which I had recommended to his use 2280
Not half an hour before.

Viola. How can this be?

Orsino. When came he to this town?

Antonio. To-day, my lord; and for three months before,
No interim, not a minute's vacancy. 2285
Both day and night did we keep company.

[Enter OLIVIA and Attendants]

Orsino. Here comes the countess: now heaven walks on earth.
But for thee, fellow; fellow, thy words are madness:
Three months this youth hath tended upon me; 2290
But more of that anon. Take him aside.

Olivia. What would my lord, but that he may not have,
Wherein Olivia may seem serviceable?
Cesario, you do not keep promise with me.

Viola. Madam! 2295

Orsino. Gracious Olivia,—

Olivia. What do you say, Cesario? Good my lord,—

Viola. My lord would speak; my duty hushes me.

Olivia. If it be aught to the old tune, my lord,
It is as fat and fulsome to mine ear 2300
As howling after music.

Orsino. Still so cruel?

Olivia. Still so constant, lord.

Orsino. What, to perverseness? you uncivil lady,
To whose ingrate and unauspicious altars 2305
My soul the faithfull'est offerings hath breathed out
That e'er devotion tender'd! What shall I do?

Olivia. Even what it please my lord, that shall become him.

Orsino. Why should I not, had I the heart to do it,
Like to the Egyptian thief at point of death, 2310
Kill what I love?—a savage jealousy
That sometimes savours nobly. But hear me this:
Since you to non-regardance cast my faith,
And that I partly know the instrument
That screws me from my true place in your favour, 2315
Live you the marble-breasted tyrant still;
But this your minion, whom I know you love,
And whom, by heaven I swear, I tender dearly,
Him will I tear out of that cruel eye,
Where he sits crowned in his master's spite. 2320
Come, boy, with me; my thoughts are ripe in mischief:
I'll sacrifice the lamb that I do love,  
To spite a raven's heart within a dove.

Viola. And I, most jocund, apt and willing,  
To do you rest, a thousand deaths would die.2325

Olivia. Where goes Cesario?

Viola. After him I love  
More than I love these eyes, more than my life,  
More, by all mores, than e'er I shall love wife.  
If I do feign, you witnesses above 2330  
Punish my life for tainting of my love!

Olivia. Ay me, detested! how am I beguiled!

Viola. Who does beguile you? who does do you wrong?

Olivia. Hast thou forgot thyself? is it so long?  
Call forth the holy father.2335

Orsino. Come, away!


Orsino. Husband!

Olivia. Ay, husband: can he that deny?

Orsino. Her husband, sirrah!2340

Viola. No, my lord, not I.

Olivia. Alas, it is the baseness of thy fear  
That makes thee strangle thy propriety:  
Fear not, Cesario; take thy fortunes up;  
Be that thou know'st thou art, and then thou art 2345  
As great as that thou fear'st.

[Enter Priest]  
O, welcome, father!  
Father, I charge thee, by thy reverence,  
Here to unfold, though lately we intended 2350  
To keep in darkness what occasion now  
Reveals before 'tis ripe, what thou dost know  
Hath newly pass'd between this youth and me.

Priest. A contract of eternal bond of love,  
Confirm'd by mutual joinder of your hands, 2355  
Attested by the holy close of lips,  
Strengthen'd by interchangement of your rings;  
And all the ceremony of this compact  
Seal'd in my function, by my testimony:  
Since when, my watch hath told me, toward my grave 2360  
I have travell'd but two hours.

Orsino. O thou dissembling cub! what wilt thou be  
When time hath sow'd a grizzle on thy case?  
Or will not else thy craft so quickly grow,  
That thine own trip shall be thine overthrow? 2365  
Farewell, and take her; but direct thy feet  
Where thou and I henceforth may never meet.
Viola. My lord, I do protest—

Olivia. O, do not swear!
Hold little faith, though thou hast too much fear. 2370

[Enter SIR ANDREW]

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. For the love of God, a surgeon! Send one presently to Sir Toby.

Olivia. What’s the matter?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. He has broke my head across and has given Sir Toby a bloody coxcomb too: for the love of God, your help! I had rather than forty pound I were at home.

Olivia. Who has done this, Sir Andrew?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. The count’s gentleman, one Cesario: we took him for a coward, but he’s the very devil incardinate. 2380

Orsino. My gentleman, Cesario?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. ‘Od’s lifelings, here he is! You broke my head for nothing; and that that I did, I was set on to do’t by Sir Toby.

Viola. Why do you speak to me? I never hurt you: 2385
You drew your sword upon me without cause;
But I bespoke you fair, and hurt you not.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. If a bloody coxcomb be a hurt, you have hurt me: I think you set nothing by a bloody coxcomb.

[Enter SIR TOBY BELCH and Clown] 2390
Here comes Sir Toby halting; you shall hear more:
but if he had not been in drink, he would have tickled you othergates than he did.

Orsino. How now, gentleman! how is’t with you?

Sir Toby Belch. That’s all one: has hurt me, and there’s the end 2395 on’t. Sot, didst see Dick surgeon, sot?

Feste. O, he’s drunk, Sir Toby, an hour agone; his eyes were set at eight i’ the morning.

Sir Toby Belch. Then he’s a rogue, and a passy measures pany: I hate a drunken rogue. 2400

Olivia. Away with him! Who hath made this havoc with them?

Sir Andrew Aguecheek. I’ll help you, Sir Toby, because well be dressed together.

Sir Toby Belch. Will you help? an ass-head and a coxcomb and a knave, a thin-faced knave, a gull!

Olivia. Get him to bed, and let his hurt be look’d to. 2405

[Exeunt Clown, FABIAN, SIR TOBY BELCH, and SIR ANDREW]

[Enter SEBASTIAN]
Sebastian. I am sorry, madam, I have hurt your kinsman:
But, had it been the brother of my blood,
I must have done no less with wit and safety. 2410
You throw a strange regard upon me, and by that
I do perceive it hath offended you:
Pardon me, sweet one, even for the vows
We made each other but so late ago.

Orsino. One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons, 2415
A natural perspective, that is and is not!

Sebastian. Antonio, O my dear Antonio!
How have the hours rack’d and tortured me,
Since I have lost thee!

Antonio. Sebastian are you?2420

Sebastian. Fear’st thou that, Antonio?

Antonio. How have you made division of yourself?
An apple, cleft in two, is not more twin
Than these two creatures. Which is Sebastian?

Olivia. Most wonderful!2425

Sebastian. Do I stand there? I never had a brother;
Nor can there be that deity in my nature,
Of here and every where. I had a sister,
Whom the blind waves and surges have devour’d.
Of charity, what kin are you to me? 2430
What countryman? what name? what parentage?

Viola. Of Messaline: Sebastian was my father;
Such a Sebastian was my brother too,
So went he suited to his watery tomb:
If spirits can assume both form and suit 2435
You come to fright us.

Sebastian. A spirit I am indeed;
But am in that dimension grossly clad
Which from the womb I did participate.
Were you a woman, as the rest goes even, 2440
I should my tears let fall upon your cheek,
And say ‘Thrice-welcome, drowned Viola!’

Viola. My father had a mole upon his brow.

Sebastian. And so had mine.

Viola. And died that day when Viola from her birth 2445
Had number’d thirteen years.

Sebastian. O, that record is lively in my soul!
He finished indeed his mortal act
That day that made my sister thirteen years.

Viola. If nothing lets to make us happy both 2450
But this my masculine usurp’d attire,
Do not embrace me till each circumstance
Of place, time, fortune, do cohere and jump
That I am Viola: which to confirm,
I’ll bring you to a captain in this town, 2455
Where lie my maiden weeds; by whose gentle help
I was preserved to serve this noble count.
All the occurrence of my fortune since
Hath been between this lady and this lord.

Sebastian. [To OLIVIA] So comes it, lady, you have been mistook: 2460
But nature to her bias drew in that.
You would have been contracted to a maid;
Nor are you therein, by my life, deceived,
You are betroth’d both to a maid and man.

Orsino. Be not amazed; right noble is his blood. 2465
If this be so, as yet the glass seems true,
I shall have share in this most happy wreck.
[To VIOLA]
Boy, thou hast said to me a thousand times
Thou never shouldst love woman like to me.2470

Viola. And all those sayings will I overswear;
And those swearings keep as true in soul
As doth that orbed continent the fire
That severs day from night.

Orsino. Give me thy hand; 2475
And let me see thee in thy woman’s weeds.

Viola. The captain that did bring me first on shore
Hath my maid’s garments: he upon some action
Is now in durance, at Malvolio’s suit,
A gentleman, and follower of my lady’s.2480

Olivia. He shall enlarge him: fetch Malvolio hither:
And yet, alas, now I remember me,
They say, poor gentleman, he’s much distract.
[Re-enter Clown with a letter, and FABIAN]
A most extracting frenzy of mine own 2485
From my remembrance clearly banish’d his.
How does he, sirrah?

Feste. Truly, madam, he holds Belzebub at the staves’s end as
well as a man in his case may do: has here writ a
letter to you; I should have given’t you to-day 2490
morning, but as a madman’s epistles are no gospels,
so it skills not much when they are delivered.

Olivia. Open’t, and read it.

Feste. Look then to be well edified when the fool delivers
the madman. 2495
[Reads]
‘By the Lord, madam,’—

Olivia. How now! art thou mad?

Feste. No, madam, I do but read madness: an your ladyship
will have it as it ought to be, you must allow Vox.2500

Olivia. Prithee, read i’ thy right wits.

Feste. So I do, madonna; but to read his right wits is to
read thus: therefore perpend, my princess, and give ear.
Olivia. Read it you, sirrah.

[To FABIAN]

Fabian. [Reads] ‘By the Lord, madam, you wrong me, and the world shall know it: though you have put me into darkness and given your drunken cousin rule over me, yet have I the benefit of my senses as well as your ladyship. I have your own letter that induced me to the semblance I put on; with which I doubt not but to do myself much right, or you much shame. Think of me as you please. I leave my duty a little unthought of and speak out of my injury. THE MADLY-USED MALVOLIO.’

Olivia. Did he write this?

Feste. Ay, madam.

Orsino. This savours not much of distraction.

Olivia. See him deliver’d, Fabian; bring him hither. [Exit FABIAN] My lord so please you, these things further thought on, To think me as well a sister as a wife, One day shall crown the alliance on’t, so please you, Here at my house and at my proper cost.

Orsino. Madam, I am most apt to embrace your offer. [To VIOLA] Your master quits you; and for your service done him, So much against the mettle of your sex, So far beneath your soft and tender breeding, And since you call’d me master for so long, Here is my hand: you shall from this time be Your master’s mistress.

Olivia. A sister! you are she.

[Re-enter FABIAN, with MALVOLIO]

Orsino. Is this the madman?

Olivia. Ay, my lord, this same. How now, Malvolio!

Malvolio. Madam, you have done me wrong, Notorious wrong.

Olivia. Have I, Malvolio? no.

Malvolio. Lady, you have. Pray you, peruse that letter. You must not now deny it is your hand: Write from it, if you can, in hand or phrase; Or say ’tis not your seal, nor your invention: You can say none of this: well, grant it then And tell me, in the modesty of honour, Why you have given me such clear lights of favour, Bade me come smiling and cross-garter’d to you, To put on yellow stockings and to frown Upon Sir Toby and the lighter people;
And, acting this in an obedient hope,
Why have you suffer'd me to be imprison'd,
Kept in a dark house, visited by the priest,
And made the most notorious geck and gull

Olivia. Alas, Malvolio, this is not my writing,
Though, I confess, much like the character
But out of question 'tis Maria's hand.
And now I do bethink me, it was she
First told me thou wast mad; then cam'est in smiling,
And in such forms which here were presupposed
Upon thee in the letter. Prithee, be content:
This practise hath most shrewdly pass'd upon thee;
But when we know the grounds and authors of it,
Thou shalt be both the plaintiff and the judge
Of thine own cause.

Fabian. Good madam, hear me speak,
And let no quarrel nor no brawl to come
Taint the condition of this present hour,
Which I have wonder'd at. In hope it shall not,
Most freely I confess, myself and Toby
Set this device against Malvolio here,
Upon some stubborn and uncourteous parts
We had conceived against him: Maria writ
The letter at Sir Toby's great importance;
In recompense whereof he hath married her.
How with a sportful malice it was follow'd,
May rather pluck on laughter than revenge;
If that the injuries be justly weigh'd
That have on both sides pass'd.

Olivia. Alas, poor fool, how have they baffled thee!

Feste. Why, 'some are born great, some achieve greatness,
and some have greatness thrown upon them.' I was
one, sir, in this interlude; one Sir Topas, sir; but
that's all one. 'By the Lord, fool, I am not mad.'
But do you remember? 'Madam, why laugh you at such
a barren rascal? an you smile not, he's gagged:'
and thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.

Malvolio. I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you.

[Exit]

Olivia. He hath been most notoriously abused.

Orsino. Pursue him and entreat him to a peace:
He hath not told us of the captain yet:
When that is known and golden time convents,
A solemn combination shall be made
Of our dear souls. Meantime, sweet sister,
We will not part from hence. Cesario, come;
For so you shall be, while you are a man;
But when in other habits you are seen,
Orsino's mistress and his fancy's queen.

[Exeunt all, except Clown]
**Feste.** [Sings]
When that I was and a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain, 2605
A foolish thing was but a toy,
For the rain it raineth every day.
But when I came to man’s estate,
With hey, ho, &c.
‘Gainst knaves and thieves men shut their gate, 2610
For the rain, &c.
But when I came, alas! to wive,
With hey, ho, &c.
By swaggering could I never thrive,
For the rain, &c. 2615
But when I came unto my beds,
With hey, ho, &c.
With toss-pots still had drunken heads,
For the rain, &c.
A great while ago the world begun, 2620
With hey, ho, &c.
But that’s all one, our play is done,
And we’ll strive to please you every day.

[Exit]

**ADDtIOnAL RESOURCES**

**Background and Interpretation**

*William-Shakespeare.info’s article on “Elizabethan Theater, Playhouses & Inn-Yards”*

Read this brief overview of the kinds of theaters in which plays were performed during the Elizabethan period (note that this is from a commercial website so be cautious about clicking other inks within it).

*Poets.org’s article on “William Shakespeare”*

Read this brief biography of Shakespeare from poets.org.

**Audio & Video Files**

If you watch this or another video or listen to an audio recording read along in the text of the play, keep in mind that the directors/producers of recordings may make some changes (use the assigned text version for all writing assignments). In any film, adaptations in set, costume, and era may be present. This is a choice of directors/producers. The movie, *She’s the Man*, is a contemporary adaptation of *Twelfth Night*.

Video: A film version of *Twelfth Night* directed by Kenneth Branagh is currently posted on *YouTube*. 
Watch this video online: [https://youtu.be/6i3J17Jp0ag](https://youtu.be/6i3J17Jp0ag)

Audio: A LibraVox audio version of *Twelfth Night* is available on YouTube:

Watch this video online: [https://youtu.be/nOB1nUl-a9k](https://youtu.be/nOB1nUl-a9k)

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John Milton (9 December 1608 – 8 November 1674) was an English poet, polemicist, man of letters, and a civil servant for the Commonwealth of England under Oliver Cromwell. He wrote at a time of religious flux and political upheaval, and is best known for his epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667), written in blank verse.

Milton’s poetry and prose reflect deep personal convictions, a passion for freedom and self-determination, and the urgent issues and political turbulence of his day. Writing in English, Latin, Greek, and Italian, he achieved international renown within his lifetime, and his celebrated *Areopagitica* (1644)—written in condemnation of pre-publication censorship—is among history’s most influential and impassioned defences of free speech and freedom of the press.

William Hayley’s 1796 biography called him the “greatest English author,” and he remains generally regarded “as one of the preeminent writers in the English language,” though critical reception has oscillated in the centuries since his death (often on account of his republicanism).

Milton’s poetry was slow to see the light of day, at least under his name. His first published poem was *On Shakespear* (1630), anonymously included in the Second Folio edition of William Shakespeare. In the midst of the excitement attending the possibility of establishing a new English government, Milton collected his work in 1645 *Poems*. The anonymous edition of *Comus* was published in 1637, and the publication of *Lycidas* in 1638 in *Justa Edouardo King Naufragio* was signed J. M. Otherwise, the 1645 collection was the only poetry of his to see print, until *Paradise Lost* appeared in 1667.

Additional information on Milton’s life, work, and influence can be found here.
Of Man’s first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa’s brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th’ Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th’ upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know’st; thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat’st brooding on the vast Abyss,
And mad’st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That, to the height of this great argument,
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.
Say first—for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell—say first what cause
Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favoured of Heaven so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the World besides.
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal Serpent; he it was whose guile,
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equalled the Most High,
If he opposed, and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Raised impious war in Heaven and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he, with his horrid crew,
Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded, though immortal. But his doom
Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him: round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,
Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.
At once, as far as Angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild.
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
No light; but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all, but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.
Such place Eternal Justice has prepared
For those rebellious; here their prison ordained
In utter darkness, and their portion set,
As far removed from God and light of Heaven
As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole,
Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns; and, wailing by his side,
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and named
Beelzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,
And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:—
"If thou beest he—but O how fallen! how changed
From him who, in the happy realms of light
Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
Myriads, though bright!—if he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise
Joined with me once, now misery hath joined
In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest
From what height fallen: so much the stronger proved
He with his thunder; and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
Nor what the potent Victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,
Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed mind,
And high disdain from sense of injured merit:
That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
And to the fierce contentions brought along
Innumerable force of Spirits armed,
That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power opposed
In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost—the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield:
And what is else not to be overcome?
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power
Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
Doubted his empire—that were low indeed;
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of Gods,
And this empyreal substance, cannot fail;
Since, through experience of this great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,
Who now triumphs, and in th’ excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven."
So spake th’ apostate Angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair;
And him thus answered soon his bold compeer:—
"O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers
That led th’ embattled Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endangered Heaven’s perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate,
Too well I see and rue the dire event
That, with sad overthrow and foul defeat,
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as Gods and heavenly Essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallowed up in endless misery.
But what if he our Conqueror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o’erpowered such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate’er his business be,
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy Deep?
What can it the avail though yet we feel
Strength undiminished, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?”

Whereto with speedy words th’ Arch-Fiend replied:—

“Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure—
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which ofttimes may succeed so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
But see! the angry Victor hath recalled
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail,
Shot after us in storm, o’erblown hath laid
The fiery surge that from the precipice
Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,
Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.
Let us not slip th’ occasion, whether scorn
Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbour there;
And, re-assembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not, what resolution from despair.”

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanean or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th’ ocean-stream.
Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff,
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays.
So stretched out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay,
Chained on the burning lake; nor ever thence
Had risen, or heaved his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others, and enraged might see
How all his malice served but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shewn
On Man by him seduced, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured.
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and rolled
In billows, leave i’ th’ midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
He lights—if it were land that ever burned
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
And such appeared in hue as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
Of thundering Etna, whose combustible
And fuelled entrails, thence conceiving fire,
Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involved
With stench and smoke. Such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate;
Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recovered strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.
“Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,”
Said then the lost Archangel, “this the seat
That we must change for Heaven?—this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is sovereign can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,
Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor—one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; th’ Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure; and, in my choice,
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
Th’ associates and co-partners of our loss,
Lie thus astonished on th’ oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion, or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"
So Satan spake; and him Beelzebub
Thus answered:—“Leader of those armies bright
Which, but th’ Omnipotent, none could have foiled!
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers—heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle, when it raged, in all assaults
Their surest signal—they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie
Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amazed;
No wonder, fallen such a pernicious height!”
He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend
Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast. The broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening, from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.
His spear—to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand—
He walked with, to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marl, not like those steps
On Heaven’s azure; and the torrid clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
Nathless he so endured, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and called
His legions—Angel Forms, who lay entranced
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th’ Etrurian shades
High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
Hath vexed the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o’erthrew
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcases
And broken chariot-wheels. So thick bestrown,
Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He called so loud that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded:—“Princes, Potentates,
Warriors, the Flower of Heaven—once yours; now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal Spirits! Or have ye chosen this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
To adore the Conqueror, who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With scattered arms and ensigns, till anon
His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern
Th’ advantage, and, descending, tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf?
Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!"
They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their General's voice they soon obeyed
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Waved round the coast, up-called a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like Night, and darkened all the land of Nile;
So numberless were those bad Angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
Till, as a signal given, th' uplifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain:
A multitude like which the populous North
Pour'd never from her frozen loins to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.
Forthwith, form every squadron and each band,
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great Commander--godlike Shapes, and Forms
Excelling human; princely Dignities;
And Powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones,
Though on their names in Heavenly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and rased
By their rebellion from the Books of Life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till, wandering o'er the earth,
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and th' invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for deities:
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the heathen world.
Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,
At their great Emperor's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof?
The chief were those who, from the pit of Hell
Roaming to seek their prey on Earth, durst fix
Their seats, long after, next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, gods adored
Among the nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned
Between the Cherubim; yea, often placed
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First, Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents’ tears;
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
Their children’s cries unheard that passed through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshiped in Rabba and her watery plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.
Next Chemos, th’ obscene dread of Moab’s sons,
From Aroar to Nebo and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon’s real, beyond
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Eleale to th’ Asphaltec Pool:
Peor his other name, when he enticed
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged
Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate,
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they who, from the bordering flood
Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baalim and Ashtaroth—those male,
These feminine. For Spirits, when they please,
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure,
Not tried or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
Can execute their airy purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their Living Strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial gods; for which their heads as low
Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of desppicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians called
Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on th’ offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king whose heart, though large,
Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer’s day,
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion’s daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark
Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off,
In his own temple, on the grunsel-edge,
Where he fell flat and shamed his worshippers:
Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
And downward fish; yet had his temple high
Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza’s frontier bounds.
Him followed Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharpar, lucid streams.
He also against the house of God was bold:
A leper once he lost, and gained a king—
Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
God’s altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the gods
Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared
A crew who, under names of old renown—
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train—
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek
Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape
Th’ infection, when their borrowed gold composed
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox—
Jehovah, who, in one night, when he passed
From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
Belial came last; than whom a Spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself. To him no temple stood
Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli’s sons, who filled
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage; and, when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Exposed a matron, to avoid worse rape.
These were the prime in order and in might:
The rest were long to tell; though far renowned
Th’ Ionian gods–of Javan’s issue held
Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,
Their boasted parents;—Titan, Heaven’s first-born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright seized
By younger Saturn: he from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea’s son, like measure found;
So Jove usurping reigned. These, first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,
Their highest heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adria to th’ Hesperian fields,
And o’er the Celtic roamed the utmost Isles.
All these and more came flocking; but with looks
Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appeared
Obscure some glimpse of joy to have found their Chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his countenance cast
Like doubtful hue. But he, his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised
Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears.
Then straight commands that, at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and clarions, be upreared
His mighty standard. That proud honour claimed
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall:
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
Th’ imperial ensign; which, full high advanced,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazoned,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host up-sent
A shout that tore Hell’s concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
With orient colours waving: with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appeared, and serried shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders—such as raised
To height of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle, and instead of rage
Deliberate valour breathed, firm, and unmoved
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force with fixed thought,
Moved on in silence to soft pipes that charmed
Their painful steps o’er the burnt soil. And now
Advanced in view they stand—a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old, with ordered spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
Had to impose. He through the armed files
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views—their order due,
Their visages and stature as of gods;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and, hardening in his strength,
Glories: for never, since created Man,
Met such embodied force as, named with these,
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warred on by cranes—though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were joined
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mixed with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
Their dread Commander. He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower. His form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appeared
Less than Archangel ruined, and th' excess
Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
Above them all th' Archangel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion, to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned
For ever now to have their lot in pain—
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung
For his revolt—yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory withered; as, when heaven's fire
Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last
Words interwove with sighs found out their way:—
'O myriads of immortal Spirits! O Powers
Matchless, but with th' Almighty!—and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,
Forseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have feared
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to re-ascend,
Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?
For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,
If counsels different, or danger shunned
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heaven till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state
Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed—
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war provoked: our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not; that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife
There went a fame in Heaven that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven.
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption—thither, or elsewhere;
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor th’ Abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired;
For who can think submission? War, then, war
Open or understood, must be resolved.”
He spake; and, to confirm his words, outflew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumined Hell. Highly they raged
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.
There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf—undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither, winged with speed,
A numerous brigade hastened: as when bands
Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe armed,
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on—
Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
From Heaven; for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of heaven’s pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed
In vision beatific. By him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransacked the centre, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Opened into the hill a spacious wound,
And digged out ribs of gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame
And strength, and art, are easily outdone
By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they, with incessant toil
And hands innumerable, scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion-dross.
A third as soon had formed within the ground
A various mould, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook;
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet—
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon
Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine
Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. Th’ ascending pile
Stood fixed her stately height, and straight the doors,
Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide
Within, her ample spaces o’er the smooth
And level pavement: from the arched roof,
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With naptha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring entered; and the work some praise,
And some the architect. His hand was known
In Heaven by many a towered structure high,
Where sceptred Angels held their residence,
And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his Hierarchy, the Orders bright.
Nor was his name unheard or unadored
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell
From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o’er the crystal battlements: from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer’s day, and with the setting sun
Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star,
On Lemnos, th’ Aegaean isle. Thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before; nor aught availed him now

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To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he scape
By all his engines, but was headlong sent,
With his industrious crew, to build in Hell.
Meanwhile the winged Heralds, by command
Of sovereign power, with awful ceremony
And trumpet’s sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be held
At Pandemonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers. Their summons called
From every band and squared regiment
By place or choice the worthiest: they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
Attended. All access was thronged; the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a covered field, where champions bold
Wont ride in armed, and at the Soldan’s chair
Defied the best of Paynim chivalry)
To mortal combat, or career with lance),
Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air,
Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring-time, when the Sun with Taurus rides.
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubbed with balm, expatiate, and confer
Their state-affairs: so thick the airy crowd
Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given,
Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed
In bigness to surpass Earth’s giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless—like that pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,
Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the Moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the Earth
Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat,
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.
O, for that warning voice, which he, who saw
The Apocalypse, heard cry in Heaven aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be revenged on men,
Woe to the inhabitants on earth! that now,
While time was, our first parents had been warned
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scape'd,
Haply so 'scape'd his mortal snare: For now
Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,
The tempter ere the accuser of mankind,
To wreak on innocent frail Man his loss
Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell:
Yet, not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt; which nigh the birth
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
And like a devilish engine back recoils
Upon himself; honour and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
The Hell within him; for within him Hell
He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
One step, no more than from himself, can fly
By change of place: Now conscience wakes despair,
That slumbered; wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;
Sometimes towards Heaven, and the full-blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tower:
Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began.
O thou, that, with surpassing glory crowned,
Lookest from thy sole dominion like the God
Of this new world: at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
Of Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down
Warring in Heaven against Heaven's matchless King:
Ah, wherefore! he deserved no such return
From me, whom he created what I was
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be less than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
How due! yet all his good proved ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
I 'sdeined subjection, and thought one step higher
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
Forgetful what from him I still received,
And understood not that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharged; what burden then
O, had his powerful destiny ordained
Me some inferiour Angel, I had stood
Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised
Ambition! Yet why not some other Power
As great might have aspired, and me, though mean,
Drawn to his part; but other Powers as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
Or from without, to all temptations armed.
Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?
Be then his love accursed, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.
Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is Hell: myself am Hell;
And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.
O, then, at last relent: Is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduced
With other promises and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
The Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know
How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
Under what torments inwardly I groan,
While they adore me on the throne of Hell.
With diadem and scepter high advanced,
The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery: Such joy ambition finds.
But say I could repent, and could obtain,
By act of grace, my former state; how soon
Would highth recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feigned submission swore? Ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
For never can true reconcilement grow,
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep:
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse
And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
Short intermission bought with double smart.
This knows my Punisher; therefore as far
From granting he, as I from begging, peace;
All hope excluded thus, behold, instead
Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,
Mankind created, and for him this world.
So farewell, hope; and with hope farewell, fear;
Farewell, remorse! all good to me is lost;
Evil, be thou my good; by thee at least
Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
As Man ere long, and this new world, shall know.
Thus while he spake, each passion dimmed his face
Thrice changed with pale, ire, envy, and despair;
Which marred his borrowed visage, and betrayed
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.
For heavenly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
Each perturbation smoothed with outward calm,
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practised falsehood under saintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couched with revenge:
Yet not enough had practised to deceive
Uriel once warned; whose eye pursued him down
The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigured, more than could befal
Spirit of happy sort; his gestures fierce
He marked and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champaign head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access denied; and overhead upgrew
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene, and, as the ranks ascend,
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verdurous wall of Paradise upsprung;
Which to our general sire gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighbouring round.
And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appeared, with gay enamelled colours mixed:
On which the sun more glad impressed his beams
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath showered the earth; so lovely seemed
That landskip: And of pure now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair: Now gentle gales,
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who fail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mozambick, off at sea north-east winds blow
Sabean odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest; with such delay
Well pleased they slack their course, and many a league
Cheered with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles:
So entertained those odorous sweets the Fiend,
Who came their bane; though with them better pleased
Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume
That drove him, though enamoured, from the spouse
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent
From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.
Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill
Satan had journeyed on, pensive and slow;
But further way found none, so thick entwined,
As one continued brake, the undergrowth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed
All path of man or beast that passed that way.
One gate there only was, and that looked east
On the other side: which when the arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdained; and, in contempt,
At one flight bound high over-leaped all bound
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
In hurdles cotes amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:
Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault,
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
Thereby regained, but sat devising death
To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only used
For prospect, what well used had been the pledge
Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right
The good before him, but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him with new wonder now he views,
To all delight of human sense exposed,
In narrow room, Nature's whole wealth, yea more,
A Heaven on Earth: For blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in the east
Of Eden planted; Eden stretched her line
From Auran eastward to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar: In this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordained;
Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the tree of life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold; and next to life,
Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by,
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
Passed underneath ingulfed; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden-mould high raised
Upon the rapid current, which, through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up-drawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Watered the garden; thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
Which from his darksome passage now appears,
And now, divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy errour under pendant shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
Pouréd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierced shade
Imbrowned the noontide bowers: Thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view;
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,
Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only, and of delicious taste:
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,
Or palm-tree hilltop; or the flowery lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose:
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o’er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant; mean while murmuring waters fall
Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on the eternal Spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower by gloomy Dis
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,
Hid Amalthea, and her florid son
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea’s eye;
Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by some supposed
True Paradise under the Ethiop line
By Nulius’ head, enclosed with shining rock,
A whole day’s journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden, where the Fiend
Saw, undelighted, all delight, all kind
Of living creatures, new to sight, and strange
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad
In naked majesty seemed lords of all:
And worthy seemed; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
(Severe, but in true filial freedom placed.)
Whence true authority in men; though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;
For contemplation he and valour formed;
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him:
His fair large front and eye sublime declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
Her unadorned golden tresses wore
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved
As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best received,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.
Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed;
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
Of nature’s works, honour dishonourable,
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
And banished from man’s life his happiest life,
Simplicity and spotless innocence!
So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight
Of God or Angel; for they thought no ill:
So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair,
That ever since in love’s embraces met;
Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade that on a green
Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain side
They sat them down; and, after no more toil
Of their sweet gardening labour than sufficed
To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
More grateful, to their supper-fruits they fell,
Nectarine fruits which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline
On the soft downy bank damasked with flowers:
The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind,
Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream;
Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems
Fair couple, linked in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they. About them frisking played
All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase
In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
Gambolled before them; the unwieldy elephant,
To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed
His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly,
Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
His braided train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass
Couched, and now filled with pasture gazing sat,
Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,
Declined, was hasting now with prone career
To the ocean isles, and in the ascending scale
Of Heaven the stars that usher evening rose:
When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length failed speech recovered sad.
O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
Into our room of bliss thus high advanced
Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,
Not Spirits, yet to heavenly Spirits bright
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that formed them on their shape hath poured.
Ah! gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe;
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;
Happy, but for so happy ill secured
Long to continue, and this high seat your Heaven
Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out such a foe
As now is entered; yet no purposed foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied: League with you I seek,
And mutual amity, so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me,
Which I as freely give: Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
Thank him who puts me loth to this revenge
On you who wrong me not for him who wronged.
And should I at your harmless innocence

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Melt, as I do, yet publick reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarged,
By conquering this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damned, I should abhor.
So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.
Then from his lofty stand on that high tree
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape served best his end
Nearer to view his prey, and, unespied,
To mark what of their state he more might learn,
By word or action marked. About them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Straight couches close, then, rising, changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing, he might surest seize them both,
Gripped in each paw: when, Adam first of men
To first of women Eve thus moving speech,
Turned him, all ear to hear new utterance flow.
Sole partner, and sole part, of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Power
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite;
That raised us from the dust, and placed us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires
From us no other service than to keep
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only tree
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life;
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,
Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou knowest
God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left,
Among so many signs of power and rule
Conferred upon us, and dominion given
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights:
But let us ever praise him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task,
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers,
Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.
To whom thus Eve replied. O thou for whom
And from whom I was formed, flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end, my guide
And head! what thou hast said is just and right.
For we to him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awaked, and found myself reposed
Under a shade on flowers, much wondering where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved
Pure as the expanse of Heaven; I thither went
With unexperienced thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seemed another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite
A shape within the watery gleam appeared,
Bending to look on me: I started back,
It started back; but pleased I soon returned,
Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks
Of sympathy and love: There I had fixed
Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warned me; “What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair Creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays
Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy
Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be called
Mother of human race.” What could I do,
But follow straight, invisibly thus led?
Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall,
Under a platane; yet methought less fair,
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
Than that smooth watery image: Back I turned;
Thou following cryedst aloud, “Return, fair Eve;
Whom flyest thou? whom thou flyest, of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
Substantial life, to have thee by my side
Henceforth an individual solace dear;
Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim
My other half.” With that thy gentle hand
Seised mine: I yielded; and from that time see
How beauty is excelled by manly grace,
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.
So spake our general mother, and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction unreproved,
And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned
On our first father; half her swelling breast
Naked met his, under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
Both of her beauty, and submissive charms,
Smiled with superiority love, as Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregnates the clouds
That shed Mayflowers; and pressed her matron lip
With kisses pure: Aside the Devil turned
For envy; yet with jealous leer malign
Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plained.
Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two,
Imparadised in one another’s arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust,
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least,
Still unfulfilled with pain of longing pines.
Yet let me not forget what I have gained
From their own mouths: All is not theirs, it seems;
One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge called,
Forbidden them to taste: Knowledge forbidden
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? Can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? And do they only stand
By ignorance? Is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith?
O fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin! hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt
Equal with Gods: aspiring to be such,
They taste and die: What likelier can ensue
But first with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspied;
A chance but chance may lead where I may meet
Some wandering Spirit of Heaven by fountain side,
Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw
What further would be learned. Live while ye may,
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed!
So saying, his proud step he scornful turned,
But with sly circumspection, and began
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam
Mean while in utmost longitude, where Heaven
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun
Slowly descended, and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levelled his evening rays: It was a rock
Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
Chief of the angelick guards, awaiting night;
About him exercised heroick games
The unarmed youth of Heaven, but nigh at hand
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fired
Impress the air, and shows the mariner
From what point of his compass to beware
Impetuous winds: He thus began in haste.
Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
No evil thing approach or enter in.
This day at highth of noon came to my sphere
A Spirit, zealous, as he seemed, to know
More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly Man,
God's latest image: I described his way
Bent all on speed, and marked his aery gait;
But in the mount that lies from Eden north,  
Where he first lighted, soon discerned his looks  
Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscured:  
Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade  
Lost sight of him: One of the banished crew,  
I fear, hath ventured from the deep, to raise  
New troubles; him thy care must be to find.  
To whom the winged warriour thus returned.  
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,  
Amid the sun’s bright circle where thou sitst,  
See far and wide: In at this gate none pass  
The vigilance here placed, but such as come  
Well known from Heaven; and since meridian hour  
No creature thence: If Spirit of other sort,  
So minded, have o’er-leaped these earthly bounds  
On purpose, hard thou knowest it to exclude  
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.  
But if within the circuit of these walks,  
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom  
Thou tellest, by morrow dawning I shall know.  
So promised he; and Uriel to his charge  
Returned on that bright beam, whose point now raised  
Bore him slope downward to the sun now fallen  
Beneath the Azores; whether the prime orb,  
Incredible how swift, had thither rolled  
Diurnal, or this less volubil earth,  
By shorter flight to the east, had left him there  
Arraying with reflected purple and gold  
The clouds that on his western throne attend.  
Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray  
Had in her sober livery all things clad;  
Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,  
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests  
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;  
She all night long her amorous descant sung;  
Silence was pleased: Now glowed the firmament  
With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led  
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,  
Rising in clouded majesty, at length  
Apparent queen unveiled her peerless light,  
And o’er the dark her silver mantle threw.  
When Adam thus to Eve. Fair Consort, the hour  
Of night, and all things now retired to rest,  
Mind us of like repose; since God hath set  
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men  
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,  
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight, inclines  
Our eye-lids: Other creatures all day long  
Rove idle, unemployed, and less need rest;  
Man hath his daily work of body or mind  
Appointed, which declares his dignity,  
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways;  
While other animals unactive range,  
And of their doings God takes no account.  
To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east  
With first approach of light, we must be risen,  
And at our pleasant labour, to reform  
Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,  
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,  
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth:
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,
That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
Mean while, as Nature wills, night bids us rest.
To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorned
My Author and Disposer, what thou bidst
Unargued I obey: So God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine: To know no more
Is woman’s happiest knowledge, and her praise.
With thee conversing I forget all time;
All seasons, and their change, all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful Evening mild; then silent Night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:
But neither breath of Morn, when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glistening with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
Nor grateful Evening mild; nor silent Night,
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.
But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?
To whom our general ancestor replied.
Daughter of God and Man, accomplished Eve,
These have their course to finish round the earth,
By morrow evening, and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Ministring light prepared, they set and rise;
Lest total Darkness should by night regain
Her old possession, and extinguish life
In Nature and all things; which these soft fires
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
Of various influence foment and warm,
Temper or nourish, or in part shed down
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
On earth, made hereby apter to receive
Perfection from the sun’s more potent ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none,
That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise:
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
Both day and night: How often from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to others note,
Singing their great Creator? oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds
In full harmonick number joined, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.
Thus talking, hand in hand alone they passed
On to their blissful bower: it was a place
Chosen by the sovran Planter, when he framed
All things to Man’s delightful use; the roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
Acanthus, and each odoruous bushy shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,
Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; underfoot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Brodered the ground, more coloured than with stone
Of costliest emblem: Other creature here,
Bird, beast, insect, or worm, durst enter none,
Such was their awe of Man. In shadier bower
More sacred and sequestered, though but feigned,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph
Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed;
And heavenly quires the hymenaean sung,
What day the genial Angel to our sire
Brought her in naked beauty more adorned,
More lovely, than Pandora, whom the Gods
Endowed with all their gifts, and O! too like
In sad event, when to the unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared
Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged
On him who had stole Jove’s authentick fire.
Thus, at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,
Both turned, and under open sky adored
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,
Which they beheld, the moon’s resplendent globe,
And starry pole: Thou also madest the night,
Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day,
Which which we, in our appointed work employed,
Have finished, happy in our mutual help
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
Ordained by thee; and this delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promised from us two a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.
This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
Handed they went; and, eased the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear,
Straight side by side were laid; nor turned, I ween,
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refused:
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
Our Maker bids encrease; who bids abstain
But our Destroyer, foe to God and Man?
Hail, wedded Love, mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common else!
By thee adulterous Lust was driven from men
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.

Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestick sweets,
Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,
Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs used.
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,
Casual fruition; nor in court-amours,
Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
Or serenate, which the starved lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.
These, lulled by nightingales, embracing slept,
And on their naked limbs the flowery roof
Showered roses, which the morn repaired. Sleep on,
Blest pair; and O! yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more.

Now had night measured with her shadowy cone
Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
And from their ivory port the Cherubim,
Forth issuing at the accustomed hour, stood armed
To their night watches in warlike parade;
When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake.
Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;
Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part,
Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.
From these, two strong and subtle Spirits he called
That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.
Ithuriel and Zephon, with winged speed
Search through this garden, leave unsearched no nook;
But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge,
Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.
This evening from the sun’s decline arrived,
Who tells of some infernal Spirit seen
Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escaped
The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt:
Such, where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.
So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct
In search of whom they sought: Him there they found
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,
Assaying by his devilish art to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions, as he list, phantasms and dreams;
Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
The animal spirits, that from pure blood arise
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
At least distempered, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits ingendering pride.
Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear
Touched lightly; for no falshood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness: Up he starts
Discovered and surprised. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the tun some magazine to store
Against a rumoured war, the smutty grain,
With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air;
So started up in his own shape the Fiend.
Back stept those two fair Angels, half amazed
So sudden to behold the grisly king;
Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon.
Which of those rebel Spirits adjudged to Hell
Comest thou, escaped thy prison? and, transformed,
Why sat’st thou like an enemy in wait,
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?
Know ye not then said Satan, filled with scorn,
Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate
For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar:
Not to know me argues yourselves unknown,
The lowest of your throng; or, if ye know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain?
To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn.
Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminished brightness to be known,
As when thou stoodest in Heaven upright and pure;
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now
Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul.
But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm.
So spake the Cherub; and his grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible: Abashed the Devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pined
His loss; but chiefly to find here observed
His lustre visibly impaired; yet seemed
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
Best with the best, the sender, not the sent,
Or all at once; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
Will save us trial what the least can do
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.
The Fiend replied not, overcome with rage;
But, like a proud steed reined, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb: To strive or fly
He held it vain; awe from above had quelled
His heart, not else dismayed. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron joined,
A waiting next command. To whom their Chief,
Gabriel, from the front thus called aloud.
O friends! I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade;
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendour wan; who by his gait
And fierce demeanour seems the Prince of Hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest;
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.
He scarce had ended, when those two approached,
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couched.
To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.
Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed
To thy transgressions, and disturbed the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress
By thy example, but have power and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employed, it seems, to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss!
To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow.
Gabriel? thou hadst in Heaven the esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question asked
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain!
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
Though thither doomed! Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt
And boldly venture to whatever place
Farthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;
To thee no reason, who knowest only good,
But evil hast not tried: and wilt object
His will who bounds us! Let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance: 'Thus much what was asked.
The rest is true, they found me where they say;
But that implies not violence or harm.
The warlike Angel moved,
Disdainfully half smiling, thus replied.
O loss of one in Heaven to judge of wise
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,
And now returns him from his prison 'scaped,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicensed from his bounds in Hell prescribed;
So wise he judges it to fly from pain
However, and to 'scape his punishment!
So judge thou still, presumptuous! till the wrath,
Which thou incurrest by flying, meet thy flight
Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
Can equal anger infinite provoked.
But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
Came not all hell broke loose? or thou than they
Less hardy to endure? Courageous Chief!
The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alleged
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.
To which the Fiend thus answered, frowning stern.
Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,
Insulting Angel! well thou knowest I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid
The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
But still thy words at random, as before,
Argue thy inexperience what behoves
From hard assays and ill successes past
A faithful leader, not to hazard all
Through ways of danger by himself untried:
I, therefore, I alone first undertook
To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
This new created world, whereof in Hell
Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted Powers
To settle here on earth, or in mid air;
Though for possession put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
High up in Heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practised distances to cringe, not fight,
To whom the warriour Angel soon replied.
To say and straight unsay, pretending first
Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader but a liar traced,
Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name,
O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!
Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
Army of Fiends, fit body to fit head.
Was this your discipline and faith engaged,
Your military obedience, to dissolve
Allegiance to the acknowledged Power supreme?
And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawned, and cringed, and servilely adored
Heaven’s awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope
To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
But mark what I arreed thee now, Avant;
Fly neither whence thou fledst! If from this hour
Within these hallowed limits thou appear,
Back to the infernal pit I drag thee chained,
And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
The facile gates of Hell too slightly barred.
So threatened he; but Satan to no threats
Gave heed, but waxing more in rage replied.
Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,
Proud limitary Cherub! but ere then
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
From my prevailing arm, though Heaven’s King
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
Us’d to the yoke, drawest his triumphant wheels
In progress through the road of Heaven star-paved.
While thus he spake, the angelick squadron bright
Turned fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported spears, as thick as when a field
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
Sways them; the careful plowman doubting stands,
Left on the threshing floor his hopeless sheaves
Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan, alarmed,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:
His stature reached the sky, and on his crest
Sat Horrour plumed; nor wanted in his grasp
What seemed both spear and shield: Now dreadful deeds
Might have ensued, nor only Paradise
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of Heaven perhaps, or all the elements
At least had gone to wrack, disturbed and torn
With violence of this conflict, had not soon
The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weighed,
The pendulous round earth with balanced air
In counterpoise, now ponderers all events,
Battles and realms: In these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of fight:
The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam,
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the Fiend.
Satan, I know thy strength, and thou knowest mine;
Neither our own, but given: What folly then
To boast what arms can do? since thine no more
Than Heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled now
To trample thee as mire: For proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign;
Where thou art weighed, and shown how light, how weak,
If thou resist. The Fiend looked up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft: Nor more; but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.
No more of talk where God or Angel guest
With Man, as with his friend, familiar us'd,
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast; permitting him the while
Venial discourse unblam'd. I now must change
Those notes to tragick; foul distrust, and breach
Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt,
And disobedience: on the part of Heaven
Now alienated, distance and distaste,
Anger and just rebuke, and judgement given,
That brought into this world a world of woe,
Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery
Death's harbinger: Sad task! yet argument
Not less but more heroick than the wrath
Of stern Achilles on his foe pursued
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd;
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
Perplexed the Greek, and Cytherea's son:
If answerable style I can obtain
Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
And dictates to me slumbering; or inspires
Easy my unpremeditated verse:
Since first this subject for heroick song
Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late;
Not sedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroick deem'd chief mastery to dissect
With long and tedious havock fabled knights
In battles feign'd; the better fortitude
Of patience and heroick martyrdom
 Unsung; or to describe races and games,
Or tilting furniture, imblazon'd shields,
Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds,
Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
At joust and tournament; then marshall'd feast
Serv'd up in hall with sewers and seneshals;
The skill of artifice or office mean,
Not that which justly gives heroick name
To person, or to poem. Me, of these
Nor skill'd nor studious, higher argument
Remains; sufficient of itself to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing
Depress'd; and much they may, if all be mine,
Not hers, who brings it nightly to my ear.
The sun was sunk, and after him the star
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter
'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
Night's hemisphere had veil'd the horizon round:
When satan, who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
In meditated fraud and malice, bent
On Man's destruction, maugre what might hap
Of heavier on himself, fearless returned
By night he fled, and at midnight returned
From compassing the earth; cautious of day,
Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried
His entrance, and forewarned the Cherubim
That kept their watch; thence full of anguish driven,
The space of seven continued nights he rode
With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line
He circled; four times crossed the car of night
From pole to pole, traversing each colure;
On the eighth returned; and, on the coast averse
From entrance or Cherubick watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change,
Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,
Into a gulf shot under ground, till part
Rose up a fountain by the tree of life:
In with the river sunk, and with it rose
Satan, involved in rising mist; then sought
Where to lie hid; sea he had searched, and land,
From Eden over Pontus and the pool
Maeotis, up beyond the river Ob;
Downward as far antarctic; and in length,
West from Orontes to the ocean barred
At Darien; thence to the land where flows
Ganges and Indus: Thus the orb he roamed
With narrow search; and with inspection deep
Considered every creature, which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles; and found
The Serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
Him after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolved, his final sentence chose
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
From sharpest sight: for, in the wily snake
Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native subtlety
Proceeding; which, in other beasts observed,
Doubt might beget of diabolick power
Active within, beyond the sense of brute.
Thus he resolved, but first from inward grief
His bursting passion into plaints thus poured.
More justly, seat worthier of Gods, as built
With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
O Earth, how like to Heaven, if not preferred
For what God, after better, worse would build?
Terrestrial Heaven, danced round by other Heavens
That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,
In thee concentrating all their precious beams
Of sacred influence! As God in Heaven
Is center, yet extends to all; so thou,
Centring, receivest from all those orbs: in thee,
Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
Of creatures animate with gradual life
Of growth, sense, reason, all summed up in Man.
With what delight could I have walked thee round,
If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange
Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
Now land, now sea and shores with forest crowned,
Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
Of contraries: all good to me becomes
Bane, and in Heaven much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no nor in Heaven
To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven's Supreme;
Nor hope to be myself less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and, him destroyed,
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him linked in weal or woe;
In woe then; that destruction wide may range:
To me shall be the glory sole among
The infernal Powers, in one day to have marred
What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days
Continued making; and who knows how long
Before had been contriving? though perhaps
Not longer than since I, in one night, freed
From servitude inglorious well nigh half
The angelick name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers: He, to be avenged,
And to repair his numbers thus impaired,
Whether such virtue spent of old now failed
More Angels to create, if they at least
Are his created, or, to spite us more,
Determined to advance into our room
A creature formed of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original,
With heavenly spoils, our spoils: What he decreed,
He effected; Man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
Him lord pronounced; and, O indignity!
Subjected to his service angel-wings,
And flaming ministers to watch and tend
Their earthly charge: Of these the vigilance
I dread; and, to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapour glide obscure, and pry
In every bush and brake, where hap may find
The serpent sleeping; in whose mazy folds
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
O foul descent! that I, who erst contended
With Gods to sit the highest, am now constrained
Into a beast; and, mixed with bestial slime,
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the hight of Deity aspired!
But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to? Who aspires, must down as low
As high he soared; obnoxious, first or last,
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils:
Let it; I reck not, so it light well aimed,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favourite
Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,
Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised
From dust: Spite then with spite is best repaid.
So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,
Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on
His midnight-search, where soonest he might find
The serpent; him fast-sleeping soon he found
In labyrinth of many a round self-rolled,
His head the midst, well stored with subtile wiles:
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,
Nor nocent yet; but, on the grassy herb,
Fearless unfeared he slept: in at his mouth
The Devil entered; and his brutal sense,
In heart or head, possessing, soon inspired
With act intelligential; but his sleep
Disturbed not, waiting close the approach of morn.
Now, when as sacred light began to dawn
In Eden on the humid flowers, that breathed
Their morning incense, when all things, that breathe,
From the Earth's great altar send up silent praise
To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
And joined their vocal worship to the quire
Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
The season prime for sweetest scents and airs:
Then commune, how that day they best may ply
Their growing work: for much their work out-grew
The hands' dispatch of two gardening so wide,
And Eve first to her husband thus began.
Adam, well may we labour still to dress
This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,
Our pleasant task enjoined; but, till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides
Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,
Or bear what to my mind first thoughts present:
Let us divide our labours; thou, where choice
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
The clasping ivy where to climb; while I,
In yonder spring of roses intermixed
With myrtle, find what to redress till noon:
For, while so near each other thus all day
Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
Casual discourse draw on; which intermits
Our day's work, brought to little, though begun
Early, and the hour of supper comes unearned?
To whom mild answer Adam thus returned.
Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
Compare above all living creatures dear!
Well hast thou motioned, well thy thoughts employed,
How we might best fulfil the work which here
God hath assigned us; nor of me shalt pass
Unpraised: for nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study houshold good,
And good works in her husband to promote.
Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed
Labour, as to debar us when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
Of looks and smiles; for smiles from reason flow,
To brute denied, and are of love the food;
Love, not the lowest end of human life.
For not to irksome toil, but to delight,
He made us, and delight to reason joined.
These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist us; But, if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield:
For solitude sometimes is best society,
And short retirement urges sweet return.
But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
Befall thee severed from me; for thou knowest
What hath been warned us, what malicious foe
Envyng our happiness, and of his own
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame
By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wish and best advantage, us asunder;
Hopeless to circumvent us joined, where each
To other speedy aid might lend at need:
Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our fealty from God, or to disturb
Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
Enjoyed by us excites his envy more;
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side
That gave thee being, still shades thee, and protects.
The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
 Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.
To whom the virgin majesty of Eve,
 As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austere composure thus replied.
Offspring of Heaven and Earth, and all Earth’s Lord!
That such an enemy we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee informed I learn,
And from the parting Angel over-heard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then returned at shut of evening flowers.
But, that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fearest not, being such
As we, not capable of death or pain,
Can either not receive, or can repel.
His fraud is then thy fear; which plain infers
Thy equal fear, that my firm faith and love
Can by his fraud be shaken or seduced;
Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
Adam, mis-thought of her to thee so dear?
To whom with healing words Adam replied.
Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve!
For such thou art; from sin and blame entire:
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
The attempt itself, intended by our foe.
For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses
The tempted with dishonour foul; supposed
Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
Against temptation: Thou thyself with scorn
And anger wouldst resent the offered wrong,
Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,
If such affront I labour to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;
Or daring, first on me the assault shall light.
Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce
Angels; nor think superfluous other's aid.
I, from the influence of thy looks, receive
Access in every virtue; in thy sight
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
Shame to be overcome or over-reached,
Would utmost vigour raise, and raised unite.
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
When I am present, and thy trial choose
With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?
So spake domestick Adam in his care
And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
Less attributed to her faith sincere,
Thus her reply with accent sweet renewed.
If this be our condition, thus to dwell
In narrow circuit straitened by a foe,
Subtle or violent, we not endued
Single with like defence, wherever met;
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin: only our foe,
Tempting, affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integrity: his foul esteem
Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns
Foul on himself; then wherefore shunned or feared
By us? who rather double honour gain
From his surmise proved false; find peace within,
Favour from Heaven, our witness, from the event.
And what is faith, love, virtue, unassayed
Alone, without exterior help sustained?
Let us not then suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combined.
Frail is our happiness, if this be so,
And Eden were no Eden, thus exposed.
To whom thus Adam fervently replied.
O Woman, best are all things as the will
Of God ordained them: His creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left
Of all that he created, much less Man,
Or aught that might his happy state secure,
Secure from outward force; within himself
The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
Against his will he can receive no harm.
But God left free the will; for what obeys
Reason, is free; and Reason he made right,
But bid her well be ware, and still erect;
Lest, by some fair-appearing good surprised,
She dictate false; and mis-inform the will
To do what God expressly hath forbid.
Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins,
That I should mind thee oft; and mind thou me.
Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve;
Since Reason not impossibly may meet
Some specious object by the foe suborned,
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warned.
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
Were better, and most likely if from me
Thou sever not: Trial will come unsought.
Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
First thy obedience; the other who can know,
Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
But, if thou think, trial unsought may find
Us both secure, than thus warned thou seemest,
Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
Go in thy native innocence, rely
On what thou hast of virtue; summon all!
For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.
Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
First thy obedience; the other who can know,
Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
But, if thou think, trial unsought may find
Us both secure than thus warned thou seemest,
Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
Go in thy native innocence, rely
On what thou hast of virtue; summon all!
For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.
Persisted; yet submiss, though last, replied.
With thy permission then, and thus forewarned
Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
Touched only; that our trial, when least sought,
May find us both perhaps far less prepared,
The willinger I go, nor much expect
A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;
So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.
Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
Softshe withdrew; and, like a Wood-Nymph light,
Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
Betook her to the groves; but Delia's self
In gait surpassed, and Goddess-like deport,
Though not as she with bow and quiver armed,
But with such gardening tools as Art yet rude,
Guiltless of fire, had formed, or Angels brought.
To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorned,
 likest she seemed, Pomona when she fled
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
Her long with ardent look his eye pursued
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
Oft he to her his charge of quick return
Repeated; she to him as oft engaged
To be returned by noon amid the bower,
And all things in best order to invite
Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
O much deceived, much failing, hapless Eve,
Of thy presumed return! event perverse!
Thou never from that hour in Paradise
Foundst either sweet repast, or sound repose;
Such ambush, hid among sweet flowers and shades,
Waited with hellish rancour imminent
To intercept thy way, or send thee back
Despoiled of innocence, of faith, of bliss!
For now, and since first break of dawn, the Fiend,
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come;
And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
The only two of mankind, but in them
The whole included race, his purposed prey.
In bower and field he sought, where any tuft
Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
Their tendance, or plantation for delight;
By fountain or by shady rivulet
He sought them both, but wished his hap might find
Eve separate; he wished, but not with hope
Of what so seldom chanced; when to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
Half spied, so thick the roses blushing round
About her glowed, oft stooping to support
Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,
Hung drooping unsustained; them she upstays
Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen,
Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers
Imbordered on each bank, the hand of Eve:
Spot more delicious than those gardens feigned
Or of revived Adonis, or renowned
Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son;
Or that, not mystick, where the sapient king
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.
Much he the place admired, the person more.
As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight;
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance, with nymph-like step, fair virgin pass,
What pleasing seemed, for her now pleases more;
She most, and in her look sums all delight:
Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold
This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve
Thus early, thus alone: Her heavenly form
Angelick, but more soft, and feminine,
Her graceful innocence, her every air
Of gesture, or least action, overawed
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
That space the Evil-one abstracted stood
From his own evil, and for the time remained
Stupidly good; of enmity disarmed,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge:
But the hot Hell that always in him burns,
Though in mid Heaven, soon ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the more he sees
Of pleasure, not for him ordained: then soon
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.
Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported, to forget
What hither brought us! hate, not love; nor hope
Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
Of pleasure; but all pleasure to destroy,
Save what is in destroying; other joy
To me is lost. Then, let me not let pass
Occasion which now smiles; behold alone
The woman, opportune to all attempts,
Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
Heroick built, though of terrestrial mould;
Foe not informidable! exempt from wound,
I not; so much hath Hell debased, and pain
Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heaven.
She fair, divinely fair, fit love for Gods!
Not terrible, though terrour be in love
And beauty, not approached by stronger hate,
Hate stronger, under show of love well feigned;
The way which to her ruin now I tend.
So spake the enemy of mankind, enclosed
In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve
Addressed his way: not with indented wave,
Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,
Circular base of rising folds, that towered
Fold above fold, a surging maze! his head
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect
Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape
And lovely; never since of serpent-kind
Lovelier, not those that in Illyria changed,
Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
In Epidaurus; nor to which transformed
Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline, was seen;
He with Olympias; this with her who bore
Scipio, the hight of Rome. With tract oblique
At first, as one who sought access, but feared
To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
As when a ship, by skilful steersmen wrought
Nigh river’s mouth or foreland, where the wind
Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail:
So varied he, and of his tortuous train
Curl’d many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
To lure her eye; she, busied, heard the sound
Of rusling leaves, but minded not, as used
To such disport before her through the field,
From every beast; more duteous at her call,
Than at Circean call the herd disguised.
He, bolder now, uncalled before her stood,
But as in gaze admiring: oft he bowed
His turret crest, and sleek enamelled neck,
Fawning; and licked the ground whereon she trod.
His gentle dumb expression turned at length
The eye of Eve to mark his play; he, glad
Of her attention gained, with serpent-tongue
Organick, or impulse of vocal air,
His fraudulent temptation thus began.
Wonder not, sovran Mistress, if perhaps
Thou canst, who art sole wonder! much less arm
Thy looks, the Heaven of mildness, with disdain,
Displeased that I approach thee thus, and gaze
Insatiate; I thus single; nor have feared
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retired.
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore
With ravishment beheld! there best beheld,
Where universally admired; but here
In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
Half what in thee is fair, one man except,
Who sees thee? and what is one? who should be seen
A Goddess among Gods, adored and served
By Angels numberless, thy daily train.
So glozed the Tempter, and his proem tuned:
Into the heart of Eve his words made way,
Though at the voice much marvelling; at length,
Not unamazed, she thus in answer spake.
What may this mean? language of man pronounced
By tongue of brute, and human sense expressed?
The first, at least, of these I thought denied
To beasts; whom God, on their creation-day,
Created mute to all articulate sound:
The latter I demur; for in their looks
Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.
Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all the field
I knew, but not with human voice endued;
Redouble then this miracle, and say,
How camest thou speakable of mute, and how
To me so friendly grown above the rest
Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight?
Say, for such wonder claims attention due.
To whom the guileful Tempter thus replied.
Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!
Easy to me it is to tell thee all
What thou commandest; and right thou shouldst be obeyed:
I was at first as other beasts that graze
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food; nor aught but food discerned
Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:
Till, on a day roving the field, I chanced
A goodly tree far distant to behold
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mixed,
Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense
Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,
Unsucked of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
To satisfy the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair apples, I resolved
Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
Powerful persuaders, quickened at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urged me so keen.
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;
For, high from ground, the branches would require
Thy utmost reach or Adam’s: Round the tree
All other beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
I spared not; for, such pleasure till that hour,
At feed or fountain, never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward powers; and speech
Wanted not long; though to this shape retained.
Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
I turned my thoughts, and with capacious mind
Considered all things visible in Heaven,
Or Earth, or Middle; all things fair and good:
But all that fair and good in thy divine
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,
United I beheld; no fair to thine
Equivalent or second! which compelled
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee of right declared
Sovran of creatures, universal Dame!
So talked the spirited sly Snake; and Eve,
Yet more amazed, unwary thus replied.
Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first proved:
But say, where grows the tree? from hence how far?
For many are the trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us; in such abundance lies our choice,
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouched,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden Nature of her birth.
To whom the wily Adder, blithe and glad.
Empress, the way is ready, and not long;
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past
Of blowing myrrh and balm: if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon
Lead then, said Eve. He, leading, swiftly rolled
In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Brightens his crest; as when a wandering fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
Kindled through agitation to a flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends,
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;
There swallowed up and lost, from succour far.
So glistered the dire Snake, and into fraud
Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree
Of prohibition, root of all our woe;
Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.
Serpent, we might have spared our coming hither,
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee;
Wonderous indeed, if cause of such effects.
But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice; the rest, we live
Law to ourselves; our reason is our law.
To whom the Tempter guilefully replied.
Indeed! hath God then said that of the fruit?
Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,
Yet Lords declared of all in earth or air?
To whom thus Eve, yet sinless. Of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat;
But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
The garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.
She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold
The Tempter, but with show of zeal and love
To Man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on; and, as to passion moved,
Fluctuates disturbed, yet comely and in act
Raised, as of some great matter to begin.
As when of old some orator renowned,
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourished, since mute! to some great cause addressed,
Stood in himself collected; while each part,
Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue;
Sometimes in highth began, as no delay
Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right:
So standing, moving, or to highth up grown,
The Tempter, all impassioned, thus began.
O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving Plant,
Mother of science! now I feel thy power
Within me clear; not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of highest agents, deemed however wise.
Queen of this universe! do not believe
Those rigid threats of death: ye shall not die:
How should you? by the fruit? it gives you life
To knowledge; by the threatener? look on me,
Me, who have touched and tasted; yet both live,
And life more perfect have attained than Fate
Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot.
Shall that be shut to Man, which to the Beast
Is open? or will God incense his ire
For such a petty trespass? and not praise
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
Of death denounced, whatever thing death be,
Deterred not from achieving what might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;
Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
Be real, why not known, since easier shunned?
God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just;
Not just, not God; not feared then, nor obeyed:
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe;
Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,
His worshippers? He knows that in the day
Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear,
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
Opened and cleared, and ye shall be as Gods,
Knowing both good and evil, as they know.
That ye shall be as Gods, since I as Man,
Internal Man, is but proportion meet;
I, of brute, human; ye, of human, Gods.
So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
Human, to put on Gods; death to be wished,
Though threatened, which no worse than this can bring.
And what are Gods, that Man may not become
As they, participating God-like food?
The Gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief, that all from them proceeds:
I question it; for this fair earth I see,
Warmed by the sun, producing every kind:
Them, nothing; if they all things, who enclosed
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains
Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies
The offence, that Man should thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
Impart against his will, if all be his?
Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
In heavenly breasts? These, these, and many more
Causes import your need of this fair fruit.
Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste!
He ended; and his words, replete with guile,
Into her heart too easy entrance won:
Fixed on the fruit she gazed, which to behold
Might tempt alone; and in her ears the sound
Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregned
With reason, to her seeming, and with truth:
Mean while the hour of noon drew on, and waked
An eager appetite, raised by the smell
So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,
Inclined now grown to touch or taste,
Solicited her longing eye; yet first
Pausing a while, thus to herself she mused.
Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admired;
Whose taste, too long forborn, at first assay
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise:
Thy praise he also, who forbids thy use,
Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
Forbids us then to taste! but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want:
For good unknown sure is not had; or, had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions bind not. But, if death
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die!
How dies the Serpent? he hath eaten and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us denied
This intellectual food, for beasts reserved?
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy
The good befallen him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
What fear I then? rather, what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and evil,
Of God or death, of law or penalty?
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
Of virtue to make wise: What hinders then
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?
So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she eat!
Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty Serpent; and well might; for Eve,
Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else
Regarded; such delight till then, as seemed,
In fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fancied so, through expectation high
Of knowledge; not was Godhead from her thought.
Greedily she ingorged without restraint,
And knew not eating death: Satiate at length,
And lightened as with wine, jocund and boon,
Thus to herself she pleasingly began.
O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees
In Paradise! of operation blest
To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed.
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise,
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches offered free to all;
Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature
In knowledge, as the Gods, who all things know;
Though others envy what they cannot give:
For, had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next, to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remained
In ignorance; thou openest wisdom’s way,
And givest access, though secret she retire.
And I perhaps am secret: Heaven is high,
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies
About him. But to Adam in what sort
Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with me, or rather not,
But keeps the odds of knowledge in my power
Without copartner? so to add what wants
In female sex, the more to draw his love,
And render me more equal; and perhaps,
A thing not undesirable, sometime
Superior; for, inferior, who is free
This may be well: But what if God have seen,
And death ensue? then I shall be no more!
And Adam, wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
A death to think! Confirmed then I resolve,
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
I could endure, without him live no life.
So saying, from the tree her step she turned;
But first low reverence done, as to the Power
That dwell within, whose presence had infused
Into the plant sciential sap, derived
From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn
Her tresses, and her rural labours crown;
As reapers oft are wont their harvest-queen.
Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delayed:
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,
Misgave him; he the faltering measure felt;
And forth to meet her went, the way she took
That morn when first they parted: by the tree
Of knowledge he must pass; there he her met,
Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smiled,
New gathered, and ambrosial smell diffused.
To him she hasted; in her face excuse
Came prologue, and apology too prompt;
Which, with bland words at will, she thus addressed.
Hast thou not wondered, Adam, at my stay?
Thee I have missed, and thought it long, deprived
Thy presence; agony of love till now
Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought,
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear:
This tree is not, as we are told, a tree
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
Opening the way, but of divine effect
To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste;
And hath been tasted such: The serpent wise,
Or not restrained as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit; and is become,
Not dead, as we are threatened, but thenceforth
Endued with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration; and with me
Persuasively hath so prevailed, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
The effects to correspond; opener mine eyes,
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;
Tedious, unshared with thee, and odious soon.
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
Lest, thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
Deity for thee, when Fate will not permit.
Thus Eve with countenance blithe the story told;
But in her cheek distemper flushing glowed.
On the other side Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed,
Astonied stood and blank, while horour chill
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed;
From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve
Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed:
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke.
O fairest of Creation, last and best
Of all God's works, Creature in whom excelled
Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost,
Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote!
Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress
The strict forbiddance, how to violate
The sacred fruit forbidden! Some cursed fraud
Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown,
And me with thee hath ruined; for with thee
Certain my resolution is to die:
How can I live without thee! how forgo
Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly joined,
To live again in these wild woods forlorn!
Should God create another Eve, and I
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart: no, no! I feel
The link of Nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.
So having said, as one from sad dismay
Recomforted, and after thoughts disturbed
Submitting to what seemed remediless,
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turned.
Bold deed thou hast presumed, adventurous Eve,
And peril great provoked, who thus hast dared,
Had it been only coveting to eye
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,
Much more to taste it under ban to touch.
But past who can recall, or done undo?
Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate; yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
Profaned first by the serpent, by him first
Made common, and unhallowed, ere our taste;
Nor yet on him found deadly; yet he lives;
Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live, as Man,
Higher degree of life; inducement strong
To us, as likely tasting to attain
Proportional ascent; which cannot be
But to be Gods, or Angels, demi-Gods.
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy
Us his prime creatures, dignified so high,
Set over all his works; which in our fail,
For us created, needs with us must fail,
Dependant made; so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;
Not well conceived of God, who, though his power
Creation could repeat, yet would be loth
Us to abolish, lest the Adversary
Triumph, and say; "Fickle their state whom God
Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
He ruined, now Mankind; whom will he next?"
Matter of scorn, not to be given the Foe.
However I with thee have fixed my lot,
Certain to undergo like doom: If death
Consort with thee, death is to me as life;
So forcible within my heart I feel
The bond of Nature draw me to my own;
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
Our state cannot be severed; we are one,
One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.
So Adam; and thus Eve to him replied.
O glorious trial of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Engaging me to emulate; but, short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
Adam, from whose dear side I boast me sprung,
And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof
This day affords, declaring thee resolved,
Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,
Shall separate us, linked in love so dear,
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit;
Whose virtue for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion, hath presented
This happy trial of thy love, which else
So eminently never had been known?
Were it I thought death menaced would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die
Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact
Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assured
Remarkably so late of thy so true,
So faithful, love unequalled: but I feel
Far otherwise the event; not death, but life
Augmented, opened eyes, new hopes, new joys,
Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
Hath touched my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds.
So saying, she embraced him, and for joy
Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love
Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
In recompence (for such compliance bad
Such recompence best merits) from the bough
She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat,
Against his better knowledge; not deceived,
But fondly overcome with female charm.
Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
In pangs; and Nature gave a second groan;
Sky loured; and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin
Original: while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate
Her former trespass feared, the more to sooth
Him with her loved society; that now,
As with new wine intoxicated both,
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings,
Wherewith to scorn the earth: But that false fruit
Far other operation first displayed,
Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve
Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him
As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn:
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.
Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant, of sapience no small part;
Since to each meaning savour we apply,
And palate call judicious; I the praise
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purveyed.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstained
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidden, it might be wished,
For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
But come, so well refreshed, now let us play,
As meet is, after such delicious fare;
For never did thy beauty, since the day
I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorned
With all perfections, so inflame my sense
With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
Than ever; bounty of this virtuous tree!
So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
Of amorous intent; well understood
Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
Her hand he seised; and to a shady bank,
Thick over-head with verdant roof imbowered,
He led her nothing loth; flowers were the couch,
Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
And hyacinth; Earth’s freshest softest lap.
There they their fill of love and love’s disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep
Oppressed them, wearied with their amorous play,
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
That with exhilarating vapour bland
About their spirits had played, and inmost powers
Made err, was now exhaled; and grosser sleep,
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams
Incumbered, now had left them; up they rose
As from unrest; and, each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how opened, and their minds
How darkened; innocence, that as a veil
Had shadowed them from knowing ill, was gone;
Just confidence, and native righteousness,
And honour, from about them, naked left
To guilty Shame; he covered, but his robe
Uncovered more. So rose the Danite strong,
Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap
Of Philistean Dalilah, and waked
Shorn of his strength. They destitute and bare
Of all their virtue: Silent, and in face
Confounded, long they sat, as strucken mute:
Till Adam, though not less than Eve abashed,
At length gave utterance to these words constrained.
O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
To counterfeit Man’s voice; true in our fall,
False in our promised rising; since our eyes
Opened we find indeed, and find we know
Both good and evil; good lost, and evil got;
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know;
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
Of innocence, of faith, of purity,
Our wonted ornaments now soiled and stained,
And in our faces evident the signs
Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;
Even shame, the last of evils; of the first
Be sure then.–How shall I behold the face
Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy
And rapture so oft beheld? Those heavenly shapes
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
Insufferably bright. O! might I here
In solitude live savage; in some glade
Obscured, where highest woods, impenetrable
To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad
And brown as evening: Cover me, ye Pines!
Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs
Hide me, where I may never see them more!–
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
What best may for the present serve to hide
The parts of each from other, that seem most
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;
Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sewed,
And girded on our loins, may cover round
Those middle parts; that this new comers, Shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.
So counselled he, and both together went
Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose
The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renowned,
But such as at this day, to Indians known,
In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother tree, a pillared shade
High over-arched, and echoing walks between:
There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loop-holes cut through thickest shade: Those leaves
They gathered, broad as Amazonian targe;
And, with what skill they had, together sewed,
To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide
Their guilt and dreaded shame! O, how unlike
To that first naked glory! Such of late
Columbus found the American, so girt
With feathered cincture; naked else, and wild
Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
Thus fenced, and, as they thought, their shame in part
Covered, but not at rest or ease of mind,
They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
Rained at their eyes, but high winds worse within
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord; and shook sore
Their inward state of mind, calm region once
And full of peace, now tost and turbulent:
For Understanding ruled not, and the Will
Heard not her lore; both in subjection now
To sensual Appetite, who from beneath
Usurping over sovran Reason claimed
Superiour sway: From thus distempered breast,
Adam, estranged in look and altered style,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renewed.
Would thou hadst hearkened to my words, and staid
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange
Desire of wandering, this unhappy morn,
I know not whence possessed thee; we had then
Remained still happy; not, as now, despoiled
Of all our good; shamed, naked, miserable!
Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve
The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail.
To whom, soon moved with touch of blame, thus Eve.
What words have passed thy lips, Adam severe!
Imputest thou that to my default, or will
Of wandering, as thou callest it, which who knows
But might as ill have happened thou being by,
Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
Or here the attempt, thou couldst not have discerned
Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake;
No ground of enmity between us known,
Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
Was I to have never parted from thy side?
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger, as thou saidst?
Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay;
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
Hadst thou been firm and fixed in thy dissent,
Neither had I transgressed, nor thou with me.
To whom, then first incensed, Adam replied.
Is this the love, is this the recompence
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve! expressed
Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I;
Who might have lived, and joyed immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?
And am I now upbraided as the cause
Of thy transgressing? Not enough severe,
It seems, in thy restraint: What could I more
I warned thee, I admonished thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking enemy
That lay in wait; beyond this, had been force;
And force upon free will hath here no place.
But confidence then bore thee on; secure
Either to meet no danger, or to find
Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
I also erred, in overmuch admiring
What seemed in thee so perfect, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue
The errour now, which is become my crime,
And thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall
Him, who, to worth in women overtrusting,
Lets her will rule: restraint she will not brook;
And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue,
She first his weak indulgence will accuse.
Thus they in mutual accusation spent
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning;
And of their vain contest appeared no end.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Background and Interpretation

Poets.org’s article on “John Milton"
Read this brief biography of John Milton from poets.org.

Paradiseloost.org’s article on “Paradise Lost ~ A Brief Overview”
Read this brief overview of the work from paradiseloost.org which provides a general context and information about the poetic form of the work.

Audio Files

You may find it helpful to listen to an audio recording of the work while you read along.

LibraVox’s recordings for Paradise Lost
From this LibraVox page, find the links to each of Books 1, 4, and 9. Note that each of the books has two audio sections.

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The Restoration of the English monarchy began in 1660 when the English, Scottish and Irish monarchies were all restored under Charles II after the Interregnum that followed the Wars of the Three Kingdoms. The term Restoration is used to describe both the actual event by which the monarchy was restored, and the period of several years afterwards in which a new political settlement was established. It is very often used to cover the whole reign of Charles II (1660–1685) and often the brief reign of his younger brother James II (1685-1688). In certain contexts it may be used to cover the whole period of the later Stuart monarchs as far as the death of Queen Anne and the accession of the Hanoverian George I in 1714; for example Restoration comedy typically encompasses works written as late as 1710.

Religious settlement

The Church of England was restored as the national Church in England, backed by the Clarendon Code and the Act of Uniformity 1662. People reportedly “pranced around May poles as a way of taunting the Presbyterians and Independents” and “burned copies of the Solemn League and Covenant.”

Restoration Britain

Historian Roger Baker argues that the Restoration and Charles’ coronation mark a reversal of the stringent Puritan morality, “as though the pendulum [of England’s morality] swung from repression to licence more or less overnight.” Theatres reopened after having been closed during the protectorship of Oliver Cromwell, Puritanism lost its momentum, and the bawdy “Restoration comedy” became a recognizable genre. In addition, women were allowed to perform on stage for the first time. In Scotland, Episcopacy was reinstated.

Restoration Literature

Restoration literature is the English literature written during the historical period commonly referred to as the English Restoration (1660–1689), which corresponds to the last years of the direct Stuart reign in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. In general, the term is used to denote roughly homogeneous styles of literature that center on a celebration of or reaction to the restored court of Charles II. It is a literature that includes extremes, for
it encompasses both *Paradise Lost* and the Earl of Rochester’s *Sodom*, the high-spirited sexual comedy of *The Country Wife* and the moral wisdom of *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. It saw Locke’s *Treatises of Government*, the founding of the Royal Society, the experiments and holy meditations of Robert Boyle, the hysterical attacks on theaters from Jeremy Collier, and the pioneering of literary criticism from John Dryden and John Dennis. The period witnessed news become a commodity, the essay developed into a periodical art form, and the beginnings of textual criticism.

The dates for Restoration literature are a matter of convention, and they differ markedly from genre to genre. Thus, the “Restoration” in drama may last until 1700, while in poetry it may last only until 1666 (see 1666 in poetry) and the *annus mirabilis*; and in prose it might end in 1668, with the increasing tensions over succession and the corresponding rise in journalism and periodicals, or not until 1700, when those periodicals grew more stabilized. In general, scholars use the term “Restoration” to denote the literature that began and flourished under Charles II, whether that literature was the laudatory ode that gained a new life with restored aristocracy, the eschatological literature that showed an increasing despair among Puritans, or the literature of rapid communication and trade that followed in the wake of England’s mercantile empire.

**Poetry**

The Restoration was an age of poetry. Not only was poetry the most popular form of literature, but it was also the most significant form of literature, as poems affected political events and immediately reflected the times. It was, to its own people, an age dominated only by the king, and not by any single genius. Throughout the period, the lyric, ariel, historical, and epic poem were being developed.

**Prose**

Prose in the Restoration period is dominated by Christian religious writing, but the Restoration also saw the beginnings of two genres that would dominate later periods: fiction and journalism. Religious writing often strayed into political and economic writing, just as political and economic writing implied or directly addressed religion.

**Theatre**

The return of the stage-struck Charles II to power in 1660 was a major event in English theatre history. As soon as the previous Puritan regime’s ban on public stage representations was lifted, the drama recreated itself quickly and abundantly. Two theatre companies, the King’s and the Duke’s Company, were established in London, with two luxurious playhouses built to designs by Christopher Wren and fitted with moveable scenery and thunder and lightning machines.

Traditionally, Restoration plays have been studied by genre rather than chronology, more or less as if they were all contemporary, but scholars today insist on the rapid evolvement of drama in the period and on the importance of social and political factors affecting it. (Unless otherwise indicated, the account below is based on Hume’s influential *Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century*, 1976.) The influence of theatre company competition and playhouse economics is also acknowledged, as is the significance of the appearance of the first professional actresses.
MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE

by John Dryden

Why should a foolish marriage vow,
    Which long ago was made,
Oblige us to each other now,
    When passion is decayed?
We loved, and we loved, as long as we could,
    ‘Till our love was loved out in us both;
But our marriage is dead, when the pleasure is fled:
    ‘Twas pleasure first made it an oath.

If I have pleasures for a friend,
    And further love in store,
What wrong has he, whose joys did end,
    And who could give no more?
‘Tis a madness that he
    Should be jealous of me,
Or that I should bar him of another:
    For all we can gain,
Is to give ourselves pain,
    When neither can hinder the other.

ODE ON SOLITUDE

by Alexander Pope
Happy the man whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air,
In his own ground.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire,
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter fire.

Blest, who can unconcern’dly find
Hours, days, and years slide soft away,
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day,

Sound sleep by night; study and ease,
Together mixt; sweet recreation;
And Innocence, which most does please
With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown,
Thus unlamented let me die,
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

A DESCRIPTION OF A CITY SHOWER

By Jonathan Swift

WRITTEN IN OCT., 1710; AND FIRST PRINTED IN “THE TATLER,” NO. 238

Careful observers may foretell the hour,
(By sure prognostics,) when to dread a shower.
While rain depends, the pensive cat gives o’er
Her frolics, and pursues her tail no more.
Returning home at night, you’ll find the sink
Strike your offended sense with double stink.
If you be wise, then, go not far to dine:
You’ll spend in coach-hire more than save in wine.
A coming shower your shooting corns presage,
Old a-ches[2] throb, your hollow tooth will rage;
Sauntering in coffeehouse is Dulman seen;
He damns the climate, and complains of spleen.

Meanwhile the South, rising with dabbled wings,
A sable cloud athwart the welkin flings,
That swill’d more liquor than it could contain,
And, like a drunkard, gives it up again.
Brisk Susan whips her linen from the rope,
While the first drizzling shower is borne aslope;
Such is that sprinkling which some careless quean
Flirts on you from her mop, but not so clean:
You fly, invoke the gods; then, turning, stop
To rail; she singing, still whirls on her mop.
Not yet the dust had shunn’d the unequal strife,
But, aided by the wind, fought still for life,
And wafted with its foe by violent gust,
’Twas doubtful which was rain, and which was dust.[3]
Ah! where must needy poet seek for aid,
When dust and rain at once his coat invade?
Sole[4] coat! where dust, cemented by the rain,
Erects the nap, and leaves a cloudy stain!

Now in contiguous drops the flood comes down,
Threatening with deluge this devoted town.
To shops in crowds the daggled females fly,
Pretend to cheapen goods, but nothing buy.
The Templar spruce, while every spout’s abroach,
Stays till ’tis fair, yet seems to call a coach.
The tuck’d-up sempstress walks with hasty strides,
While streams run down her oil’d umbrella’s sides.
Here various kinds, by various fortunes led,
Commence acquaintance underneath a shed.
Triumphant Tories, and desponding Whigs,[5]
Forget their feuds, and join to save their wigs.
Box’d in a chair the beau impatient sits,
While spouts run clattering o’er the roof by fits,
And ever and anon with frightful din
The leather sounds; he trembles from within.
So when Troy chairmen bore the wooden steed,
Pregnant with Greeks impatient to be freed,
(Those bully Greeks, who, as the moderns do,
Instead of paying chairmen, ran them through,)
Laocoon[6] struck the outside with his spear,
And each imprison’d hero quaked for fear.
Now from all parts the swelling kennels flow,
And bear their trophies with them as they go:
Filth of all hues and odour, seem to tell
What street they sail’d from, by their sight and smell.
They, as each torrent drives with rapid force,
From Smithfield to St. Pulchre’s shape their course,
And in huge confluence join’d at Snowhill ridge,
Fall from the conduit prone to Holborn bridge.[7]
Sweeping from butchers’ stalls, dung, guts, and blood,
Drown’d puppies, stinking sprats, all drench’d in mud,
Dead cats, and turnip-tops, come tumbling down the flood.

[Footnote 1: Swift was very proud of the “Shower,” and so refers to it in the Journal to Stella. See “Prose Works,”
vol. ii, p. 33: “They say ’tis the best thing I ever writ, and I think so too. I suppose the Bishop of Clogher will show
it you. Pray tell me how you like it.” Again, p. 41: “there never was such a Shower since Danâe’s,” etc.—W. E. B.]

[Footnote 2: “Aches” is two syllables, but modern printers, who had lost the right pronunciation, have aches as
one syllable; and then to complete the metre have foisted in “aches will throbb.” Thus, what the poet and the
linguist wish to preserve, is altered and finally lost. See Disraeli’s “Curiosities of Literature,” vol. i, title “Errata,” p.
81, edit. 1858. A good example occurs in “Hudibras,” Part III, canto 2, line 407, where persons are mentioned who
“Can by their Pangs and Aches find All turns and changes of the wind.”—W. E. B.]

[Footnote 3: “’Twas doubtful which was sea and which was sky.” GARTH’S Dispensary.]
THE USE OF MEMORY CONSIDERED

by Samuel Johnson

From The Idler, #44

Memory is, among the faculties of the human mind, that of which we make the most frequent use, or rather that of which the agency is incessant, or perpetual. Memory is the primary and fundamental power, without which there could be no other intellectual operation. Judgment and ratiocination suppose something already known, and draw their decisions only from experience. Imagination selects ideas from the treasures of remembrance, and produces novelty only by varied combinations. We do not even form conjectures of distant, or anticipations of future events, but by concluding what is possible from what is past.

The two offices of memory are collection and distribution; by one images are accumulated, and by the other produced for use. Collection is always the employment of our first years; and distribution commonly that of our advanced age.

To collect and reposite the various forms of things, is far the most pleasing part of mental occupation. We are naturally delighted with novelty, and there is a time when all that we see is new. When first we enter into the world, whithersoever we turn our eyes, they meet knowledge with pleasure at her side; every diversity of nature pours ideas in upon the soul; neither search nor labour are necessary, we have nothing more to do than to open our eyes, and curiosity is gratified.

Much of the pleasure which the first survey of the world affords, is exhausted before we are conscious of our own felicity, or able to compare our condition with some other possible state. We have, therefore, few traces of the joy of our earliest discoveries; yet we all remember a time, when nature had so many untasted gratifications, that every excursion gave delight which, can now be found no longer, when the noise of a torrent, the rustle of a wood, the song of birds, or the play of lambs, had power to fill the attention, and suspend all perception of the course of time.

But these easy pleasures are soon at an end; we have seen in a very little time so much, that we call out for new objects of observation, and endeavour to find variety in books and life. But study is laborious, and not always satisfactory; and conversation has its pains as well pleasures; we are willing to learn, but not willing to be taught; we are pained by ignorance, but pained yet more by another’s knowledge.

From the vexation of pupilage men commonly set themselves free about the middle of life, by shutting up the avenues of intelligence, and resolving to rest in their present state; and they, whose ardour of inquiry continues
longer, find themselves insensibly forsaken by their instructors. As every man advances in life, the proportion between those that are younger and that are older than himself is continually changing; and he that has lived half a century finds few that do not require from him that information which he once expected from those that went before him.

Then it is, that the magazines of memory are opened, and the stores of accumulated knowledge are displayed by vanity or benevolence, or in honest commerce of mutual interest. Every man wants others, and is, therefore, glad when he is wanted by them. And as few men will endure the labour of intense meditation without necessity, he that has learned enough for his profit or his honour, seldom endeavours after further acquisitions.

The pleasure of recollecting speculative notions would not be much less than that of gaining them, if they could be kept pure and unmingled with the passages of life; but such is the necessary concatenation of our thoughts, that good and evil are linked together, and no pleasure recurs but associated with pain. Every revived idea reminds us of a time when something was enjoyed that is now lost, when some hope was not yet blasted, when some purpose had yet not languished into sluggishness or indifference.

Whether it be, that life has more vexations than comforts, or, what is in the event just the same, that evil makes deeper impression than good, it is certain that few can review the time past without heaviness of heart. He remembers many calamities incurred by folly, many opportunities lost by negligence. The shades of the dead rise up before him; and he laments the companions of his youth, the partners of his amusements, the assistants of his labours, whom the hand of death has snatched away.

When an offer was made to Themistocles of teaching him the art of memory, he answered, that he would rather wish for the art of forgetfulness. He felt his imagination haunted by phantoms of misery which he was unable to suppress, and would gladly have calmed his thoughts with some oblivious antidote. In this we all resemble one another; the hero and the sage are, like vulgar mortals, overburdened by the weight of life; all shrink from recollection, and all wish for an art of forgetfulness.

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**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**Background and Interpretation**

*Poets.org*'s article on “John Dryden”

Brief biography of John Dryden from poets.org.

*Poets.org*'s article on “Alexander Pope”

Brief biography of Alexander Pope from poets.org.

*Poets.org*'s article on “Jonathan Swift”

Brief biography of Jonathan Swift from poets.org.

*The Victorian Web*'s article on “Samuel Johnson: A Brief Biography”
Brief biography of Samuel Johnson from The Victorian Web.

Audio/ Visual Files

Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/5DxDZCZH0BQ

https://youtu.be/_r0jXDEDql0

https://youtu.be/NkVOKqZNYpU

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- Marriage a-la-Mode, by John Dryden. Authored by: Christopher Booth. Located at: https://youtu.be/5DxDZCZH0BQ. License: All Rights Reserved License Terms: Standard YouTube License
- Alexander Pope – Ode on Solitude – poem with text. Authored by: Audio Productions. Located at: https://youtu.be/_r0jXDEDql0. License: All Rights Reserved License Terms: Standard YouTube License
APHRA BEHN: BIOGRAPHY

Aphra Behn [Aphara] (14 December 1640? – 16 April 1689) was a British playwright, poet, translator and fiction writer from the Restoration era. As one of the first English women to earn her living by her writing, she broke cultural barriers and served as a literary role model for later generations of women authors. Rising from obscurity, she came to the notice of Charles II, who employed her as a spy in Antwerp. Upon her return to London and a probable, brief stay in debtors’ prison, she began writing for the stage. She belonged to a coterie of poets and famous libertines such as John Wilmot, Lord Rochester. She wrote under the pastoral pseudonym Astrea. During the turbulent political times of the Exclusion Crisis, she wrote an epilogue and prologue that brought her into legal trouble; she thereafter devoted most of her writing to prose genres and translations. A staunch supporter of the Stuart line, she declined an invitation from Bishop Burnet to write a welcoming poem to the new king William III. She died shortly after.

Behn is now regarded as a key dramatist of the seventeenth-century theatre, and her prose work is critically acknowledged as having been important to the development of the English novel. She is perhaps best known to modern audiences for her short novel *Oroonoko* (1688), the tale of an enslaved African prince. It is notable for its exploration of slavery, race, and gender.

Behn was immensely prolific, adapting plays, writing fiction and poetry, and translating works from French and Latin. She caused scandal in some of her chosen subject matter, often alluding to sexual desire. She was aware, and stated that, the works would not have caused problems if they had been written by a man. Behn’s work frequently takes homoerotic themes, featuring same-sex love between men. One of her best known poems, “The Disappointment,” is the story of a sexual encounter told from a woman’s point of view that may be interpreted as a work about male impotence.

Additional information on Behn’s life, work, and influence can be found here.
INTRODUCTION TO OROONOKO

The tale of *Oroonoko, the Royal Slave* is undisputedly Mrs. Behn’s masterpiece in prose. Its originality and power have singled it out for a permanence and popularity none of her other works attained. It is vivid, realistic, pregnant with pathos, beauty, and truth, and not only has it so impressed itself upon the readers of more than two centuries, but further, it surely struck a new note in English literature and one which was re-echoed far and wide. It has been said that ‘Oroonoko is the first emancipation novel’, and there is no little acumen in this remark. Certainly we may absolve Mrs. Behn from having directly written with a purpose such as animated Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*; but none the less her sympathy with the oppressed blacks, her deep emotions of pity for outraged humanity, her anger at the cruelties of the slave-driver aye ready with knout or knife, are manifest in every line. Beyond the intense interest of the pure narrative we have passages of a rhythm that is lyric, exquisitely descriptive of the picturesque tropical scenery and exotic vegetations, fragrant and luxuriant; there are intimate accounts of adventuring and primitive life; there are personal touches which lend a colour only personal touches can, as Aphara tells her prose-epic of her Superman, Caesar the slave, Oroonoko the prince.

Epistle Dedicatory.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD MAITLAND.

[Transcriber’s Note: The Epistle Dedicatory was printed as an Appendix; see Note.]

My Lord,

Since the World is grown so Nice and Critical upon Dedications, and will Needs be Judging the Book by the Wit of the Patron; we ought, with a great deal of Circumspection to chuse a Person against whom there can be no Exception; and whose Wit and Worth truly Merits all that one is capable of saying upon that Occasion.

The most part of Dedications are charg’d with Flattery; and if the World knows a Man has some Vices, they will not allow one to speak of his Virtues. This, My Lord, is for want of thinking Rightly; if Men wou’d consider with Reason, they wou’d have another sort of Opinion, and Esteem of Dedications; and wou’d believe almost every Great Man has enough to make him Worthy of all that can be said of him there. My Lord, a Picture-drawer, when he intends to make a good Picture, essays the Face many Ways, and in many Lights, before he begins; that he may chuse from the several turns of it, which is most Agreeable and gives it the best Grace; and if there be a Scar, an ungrateful Mole, or any little Defect, they leave it out; and yet make the Picture extreamly like: But he who has the good Fortune to draw a Face that is exactly Charming in all its Parts and Features, what Colours or Agreements can be added to make it Finer? All that he can give is but its due; and Glories in a
Piece whose Original alone gives it its Perfection. An ill Hand may diminish, but a good Hand cannot augment its Beauty. A Poet is a Painter in his way; he draws to the Life, but in another kind; we draw the Nobler part, the Soul and Mind; the Pictures of the Pen shall out-last those of the Pencil, and even Worlds themselves. 'Tis a short Chronicle of those Lives that possibly wou'd be forgotten by other Historians, or lye neglected there, however deserving an immortal Fame; for Men of eminent Parts are as Exemplary as even Monarchs themselves; and Virtue is a noble Lesson to be learn'd, and 'tis by Comparison we can Judge and Chuse. 'Tis by such illustrious Presidents as your Lordship the World can be Better'd and Refin'd; when a great part of the lazy Nobility shall, with Shame, behold the admirable Accomplishments of a Man so Great, and so Young.

Your Lordship has Read innumerable Volumes of Men and Books, not Vainly for the gust of Novelty, but Knowledge, excellent Knowledge: Like the industrious Bee, from every Flower you return Laden with the precious Dew, which you are sure to turn to the Publick Good. You hoard no one Reflection, but lay it all out in the Glorious Service of your Religion and Country; to both which you are a useful and necessary Honour: They both want such Supporters; and 'tis only Men of so elevated Parts, and fine Knowledge; such noble Principles of Loyalty and Religion this Nation Sighs for. Where shall we find a Man so Young, like St. Augustine, in the midst of all his Youth and Gaiety, Teaching the World Divine Precepts, true Notions of Faith, and Excellent Morality, and, at the same time be also a perfect Pattern of all that accomplish a Great Man? You have, My Lord, all that refin'd Wit that Charms, and the Affability that Obliges; a Generosity that gives a Lustre to your Nobility; that Hospitality, and Greatness of Mind that ingages the World; and that admirable Conduct, that so well Instructs it. Our Nation ought to regret and bemoan their Misfortunes, for not being able to claim the Honour of the Birth of a Man who is so fit to serve his Majesty, and his Kingdoms in all Great and Publick Affairs; And to the Glory of your Nation, be it spoken, it produces more considerable Men, for all fine Sence, Wit, Wisdom, Breeding and Generosity (for the generality of the Nobility) than all other Nations can Boast; and the Fruitfulness of your Virtues sufficiently make amends for the Barrenness of your Soil: Which however cannot be incommode to your Lordship; since your Quality and the Veneration that the Commonalty naturally pay their Lords creates a flowing Plenty there . . . that makes you Happy. And to compleat your Happiness, my Lord, Heaven has blest you with a Lady, to whom it has given all the Graces, Beauties, and Virtues of her Sex; all the Youth, Sweetness of Nature, of a most illustrious Family; and who is a most rare Example to all Wives of Quality, for her eminent Piety, Easiness, and Condescention; and as absolutely merits Respect from all the World as she does that Passion and Resignation she receives from your Lordship; and which is, on her part, with so much Tenderness return'd. Methinks your tranquil Lives are an Image of the new Made and Beautiful Pair in Paradise: And 'tis the Prayers and Wishes of all, who have the Honour to know you, that it may Eternally so continue with Additions of all the Blessings this World can give you.

My Lord, the Obligations I have to some of the Great Men of your Nation, particularly to your Lordship, gives me an Ambition of making my Acknowledgements by all the Opportunities I can; and such humble Fruits as my Industry produces I lay at your Lordship's Feet. This is a true Story, of a Man Gallant enough to merit your Protection, and, had he always been so Fortunate, he had not made so Inglorious an end: The Royal Slave I had the Honour to know in my Travels to the other World; and though I had none above me in that Country yet I wanted power to preserve this Great Man. If there be anything that seems Romantick I
beseech your Lordship to consider these Countries do, in all things, so far differ from ours that they produce unconceivable Wonders, at least, so they appear to us, because New and Strange. What I have mentioned I have taken care shou’d be Truth, let the Critical Reader judge as he pleases. 'Twill be no Commendation to the Book to assure your Lordship I writ it in a few Hours, though it may serve to Excuse some of its Faults of Connexion, for I never rested my Pen a Moment for Thought: 'Tis purely the Merit of my Slave that must render it worthy of the Honour it begs; and the Author of that of Subscribing herself,

My Lord
Your Lordship’s most oblig’d
and obedient Servant
A. Behn.

OROONOKO; OR, THE ROYAL SLAVE

THE HISTORY OF
THE ROYAL SLAVE.

I do not pretend, in giving you the History of this ROYAL SLAVE, to entertain my Reader with the Adventures of a feign’d Hero, whose Life and Fortunes Fancy may manage at the Poet’s Pleasure; nor in relating the Truth, design to adorn it with any Accidents, but such as arrived in earnest to him: And it shall come simply into the World, recommended by its own proper Merits, and natural Intrigues; there being enough of Reality to support it, and to render it diverting, without the Addition of Invention.

I was myself an Eye-witness to a great Part of what you will find here set down; and what I could not be Witness of, I receiv’d from the Mouth of the chief Actor in this History, the Hero himself, who gave us the whole Transactions of his Youth: And I shall omit, for Brevity’s Sake, a thousand little Accidents of his Life, which, however pleasant to us, where History was scarce, and Adventures very rare, yet might prove tedious and heavy to my Reader, in a World where he finds Diversions for every Minute, new and strange. But we who were perfectly charm’d with the Character of this great Man, were curious to gather every Circumstance of his Life.

The Scene of the last Part of his Adventures lies in a Colony in America, called Surinam, in the West-Indies.

But before I give you the Story of this Gallant Slave, 'tis fit I tell you the Manner of bringing them to these new Colonies; those they make Use of there, not being Natives of the Place: for those we live with in perfect Amity, without daring to command 'em; but, on the contrary, caress 'em with all the brotherly and friendly Affection in the World: trading with them for their Fish, Venison, Buffaloes Skins, and little Rarities; as Marmosets, a sort of Monkey, as big as a Rat or Weasel, but of a marvellous and delicate Shape, having Face and Hands like a Human Creature; and Cougheries, a little Beast in the Form and Fashion of a Lion, as big as a Kitten, but so exactly made in all Parts like that Noble Beast, that it is it in Miniature: Then for little Paraketoes, great Parrots, Muckaws, and a thousand other Birds and Beasts of wonderful and surprizing Forms, Shapes, and Colours: For Skins of prodigious Snakes, of which there are some three-score Yards in Length; as is the Skin of one that may be seen at his Majesty’s Antiquary’s; where are also some rare Flies, of amazing Forms and Colours, presented to 'em by myself; some as big as my Fist, some less; and all of various Excellencies, such as Art cannot imitate. Then we trade for Feathers, which they order into all Shapes, make themselves little short Habits of 'em, and glorious Wreaths for their Heads, Necks, Arms and Legs, whose Tinctures are unconceivable. I had a Set of these presented to me, and I gave 'em to the King’s Theatre; it was the Dress of the Indian Queen, infinitely admir’d by Persons of Quality; and was inimitable. Besides these, a thousand little Knacks, and Rarities in Nature;
and some of Art, as their Baskets, Weapons, Aprons, &c. We dealt with 'em with Beads of all Colours, Knives, Axes, Pins and Needles, which they us’d only as Tools to drill Holes with in their Ears, Noses and Lips, where they hang a great many little Things; as long Beads, Bits of Tin, Brass or Silver beat thin, and any shining Trinket. The Beads they weave into Aprons about a Quarter of an Ell long, and of the same Breadth; working them very prettily in Flowers of several Colours; which Apron they wear just before 'em, as Adam and Eve did the Fig-leaves; the Men wearing a long Stripe of Linen, which they deal with us for. They thread these Beads also on long Cotton-threads, and make Girdles to tie their Aprons to, which come twenty times, or more, about the Waste, and then cross, like a Shoulder-belt, both Ways, and round their Necks, Arms and Legs. This Adornment, with their long black Hair, and the Face painted in little Specks or Flowers here and there, makes 'em a wonderful Figure to behold. Some of the Beauties, which indeed are finely shap’d, as almost all are, and who have pretty Features, are charming and novel; for they have all that is called Beauty, except the Colour, which is a reddish Yellow; or after a new Oiling, which they often use to themselves, they are of the Colour of a new Brick, but smooth, soft and sleek. They are extreme modest and bashful, very shy, and nice of being touch’d. And tho' they are all thus naked, if one lives for ever among 'em, there is not to be seen an indecent Action, or Glance: and being Matter of twenty Pound a Head, for as many as he agrees for, and to pay for 'em when they shall be deliver’d on such a Plantation: So that when there arrives a Ship laden with Slaves, they who have so contracted, go aboard, and receive their Number by Lot; and perhaps in one Lot that may be for ten, there may happen to be
three or four Men, the rest Women and Children. Or be there more or less of either Sex, you are obliged to be contented with your Lot.

Coramantien, a Country of Blacks so called, was one of those Places in which they found the most advantageous Trading for these Slaves, and thither most of our great Traders in that Merchandize traffick; for that Nation is very warlike and brave; and having a continual Campaign, being always in Hostility with one neighbouring Prince or other, they had the Fortune to take a great many Captives: for all they took in Battle were sold as Slaves; at least those common Men who could not ransom themselves. Of these Slaves so taken, the General only has all the Profit; and of these Generals our Captains and Masters of Ships buy all their Freights.

The King of Coramantien was of himself a Man of an hundred and odd Years old, and had no Son, tho' he had many beautiful Black Wives: for most certainly there are Beauties that can charm of that Colour. In his younger Years he had had many gallant Men to his Sons, thirteen of whom died in Battle, conquering when they fell; and he had only left him for his Successor, one Grand-child, Son to one of these dead Victors, who, as soon as he could bear a Bow in his Hand, and a Quiver at his Back, was sent into the Field, to be train'd up by one of the oldest Generals to War; where, from his natural Inclination to Arms, and the Occasions given him, with the good Conduct of the old General, he became, at the Age of seventeen, one of the most expert Captains, and bravest Soldiers that ever saw the Field of Mars: so that he was ador'd as the Wonder of all that World, and the Darling of the Soldiers. Besides, he was adorn'd with a native Beauty, so transcending all those of his gloomy Race, that he struck an Awe and Reverence, even into those that knew not his Quality; as he did into me, who beheld him with Surprize and Wonder, when afterwards he arrived in our World.

He had scarce arrived at his seventeenth Year, when, fighting by his Side, the General was kill'd with an Arrow in his Eye, which the Prince Oroonoko (for so was this gallant Moor call'd) very narrowly avoided; nor had he, if the General who saw the Arrow shot, and perceiving it aimed at the Prince, had not bow'd his Head between, on Purpose to receive it in his own Body, rather than it should touch that of the Prince, and so saved him.

'Twas then, afflicted as Oroonoko was, that he was proclaimed General in the old Man's Place: and then it was, at the finishing of that War, which had continu'd for two Years, that the Prince came to Court, where he had hardly been a Month together, from the Time of his fifth Year to that of seventeen: and 'twas amazing to imagine where it was he learn'd so much Humanity; or to give his Accomplishments a juster Name, where 'twas he got that real Greatness of Soul, those refined Notions of true Honour, that absolute Generosity, and that Softness, that was capable of the highest Passions of Love and Gallantry, whose Objects were almost continually fighting Men, or those mangled or dead, who heard no Sounds but those of War and Groans. Some Part of it we may attribute to the Care of a Frenchman of Wit and Learning, who finding it turn to a very good Account to be a sort of Royal Tutor to this young Black, and perceiving him very ready, apt, and quick of Apprehension, took a great Pleasure to teach him Morals, Language and Science; and was for it extremely belov'd and valu'd by him. Another Reason was, he lov'd when he came from War, to see all the English Gentlemen that traded thither; and did not only learn their Language, but that of the Spaniard also, with whom he traded afterwards for Slaves.

I have often seen and conversed with this Great Man, and been a Witness to many of his mighty Actions; and do assure my Reader, the most illustrious Courts could not have produced a braver Man, both for Greatness of Courage and Mind, a Judgment more solid, a Wit more quick, and a Conversation more sweet and diverting. He knew almost as much as if he had read much: He had heard of and admired the Romans: He had heard of the late Civil Wars in England, and the deplorable Death of our great Monarch; and would discourse of it with all the Sense and Abhorrence of the Injustice imaginable. He had an extreme good and graceful Mien, and all the Civility of a well-bred Great Man. He had nothing of Barbarity in his Nature, but in all Points address'd himself as if his Education had been in some European Court.

This great and just Character of Oroonoko gave me an extreme Curiosity to see him, especially when I knew he spoke French and English, and that I could talk with him. But tho' I had heard so much of him, I was as greatly surprised when I saw him, as if I had heard nothing of him; so beyond all Report I found him. He came into the Room, and addressed himself to me, and some other Women, with the best Grace in the World. He was pretty tall, but of a Shape the most exact that can be fancy'd: The most famous Statuary could not form the Figure of a Man more admirably turn'd from Head to Foot. His Face was not of that brown rusty Black which most of that Nation are, but a perfect Ebony, or polished Jet. His Eyes were the most aweful; the White of 'em being like Snow, as were his Teeth. His Nose was rising and Roman, instead of African and flat: His Mouth the finest shaped that could be seen; far from those great turn'd Lips, which are so natural to the rest of the Negroes, the whole Proportion and Air of his Face was so nobly and exactly form'd, that bating his Colour, there could be nothing in Nature more beautiful, agreeable and handsome. There was no one Grace wanting, that bears the Standard of true Beauty. His Hair came down to his Shoulders, by the Aids of Art, which
was by pulling it out with a Quill, and keeping it comb’d; of which he took particular Care. Nor did the Perfections of his Mind come short of those of his Person; for his Discourse was admirable upon almost any Subject: and whoever had heard him speak, would have been convinced of their Errors, that all fine Wit is confined to the white Men, especially to those of Christendom; and would have confess’d that Oroonoko was as capable even of reigning well, and of governing as wisely, as great a Soul, as politick Maxims, and as was sensible of Power, as any Prince civiliz’d in the most refined Schools of Humanity and Learning, or the most illustrious Courts.

This Prince, such as I have describ’d him, whose Soul and Body were so admirably adorned, was (while yet he was in the Court of his Grandfather, as I said) as capable of Love, as ‘twas possible for a brave and gallant Man to be; and in saying that, I have named the highest Degree of Love: for sure great Souls are most capable of that Passion.

I have already said, the old General was kill’d by the Shot of an Arrow, by the Side of this Prince, in Battle; and that Oroonoko was made General. This old dead Hero had one only Daughter left of his Race, a Beauty, that to describe her truly, one need say only, she was Female to the noble Male; the beautiful Black Venus to our young Mars; as charming in her Person as he, and of delicate Virtues. I have seen a hundred White Men sighing after her, and making a thousand Vows at her Feet, all in vain and unsuccessful. And she was indeed too great for any but a Prince of her own Nation to adore.

Oroonoko coming from the Wars (which were now ended) after he had made his Court to his Grandfather, he thought in Honour he ought to make a Visit to Imoinda, the Daughter of his Foster-father, the dead General; and to make some Excuses to her, because his Preservation was the Occasion of her Father’s Death; and to present her with those Slaves that had been taken in this last Battle, as the Trophies of her Father’s Victories. When he came, attended by all the young Soldiers of any Merit, he was infinitely surpriz’d at the Beauty of this fair Queen of Night, whose Face and Person were so exceeding all he had ever beheld, that lovely Modesty with which she receiv’d him, that Softness in her Look and Sighs, upon the melancholy Occasion of this Honour that was done by so great a Man as Oroonoko, and a Prince of whom she had heard such admirable Things; the Awfulness wherewith she receiv’d him, and the Sweetness of her Words and Behaviour while he stay’d, gain’d a perfect Conquest over his fierce Heart, and made him feel, the Victor could be subdu’d. So that having made his first Compliments, and presented her an hundred and fifty Slaves in Fetters, he told her with his Eyes, that he was not insensible of her Charms; while Imoinda, who wish’d for nothing more than so glorious a Conquest, was pleas’d to believe, she understood that silent Language of new-born Love; and, from that Moment, put on all her Additions to Beauty.

The Prince return’d to Court with quite another Humour than before; and tho’ he did not speak much of the fair Imoinda, he had the Pleasure to hear all his Followers speak of nothing but the Charms of that Maid, insomuch, that, even in the Presence of the old King, they were extolling her, and heightning, if possible, the Beauties they had found in her: so that nothing else was talk’d of, no other Sound was heard in every Corner where there were Whisperers, but Imoinda! Imoinda!

’Twill be imagin’d Oroonoko stay’d not long before he made his second Visit; nor, considering his Quality, not much longer before he told her, he ador’d her. I have often heard him say, that he admir’d by what strange Inspiration he came to talk Things so soft, and so passionate, who never knew Love, nor was us’d to the Conversation of Women; but (to use his own Words) he said, ‘Most happily, some new, and, till then, unknown Power instructed his Heart and Tongue in the Language of Love; and at the same Time, in Favour of him, inspir’d Imoinda with a Sense of his Passion.’ She was touch’d with what he said, and return’d it all in such Answers as went to his very Heart, with a Pleasure unknown before. Nor did he use those Obligations ill, that Love had done him, but turn’d all his happy Moments to the best Advantage; and as he knew no Vice, his Flame aim’d at nothing but Honour, if such a Distinction may be made in Love; and especially in that Country, where Men take to themselves as many as they can maintain; and where the only Crime and Sin against a Woman, is, to turn her off, to abandon her to Want, Shame and Misery: such ill Morals are only practis’d in Christian Countries, where they prefer the bare Name of Religion; and, without Virtue or Morality, think that sufficient. But Oroonoko was none of those Professors; but as he had right Notions of Honour, so he made her such Propositions as were not only and barely such; but, contrary to the Custom of his Country, he made her Vows, she should be the only Woman he would possess while he liv’d; that no Age or Wrinkles should incline him to change: for her Soul would be always fine, and always young; and he should have an eternal idea in his Mind of the Charms she now bore; and should look into his Heart for that idea, when he could find it no longer in her Face.

After a thousand Assurances of his lasting Flame, and her eternal Empire over him, she condescended to receive him for her Husband; or rather, receive him, as the greatest Honour the Gods could do her.
On the other Side, the old King, who had many Wives, and many Concubines, wanted not Court-Flatterers to insinuate into his Heart a thousand tender Thoughts for this young Beauty; and who represented her to his Fancy, as the most charming he had ever possess’d in all the long Race of his numerous Years. At this Character, his old Heart, like an extinguish’d Brand, most apt to take Fire, felt new Sparks of Love, and began to kindle; and now grown to his second Childhood, long’d with Impatience to behold this gay Thing, with whom, alas! he could but innocently play. But how he should be confirm’d she was this Wonder, before he us’d his Power to call her to Court, (where Maidens never came, unless for the King’s private Use) he was next to consider; and while he was so doing, he had Intelligence brought him, that Imoinda was most certainly Mistress to the Prince Oroonoko. This gave him some Chagrine: however, it gave him also an Opportunity, one Day, when the Prince was a hunting, to wait on a Man of Quality, as his Slave and Attendant, who should go and make a Present to Imoinda, as from the Prince; he should then, unknown, see this fair Maid, and have an Opportunity to hear what Message she would return the Prince for his Present, and from thence gather the State of her Heart, and Degree of her Inclination. This was put in Execution, and the old Monarch saw, and burn’d: He found her all he had heard, and would not delay his Happiness, but found he should have some Obstacle to overcome her Heart; for she express’d her Sense of the Present the Prince had sent her, in Terms so sweet, so soft and pretty, with an Air of Love and Joy that could not be dissembled, insomuch that 'twas past Doubt whether she lov’d Oroonoko entirely. This gave the old King some Affliction; but he salv’d it with this, that the Obedience the People pay their King, was not at all inferior to what they paid their Gods; and what Love would not oblige Imoinda to do, Duty would compel her to.

He was therefore no sooner got into his Apartment, but he sent the Royal Veil to Imoinda; that is the Ceremony of Invitation: He sends the Lady he has a Mind to honour with his Bed, a Veil, with which she is covered, and secur’d for the King’s Use; and ‘tis Death to disobey; besides, held a most impious Disobedience.

‘Tis not to be imagin’d the Surprize and Grief that seiz’d the lovely Maid at this News and Sight. However, as Delays in these Cases are dangerous, and Pleading worse than Treason; trembling, and almost fainting, she was oblig’d to suffer herself to be cover’d, and led away.

They brought her thus to Court; and the King, who had caus’d a very rich Bath to be prepar’d, was led into it, where he sat under a Canopy, in State, to receive this long’d-for Virgin; whom he having commanded to be brought to him, they (after disrobing her) led her to the Bath, and making fast the Doors, left her to descend. The King, without more Courtship, bad her throw off her Mantle, and come to his Arms. But Imoinda, all in Tears, threw herself on the Marble, on the Brink of the Bath, and besought him to hear her. She told him, as she was a Maid, how proud of the Divine Glory she should have been, of having it in her Power to oblige her King: but as by the Laws he could not, and from his Royal Goodness would not take from any Man his wedded Wife; so she believ’d she should be the occasion of making him commit a great Sin, if she did not reveal her State and Condition; and tell him she was another’s, and could not be so happy to be his.

The King, enrag’d at this Delay, hastily demanded the Name of the bold Man, that had married a Woman of her Degree, without his Consent. Imoinda seeing his Eyes fierce, and his Hands tremble, (whether with Age or Anger, I know not, but she fanc’d the last) almost repented she had said so much, for now she fear’d the Storm would fall on the Prince; she therefore said a thousand Things to appease the raging of his Flame, and to prepare him to hear who it was with Calmness: but before she spoke, he imagin’d who she meant, but would not seem to do so, but commanded her to lay aside her Mantle, and suffer herself to receive his Caresses, or, by his Gods he swore, that happy Man whom she was going to name should die, tho’ it was even Oroonoko himself. Therefore (said he) deny this Marriage, and swear thyself a Maid. That (reply’d Imoinda) by all our Powers I do; for I am not yet known to my Husband. ‘Tis enough (said the King) ‘tis enough both to satisfy my Conscience and my Heart. And rising from his Seat, he went and led her into the Bath; it being in vain for her to resist.

In this Time, the Prince, who was return’d from Hunting, went to visit his Imoinda, but found her gone; and not only so, but heard she receiv’d the Royal Veil. This rais’d him to a Storm; and in his Madness, they had much ado to save him from laying violent Hands on himself. Force first prevailed, and then Reason: They urg’d all to him, that might oppose his Rage; but nothing weigh’d so greatly with him as the King’s old Age, incapable of injuring him with Imoinda. He would give Way to that Hope, because it pleas’d him most, and flatter’d best his Heart. Yet this serv’d not altogether to make him cease his different Passions, which sometimes rag’d within him, and soften’d into Showers. ’Twas not enough to appease him, to tell him, his Grandfather was old, and could not that Way injure him, while he retain’d that awful Duty which the young Men are us’d there to pay to their grave Relations. He could not be convinc’d he had no Cause to sigh and mourn for the Loss of a Mistress, he could not.
with all his Strength and Courage retrieve, and he would often cry, 'Oh, my Friends! were she in wall'd Cities, or confin'd from me in Fortifications of the greatest Strength; did Inchantments or Monsters detain her from me; I would venture thro' any Hazard to free her; But here, in the Arms of a feeble old Man, my Youth, my violent Love, my Trade in Arms, and all my vast Desire of Glory, avail me nothing. *Imoinda* is as irrecoverably lost to me, as if she were snatch'd by the cold Arms of Death: Oh! she is never to be retrieved. If I would wait tedious Years; till Fate should bow the old King to his Grave, even that would not leave me *Imoinda* free; but still that Custom that makes it so vile a Crime for a Son to marry his Father's Wives or Mistresses, would hinder my Happiness; unless I would either ignobly set an ill Precedent to my Successors, or abandon my Country, and fly with her to some unknown World who never heard our Story.'

But it was objected to him, That his Case was not the same: for *Imoinda* being his lawful Wife by solemn Contract, 'twas he was the injur'd Man, and might, if he so pleas'd, take *Imoinda* back, the Breach of the Law being on his Grandfather's Side; and that if he could circumvent him, and redeem her from the *Otan*, which is the Palace of the King's Women, a sort of Seraglio, it was both just and lawful for him so to do.

This Reasoning had some Force upon him, and he should have been entirely comforted, but for the Thought that she was possess'd by his Grandfather. However, he lov'd her so well, that he was resolv'd to believe what most favour'd his Hope, and to endeavour to learn from *Imoinda*'s own Mouth, what only she could satisfy him in, whether she was rob'd of that Blessing which was only due to his Faith and Love. But as it was very hard to get a Sight of the Women, (for no Men ever enter'd into the *Otan* but when the King went to entertain himself with some one of his Wives or Mistresses; and 'twas Death, at any other Time, for any other to go in) so he knew not how to contrive to get a Sight of her.

While *Oroonoko* felt all the Agonies of Love, and suffer'd under a Torment the most painful in the World, the old King was not exempted from his Share of Affliction. He was troubled, for having been forc'd, by an irresistible Passion, to rob his Son of a Treasure, he knew, could not but be extremely dear to him; since she was the most beautiful that ever had been seen, and had besides, all the Sweetness and Innocence of Youth and Modesty, with a Charm of Wit surpassing all. He found, that however she was forc'd to expose her lovely Person to his wither'd Arms, she could only sigh and weep there, and think of *Oroonoko*; and oftentimes could not forbear speaking of him, tho' her Life were, by Custom, forfeited by owning her Passion. But she spoke not of a Lover only, but of a Prince dear to him to whom she spoke; and of the Praises of a Man, who, 'till now, fill'd the old Man's Soul with Joy at every Recital of his Bravery, or even his Name. And 'twas this Dotage on our young Hero, that gave *Imoindaa* thousand Privileges to speak of him without offending; and this Condescension in the old King, that made her take the Satisfaction of speaking of him so very often.

Besides, he many times enquir'd how the Prince bore himself: And those of whom he ask'd, being entirely Slaves to the Merits and Virtues of the Prince, still answer'd what they thought conduc't best to his Service; which was, to make the old King fancy that the Prince had no more Interest in *Imoinda*, and had resign'd her willingly to the Pleasure of the King; that he diverted himself with his Mathematicians, his Fortifications, his Officers, and his Hunting.

This pleas'd the old Lover, who fail'd not to report these Things again to *Imoinda*, that she might, by the Example of her young Lover, withdraw her Heart, and rest better contented in his Arms. But, however she was forc'd to receive this unwelcome News, in all Appearance, with Unconcern and Content; her Heart was bursting within, and she was only happy when she could get alone, to vent her Griefs and Moans with Sighs and Tears.

What Reports of the Prince's Conduct were made to the King, he thought good to justify, as far as possibly he could, by his Actions; and when he appear'd in the Presence of the King, he shew'd a Face not at all betraying his Heart: so that in a little Time, the old Man, being entirely convinc'd that he was no longer a Lover of *Imoinda* he carry'd him with him in his Train to the *Otan*, often to banquet with his Mistresses. But as soon as he enter'd, one Day, into the Apartment of *Imoinda*, with the King, at the first Glance from her Eyes, notwithstanding all his determined Resolution, he was ready to sink in the Place where he stood; and had certainly done so, but for the Support of *Aboan*, a young Man who was next to him; which, with his Change of Countenance, had betray'd him, had the King chanc'd to look that Way. And I have observ'd, 'tis a very great Error in those who laugh when one says, *A Negro can change Colour*: for I have seen 'em as frequently blush, and look pale, and that as visibly as ever I saw in the most beautiful White. And 'tis certain, that both these Changes were evident, this Day, in both these Lovers. And *Imoinda*, who saw with some Joy the Change in the Prince's Face, and found it in her own, strive to divert the King from beholding either, by a forc'd Caress, with which she met him; which was a new Wound in the Heart of the poor dying Prince. But as soon as the King was busy'd in looking on some fine Thing of *Imoinda*'smaking, she had Time to tell the Prince, with her angry, but Love-darting Eyes, that she resented his Coldness, and bemoan'd her own miserable Captivity. Nor were his Eyes silent, but answer'd her's again, as
much as Eyes could do, instructed by the most tender and most passionate Heart that ever lov’d: And they spoke so well, and so effectually, as Imoinda no longer doubted but she was the only Delight and Darling of that Soul she found pleading in ‘em its Right of Love, which none was more willing to resign than she. And ’twas this powerful Language alone that in an Instant convey’d all the Thoughts of their Souls to each other; that they both found there wanted but Opportunity to make them both entirely happy. But when he saw another Door open’d by Onahal (a former old Wife of the King’s, who now had Charge of Imoinda) and saw the Prospect of a Bed of State made ready, with Sweets and Flowers for the Dalliance of the King, who immediately led the trembling Victim from his Sight, into that prepar’d Repose; what Rage! what wild Frenzies seiz’d his Heart! which forcing to keep within Bounds, and to suffer without Noise, it became the more insupportable, and rent his Soul with ten thousand Pains. He was forc’d to retire to vent his Groans, where he fell down on a Carpet, and lay struggling a long Time, and only breathing now and then—Oh Imoinda! When Onahal had finished her necessary Affair within, shutting the Door, she came forth, to wait till the King called; and hearing some one sighing in the other Room, she pass’d on, and found the Prince in that deplorable Condition, which she thought needed her Aid. She gave him Cordials, but all in vain; till finding the Nature of his Disease, by his Sighs, and naming Imoinda, she told him he had not so much Cause as he imagined to afflict himself: for if he knew the King so well as she did, he would not lose a Moment in Jealousy; and that she was confident that Imoinda bore, at this Minute, Part in his Affliction. Aboan was of the same Opinion, and both together persuaded him to re-assume his Courage; and all sitting down on the Carpet, the Prince said so many obliging Things to Onahal, that he half-persuaded her to be of his Party: and she promised him, she would thus far comply with his just Desires, that she would let Imoinda know how faithful he was, what he suffer’d, and what he said.

This Discourse lasted till the King called, which gave Oroonoko a certain Satisfaction; and with the Hope Onahal had made him conceive, he assumed a Look as gay as ’twas possible a Man in his Circumstances could do: and presently after, he was call’d in with the rest who waited without. The King commanded Musick to be brought, and several of his young Wives and Mistresses came all together by his Command, to dance before him; where Imoinda, she bore, at this Part with an Air and Grace so surpassing all the rest, as her Beauty was above ’em, and received the Present ordained as a Prize. The Prince was every Moment more charmed with the new Beauties and Graces he beheld in this Fair-One; and while he gazed, and she danc’d, Onahal was retir’d to a Window with Aboan.

This Onahal, as I said, was one of the Cast-Mistresses of the old King; and ’twas these (now past their Beauty) that were made Guardians or Governantes to the new and the young ones, and whose Business it was to teach them all those wanton Arts of Love, with which they prevail’d and charm’d heretofore in their Turn; and who now treated the triumphing Happy-ones with all the Severity, as to Liberty and Freedom, that was possible, in Revenge of the Honours they rob them of; envying them those Satisfactions, those Gallantries and Presents, that were once made to themselves, while Youth and Beauty lasted, and which they now saw pass, as it were regardless by, and paid only to the Bloomings. And certainly, nothing is more afflicting to a decay’d Beauty, than to behold in itself declining Charms, that were once ador’d; and to find those Caresses paid to new Beauties, to which once she laid Claim; to hear them whisper, as she passes by, that once was a delicate Woman. Those abandon’d ladies therefore endeavour to revenge all the Despights and Decays of Time, on these flourishing Happy-ones. And ’twas this Severity that gave Oroonoko a thousand Fears he should never prevail with Onahal to see Imoinda. But, as I said, she was now retir’d to a Window with Aboan.

This young Man was not only one of the best Quality, but a Man extremely well made, and beautiful; and coming often to attend the King to the Otan, he had subdu’d the Heart of the antiquated Onahal, which had not forgot how pleasant it was to be in love. And tho’ she had some Decays in her Face, she had none in her Sense and Wit; she was there agreeable still, even to Aboan’s Youth: so that he took Pleasure in entertaining her with Discourses of Love. He knew also, that to make his Court to these She-favourites, was the Way to be great; these being the Persons that do all Affairs and Business at Court. He had also observed, that she had given him Glances more tender and inviting than she had done to others of his Quality. And now, when he saw that her Favour could so absolutely oblige the Prince, he fail’d not to sigh in her Ear, and look with Eyes all soft upon her, and gave her Hope that she had made some Impressions on his Heart. He found her pleas’d at this, and making a thousand Advances to him: but the Ceremony ending, and the King departing, broke up the Company for that Day, and his Conversation.

Aboan fail’d not that Night to tell the Prince of his Success, and how advantageous the Service of Onahal might be to his Amour with Imoinda. The Prince was overjoy’d with this good News: and besought him, if it were possible, to caress her so, as to engage her entirely, which he could not fail to do, if he comply’d with her Desires: For then(said the Prince) her Life lying at your Mercy, she must grant you the Request you make in my Behalf. Aboan understood him, and assur’d him he would make Love so effectually, that he would defy the most expert
Mistress of the Art, to find out whether he dissembled it, or had it really. And 'twas with Impatience they waited the next Opportunity of going to the Otan.

The Wars came on, the Time of taking the Field approached; and 'twas impossible for the Prince to delay his going at the Head of his Army to encounter the Enemy; so that every Day seemed a tedious Year, till he saw his Imoinda: for he believed he could not live, if he were forced away without being so happy. 'Twas with Impatience therefore that he expected the next Visit the King would make; and, according to his Wish, it was not long.

The Parley of the Eyes of these two Lovers had not pass'd so secretly, but an old jealous Lover could spy it; or rather, he wanted not Flatterers who told him they observ'd it: so that the Prince was hasten'd to the Camp, and this was the last Visit he found he should make to the Otan; he therefore urged Aboan to make the best of this last Effort, and to explain himself so to Onahal, that she deferring her Enjoyment of her young Lover no longer, might make Way for the Prince to speak to Imoinda.

The whole Affair being agreed on between the Prince and Aboan, they attended the King, as the Custom was, to the Otan; where, while the whole Company was taken up in beholding the Dancing, and Antick Postures the Women-Royal made to divert the King, Onahal singled out Aboan, whom she found most pliable to her Wish. When she had him where she believed she could not be heard, she sigh'd to him, and softly cry'd, 'Ah, Aboan! when will you be sensible of my Passion? I confess it with my Mouth, because I would not give my Eyes the Lye; and you have but too much already perceived they have confess'd my Flame: nor would I have you believe, that because I am the abandon'd Mistress of a King, I esteem myself altogether divested of Charms: No, Aboan; I have still a Rest of Beauty enough engaging, and have learn'd to please too well, not to be desirable. I have Lovers still, but will have none but Aboan. Madam, (rep'y'd the half-feigning Youth) you have already, by my Eyes, found you can still conquer; and I believe 'tis in pity of me you condescend to this kind Confession. But, Madam, Words are used to be so small a Part of our Country-Courtship, that 'tis rare one can get so happy an Opportunity as to tell one's Heart; and those few Minutes we have, are forced to be snatch'd for more certain Proofs of Love than speaking and sighing: and such I languish for.'

He spoke this with such a Tone, that she hoped it true, and could not forbear believing it; and being wholly transported with Joy for having subdu'd the finest of all the King's Subjects to her Desires, she took from her Ears two large Pearls, and commanded him to wear 'em in his. He would have refused 'em, crying, Madam these are not the Proofs of our Love that I expect; 'tis Opportunity, 'tis a Lone-Hour only, that can make me happy. But forcing the Pearls into his Hand, she whisper'd softly to him; Oh! do not fear a Woman's Invention, when Love sets her a thinking. And pressing his Hand, she cry'd, This Night you shall be happy. Come to the Gate of the Orange-Grove, behind the Otan, and I will be ready about midnight to receive you. 'Twas thus agreed, and she left him, that no Notice might be taken of their speaking together.

The Ladies were still dancing, and the King, laid on a Carpet, with a great deal of Pleasure was beholding them, especially Imoinda, who that Day appeared more lovely than ever, being enlivened with the good Tidings Onahal had brought her, of the constant Passion the Prince had for her. The Prince was laid on another Carpet at the other End of the Room, with his Eyes fixed on the Object of his Soul; and as she turned or moved, so did they; and she alone gave his Eyes and Soul their Motions. Nor did Imoinda employ her Eyes to any other use, than in beholding with infinite Pleasure the Joy she produced in those of the Prince. But while she was more regarding him than the Steps she took, she chanced to fall, and so near him, as that leaping with extreme Force from the Carpet, he caught her in his Arms as she fell; and 'twas visible to the whole Presence, the Joy wherewith he received her. He clasped her close to his Bosom, and quite forgot that Reverence that was due to the Mistress of a King, and that Punishment that is the Reward of a Boldness of this Nature. And had not the Presence of Mind of Imoinda (fonder of his Safety than her own) befriended him, in making her spring from his Arms, and fall into her Dance again, he had at that Instant met his Death; for the old King, jealous to the last Degree, rose up in Rage, broke all the Diversion, and led Imoinda to her Apartment, and sent out Word to the Prince, to go immediately to the Camp; and that if he were found another Night in Court, he should suffer the Death ordained for disobedient Offenders.

You may imagine how welcome this News was to Oroonoko, whose unseasonable Transport and Caress of Imoinda was blamed by all Men that loved him: and now he perceived his Fault, yet cry'd, That for such another Moment he would be content to die.

All the Otan was in Disorder about this Accident; and Onahal was particularly concern'd, because on the Prince's Stay depended her Happiness; for she could no longer expect that of Aboan: So that e'er they departed, they contrived it so, that the Prince and he should both come that Night to the Grove of the Otan, which was all of Oranges and Citrons, and that there they would wait her Orders.
They parted thus with Grief enough ‘till Night, leaving the King in Possession of the lovely Maid. But nothing could appease the Jealousy of the old Lover; he would not be imposed on, but would have it, that Imoinda made a false Step on Purpose to fall into Oroonoko’s Bosom, and that all things looked like a Design on both Sides; and ’twas in vain she protested her Innocence: He was old and obstinate, and left her, more than half assur’d that his Fear was true.

The King going to his Apartment, sent to know where the Prince was, and if he intended to obey his Command. The Messenger return’d, and told him, he found the Prince pensive, and altogether unprepar’d for the Campaign; that he lay negligently on the Ground, and answer’d very little. This confirmed the Jealousy of the King, and he commanded that they should very narrowly and privately watch his Motions; and that he should not stir from his Apartment, but one Spy or other should be employ’d to watch him: So that the Hour approaching, wherein he was to go to the Citron-Grove; and taking only Aboan along with him, he leaves his Apartment, and was watched to the very Gate of the Otar; where he was seen to enter, and where they left him, to carry back the Tidings to the King.

Oroonoko and Aboan were no sooner enter’d, but Onahal led the Prince to the Apartment of Imoinda; who, not knowing any thing of her Happiness, was laid in Bed. But Onahal only left him in her Chamber, to make the best of his Opportunity, and took her dear Aboan to her own; where he shewed the Height of Complaisance for his Prince, when, to give him an Opportunity, he suffered himself to be caressed in Bed by Onahal.

The Prince softly waken’d Imoinda, who was not a little surpriz’d with Joy to find him there; and yet she trembled with a thousand Fears. I believe he omitted saying nothing to this young Maid, that might persuade her to suffer him to seize his own, and take the Rights of Love. And I believe she was not long resisting those Arms where she so longed to be; and having Opportunity, Night, and Silence, Youth, Love, and Desire, he soon prevail’d, and ravished in a Moment what his old Grandfather had been endeavouring for so many Months.

’Tis not to be imagined the Satisfaction of these two young Lovers; nor the Vows she made him, that she remained a spotless Maid till that Night, and that what she did with his Grandfather had robb’d him of no Part of her Virgin-Honour; the Gods, in Mercy and Justice, having reserved that for her plighted Lord, to whom of Right it belonged. And ’tis impossible to express the Transports he suffer’d, while he listen’d to a Discourse so charming from her loved Lips; and clasped that Body in his Arms, for whom he had so long languished; and nothing now afflicted him, but his sudden Departure from her; for he told her the Necessity, and his Commands, but should depart satisfy’d in this, That since the old King had hitherto not been able to deprive him of those Enjoyments which only belonged to him, he believed for the future he would be less able to injure him; so that, abating the Scandal of the Veil, which was no otherwise so, than that she was Wife to another, he believed her safe, even in the Arms of the King, and innocent; yet would he have ventur’d at the Conquest of the World, and have given it all to have had her avoided that Honour of receiving the Royal Veil. ’Twas thus, between a thousand Caresses, that both bemoan’d the hard Fate of Youth and Beauty, so liable to that cruel Promotion: ’Twas a Glory that could well have been spared here, tho’ desired and aim’d at by all the young Females of that Kingdom.

But while they were thus fondly employ’d, forgetting how Time ran on, and that the Dawn must conduct him far away from his only Happiness, they heard a great Noise in the Otan, and unusual Voices of Men; at which the Prince, starting from the Arms of the frighted Imoinda, ran to a little Battle-Ax he used to wear by his Side; and having not so much Leisure as to put on his Habit, he opposed himself against some who were already opening the Door: which they did with so much Violence, that Oroonoko was not able to defend it; but was forced to cry out with a commanding Voice, ‘Whoever ye are that have the Boldness to attempt to approach this Apartment thus rudely; know, that I, the Prince Oroonoko, will revenge it with the certain Death of him that first enters: Therefore stand back, and know, this Place is sacred to Love and Me this Night; To-morrow ’tis the King’s.’

This he spoke with a Voice so resolv’d and assur’d, that they soon retired from the Door; but cry’d, ‘Tis by the King’s Command we are come; and being satisfy’d by thy Voice, O Prince, as much as if we had enter’d, we can report to the King the Truth of all his Fears, and leave thee to provide for thy own Safety, as thou art advis’d by thy Friends.’

At these Words they departed, and left the Prince to take a short and sad Leave of his Imoinda; who, trusting in the Strength of her Charms, believed she should appease the Fury of a jealous King, by saying, she was surprized, and that it was by Force of Arms he got into her Apartment. All her Concern now was for his Life, and therefore she hasten’d him to the Camp, and with much ado prevail’d on him to go. Nor was it she alone that prevail’d; Aboanand Onahal both pleaded, and both assured him of a Lyre that should be well enough contriv’d to secure Imoinda. So that at last, with a Heart sad as Death, dying Eyes, and sighing Soul, Oroonoko departed, and took his way to the Camp.
It was not long after, the King in Person came to the Otan; where beholding Imoinda, with Rage in his Eyes, he upbraided her Wickedness, and Perfidy; and threatening her Royal Lover, she fell on her Face at his Feet, bedewing the Floor with her Tears, and imploring his Pardon for a Fault which she had not with her Will committed; as Onahal, who was also prostrate with her, could testify: That, unknown to her, he had broke into her Apartment, and ravished her. She spoke this much against her Conscience; but to save her own Life, 'twas absolutely necessary she should feign this Falsity. She knew it could not injure the Prince, he being fled to an Army that would stand by him, against any Injuries that should assault him. However, this last Thought of Imoinda’s being ravished, changed the Measures of his Revenge; and whereas before he designed to be himself her Executioner, he now resolved she should not die. But as it is the greatest Crime in Nature amongst them, to touch a Woman after having been possess’d by a Son, a Father, or a Brother, so now he looked on Imoinda as a polluted thing wholly unfit for his Embrace; nor would he resign her to his Grandson, because she had received the Royal Veil: He therefore removes her from the Otan, with Onahal; whom he put into safe Hands, with Order they should be both sold off as Slaves to another Country, either Christian or Heathen, 'twas no Matter where.

This cruel Sentence, worse than Death, they implor’d might be reversed; but their Prayers were vain, and it was put in Execution accordingly, and that with so much Secrecy, that none, either without or within the Otan, knew any thing of their Absence, or their Destiny.

The old King nevertheless executed this with a great deal of Reluctancy; but he believed he had made a very great Conquest over himself, when he had once resolved, and had perform’d what he resolved. He believed now, that his Love had been unjust; and that he could not expect the Gods, or Captain of the Clouds (as they call the unknown Power) would suffer a better Consequence from so ill a Cause. He now begins to hold Oroonoko excused; and to say, he had reason for what he did. And now every body could assure the King how passionately Imoinda was beloved by the Prince; even those confess’d it now, who said the contrary before his Flame was not abated. So that the King being old, and not able to defend himself in War, and having no Sons of all his Race remaining alive, but only this, to maintain him on his Throne; and looking on this as a man disoblige, first by the Rape of his Mistress, or rather Wife, and now by depriving him wholly of her, he fear’d, might make him desperate, and do some cruel thing, either to himself or his old Grandfather the Offender, he began to repent him extremely of the Contempt he had, in his Rage, put on Imoinda. Besides, he consider’d he ought in Honour to have killed her for this Offence, if it had been one. He ought to have had so much Value and Consideration for a Maid of her Quality, as to have nobly put her to Death, and not to have sold her like a common Slave; the greatest Revenge, and the most disgraceful of any, and to which they a thousand times prefer Death, and implore it; as Imoinda did, but could not obtain that Honour. Seeing therefore it was certain that Oroonoko would highly resent this Affront, he thought good to make some Excuse for his Rashness to him; and to that End, he sent a Messenger to the Camp, with Orders to treat with him about the Matter, to gain his Pardon, and endeavour to mitigate his Grief: but that by no Means he should tell him she was sold, but secretly put to Death; for he knew he should never obtain his Pardon for the other.

When the Messenger came, he found the Prince upon the Point of engaging with the Enemy; but as soon as he heard of the Arrival of the Messenger, he commanded him to his Tent, where he embraced him, and received him with Joy; which was soon abated by the down-cast Looks of the Messenger, who was instantly demanded the Cause by Oroonoko; who, impatient of Delay, ask’d a thousand Questions in a Breath, and all concerning Imoinda. But there needed little Return; for he could almost answer himself of all he demanded, from his Sight and Eyes. At last the Messenger casting himself at the Prince’s Feet, and kissing him with all the Submission of a Man that had something to implore which he dreaded to utter, besought him to hear with Calmness what he had to deliver extremely of the Contempt he had, in his Rage, put on Imoinda. Besides, he consider’d he ought in Honour to have killed her for this Offence, if it had been one. He ought to have had so much Value and Consideration for a Maid of her Quality, as to have nobly put her to Death, and not to have sold her like a common Slave; the greatest Revenge, and the most disgraceful of any, and to which they a thousand times prefer Death, and implore it; as Imoinda did, but could not obtain that Honour. Seeing therefore it was certain that Oroonoko would highly resent this Affront, he thought good to make some Excuse for his Rashness to him; and to that End, he sent a Messenger to the Camp, with Orders to treat with him about the Matter, to gain his Pardon, and endeavour to mitigate his Grief: but that by no Means he should tell him she was sold, but secretly put to Death; for he knew he should never obtain his Pardon for the other.

Oroonoko bad him return his Duty to his Lord and Master; and to assure him, there was no Account of Revenge to be adjudged between them; If there was, he was the Aggressor, and that Death would be just, and, maugre his Age, would see him righted; and he was contented to leave his Share of Glory to Youths more fortunate and worthy of that Favour from the Gods: That henceforth he would never lift a Weapon, or draw a Bow, but abandon
the small Remains of his Life to Sighs and Tears, and the continual Thoughts of what his Lord and Grandfather had thought good to send out of the World, with all that Youth, that Innocence and Beauty.

After having spoken this, whatever his greatest Officers and Men of the best Rank could do, they could not raise him from the Carpet, or persuade him to Action, and Resolutions of Life; but commanding all to retire, he shut himself into his Pavilion all that Day, while the Enemy was ready to engage: and wondring at the Delay, the whole Body of the chief of the Army then address’d themselves to him, and to whom they had much ado to get Admittance. They fell on their Faces at the Foot of his Carpet, where they lay, and besought him with earnest Prayers and Tears to lead them forth to Battle, and not let the Enemy take Advantages of them; and implored him to have Regard to his Glory, and to the World, that depended on his Courage and Conduct. But he made no other Reply to all their Supplications than this, That he had now no more Business for Glory; and for the World, it was a Trifle not worth his Care: Go, (continued he, sighing) and divide it amongst you, and reap with Joy what you so vainly prize, and leave me to my more welcome Destiny.

They then demanded what they should do, and whom he would constitute in his Room, that the Confusion of ambitious Youth and Power might not ruin their Order, and make them a Prey to the Enemy. He reply’d, he would not give himself that Trouble—but wished ’em to chuse the bravest Man amongst ’em, let his Quality or Birth be what it would: ‘For, Oh my Friends! (says he) it is not Titles make Men Brave or Good; or Birth that bestows Courage and Generosity, or makes the Owner Happy. Believe this, when you behold Oroonoko the most wretched, and abandoned by Fortune, of all the Creation of the Gods.’ So turning himself about, he would make no more Reply to all they could urge or implore.

The Army beholding their Officers return unsuccessful, with sad Faces and ominous Looks, that presaged no good Luck, suffer’d a thousand Fears to take Possession of their Hearts, and the Enemy to come even upon them before they could provide for their Safety by any Defence: and tho’ they were assured by some who had a Mind to animate them, that they should be immediately headed by the Prince; and that in the mean time Aboan had Orders to command as General; yet they were so dismay’d for want of that great Example of Bravery, that they could make but a very feeble Resistance; and, at last, down-right fled before the Enemy, who pursued ’em to the very Tents, killing ’em: Nor could all Aboan’s Courage, which that Day gained him immortal Glory, shame ’em into a manly Defence of themselves. The Guards that were left behind about the Prince’s Tent, seeing the Soldiers flee before the Enemy, and scatter themselves all over the Plain, in great Disorder, made such Out-cries, as roused the Prince from his amorous Slumber, in which he had remained buried for two Days, without permitting any Sustenance to approach him. But, in Spite of all his Resolutions, he had not the Constancy of Grief to that Degree, as to make him insensible of the Danger of his Army; and in that Instant he leaped from his Couch, and cry’d—‘Come, if we must die, let us meet Death the noblest Way; and ’twill be more like Oroonoko to encounter him at an Army’s Head, opposing the Torrent of a conquering Foe, than lazily on a Couch, to wait his lingering Pleasure, and die every Moment by a thousand racking Thoughts; or be tamely taken by an Enemy, and led a whining, love-sick Slave to adorn the Triumphs of Jamoan, that young Victor, who already is enter’d beyond the Limits I have prescrib’d him.’

While he was speaking, he suffer’d his People to dress him for the Field; and sallying out of his Pavilion, with more Life and Vigour in his Countenance than ever he shew’d, he appear’d like some Divine Power descended to save his Country from Destruction: And his People had purposely put him on all Things that might make him shine with most Splendor, to strike a reverend Awe into the Beholders. He flew into the thickest of those that were pursuing his Men; and being animated with Despair, he fought as if he came on Purpose to die, and did such Things as will not be believed that human Strength could perform; and such, as soon inspir’d all the rest with new Courage, and new Ardor. And now it was that they began to fight indeed; and so, as if they would not be out-done even by their ador’d Hero; who turning the Tide of the Victory, changing absolutely the Fate of the Day, gain’d an entire Conquest: And Oroonoko having the good Fortune to single out Jamoan, he took him Prisoner with his own Hand, having wounded him almost to Death.

This Jamoan afterwards became very dear to him, being a Man very Gallant, and of excellent Graces, and fine Parts; so that he never put him amongst the Rank of Captives as they used to do, without Distinction, for the common Sale, or Market, but kept him in his own Court, where he retain’d nothing of the Prisoner but the Name, and returned no more into his own Country; so great an Affection he took for Oroonoko, and by a thousand Tales and Adventures of Love and Gallantry, flatter’d his Disease of Melancholy and Languishment; which I have often heard him say, had certainly kill’d him, but for the Conversation of this Prince and Aboan, and the French Governor he had from his Childhood, of whom I have spoken before, and who was a Man of admirable Wit, great Ingenuity and Learning; all which he had infused into his young Pupil. This Frenchman was banished out of his own Country for some Heretical Notions he held; and tho’ he was a Man of very little Religion, yet he had admirable Morals, and a brave Soul.
After the total Defeat of Jamoan’s Army, which all fled, or were left dead upon the Place, they spent some Time in the Camp; Oroonoko chusing rather to remain a While there in his Tents, than to enter into a Palace, or live in a Court where he had so lately suffer’d so great a Loss, the Officers therefore, who saw and knew his Cause of Discontent, invented all sorts of Diversions and Sports to entertain their Prince: So that what with those Amusements abroad, and others at home, that is, within their Tents, with the Persuasions, Arguments, and Care of his Friends and Servants that he more peculiarly priz’d, he wore off in Time a great Part of that Chagrin, and Torture of Despair, which the first Efforts of Imoinda’s Death had given him; insomuch, as having received a thousand kind Embassies from the King, and Invitation to return to Court, he obey’d, tho’ with no little Reluctancy; and when he did so, there was a visible Change in him, and for a long Time he was much more melancholy than before. But Time lessens all Extremes, and reduces ’em to Mediums, and Unconcern; but no Motives of Beauties, tho’ all endeavour’d it, could engage him in any sort of Amour, tho’ he had all the Invitations to it, both from his own Youth, and other Ambitions and Designs.

Oroonoko was no sooner return’d from this last Conquest, and receiv’d at Court with all the Joy and Magnificence that could be express’d to a young Victor, who was not only return’d Triumphant, but belov’d like a Deity, than there arriv’d in the Port an English Ship.

The Master of it had often before been in these Countries, and was very well known to Oroonoko, with whom he had traffick’d for Slaves, and had us’d to do the same with his Predecessors.

This Commander was a Man of a finer sort of Address and Conversation, better bred, and more engaging, than most of that sort of Men are; so that he seem’d rather never to have been bred out of a Court, than almost all his Life at Sea. This Captain therefore was always better receiv’d at Court, than most of the Traders to those Countries were; and especially by Oroonoko, who was more civiliz’d, according to the European Mode, than any other had been, and took more Delight in the White Nations; and, above all, Men of Parts and Wit. To this Captain he sold abundance of his Slaves; and for the Favor and Esteem he had for him, made him many Presents, and oblig’d him to stay at Court as long as possibly he could. Which the Captain seem’d to take as a very great Honour done him, entertaining the Prince every Day with Globes and Maps, and Mathematical Discourses and Instruments; eating, drinking, hunting, and living with him with so much Familiarity, that it was not to be doubted but he had gain’d very greatly upon the Heart of this gallant young Man. And the Captain, in Return of all these mighty Favours, besought the Prince to honour his Vessel with his Presence some Day or other at Dinner, before he should set sail; which he condescended to accept, and appointed his Day. The Captain, on his Part, fail’d not to have all Things in a Readiness, in the most magnificent Order he could possibly: And the Day being come, the Captain, in his Boat, richly adorn’d with Carpets and Velvet Cushions, rowed to the Shore, to receive the Prince; with another Long-boat, where was plac’d all his Musick and Trumpets, with which Oroonoko was extremely delighted; who met him on the Shore, attended by his French Governor, Jamoan, Aboan, and about an Hundred of the noblest of the Youths of the Court: And after they had first carried the Prince on Board, the Boats fetch’d the rest off; where they found a very splendid Treat, with all Sorts of fine Wines; and were as well entertain’d, as ’twas possible in such a Place to be.

The Prince having drank hard of Punch, and several Sorts of Wine, as did all the rest, (for great Care was taken they should want nothing of that Part of the Entertainment) was very merry, and in great Admiration of the Ship, for he had never been in one before; so that he was curious of beholding every Place where he decently might descend. The rest, no less curious, who were not quite overcome with drinking, rambled at their Pleasure Fore and Aft; as their Fancies guided ’em: So that the Captain, who had well laid his Design before, gave the Word, and seiz’d on all his Guests; they clapping great Irons suddenly on the Prince, when he was leap’d down into the Hold, to view that Part of the Vessel; and locking him fast down, secur’d him. The same Treachery was used to all the rest; and all in one Instant, in several Places of the Ship, were lash’d fast in Irons, and betray’d to Slavery.

That great Design over, they set all Hands at Work to hoist Sail; and with as treacherous as fair a Wind they made from the Shore with this innocent and glorious Prize, who thought of nothing less than such an Entertainment. Some have commended this Act, as brave in the Captain; but I will spare my Sense of it, and leave it to my Reader to judge as he pleases. It may be easily guess’d, in what Manner the Prince resented this Indignity, who may be best resembled to a Lion taken in a Toil; so he raged, so he struggled for Liberty, but all in vain: And they had so wisely managed his Fetters, that he could not use a Hand in his Defence, to quit himself of a Life that would by no Means endure Slavery; nor could he move from the Place where he was ty’d, to any solid Part of the Ship, against which he might have beat his Head, and have finish’d his Disgrace that Way. So that being deprived of all other Means, he resolv’d to perish for want of Food; and pleas’d at last with that Thought, and toil’d and tir’d by Rage and Indignation, he laid himself down, and sullenly resolv’d upon dying, and refused all Things that were brought him.
This did not a little vex the Captain, and the more so, because he found almost all of 'em of the same Humour; so that the Loss of so many brave Slaves, so tall and goodly to behold, would have been very considerable: He therefore order'd one to go from him (for he would not be seen himself) to Oroonoko, and to assure him, he was afflicted for having rashly done so unhospitable a Deed, and which could not be now remedied, since they were far from Shore; but since he resented it in so high a Nature, he assur'd him he would revoke his Resolution, and set both him and his Friends ashore on the next Land they should touch at; and of this the Messenger gave him his Oath, provided he would resolve to live. And Oroonoko, whose Honour was such, as he never had violated a Word in his Life himself, much less a solemn Asseveration, believ'd in an Instant what this Man said; but reply'd, He expected, for a Confirmation of this, to have his shameful Fetters dismis'd. This Demand was carried to the Captain; who return'd him Answer, That the Offence had been so great which he had put upon the Prince, that he durst not trust him with Liberty while he remain'd in the Ship, for fear, lest by a Valour natural to him, and a Revenge that would animate that Valour, he might commit some Outrage fatal to himself, and the King his Master, to whom the Vessel did belong. To this Oroonoko reply'd, He would engage his Honour to behave himself in all friendly Order and Manner, and obey the Command of the Captain, as he was Lord of the King's Vessel, and General of those Men under his Command.

This was deliver'd to the still doubting Captain, who could not resolve to trust a Heathen, he said, upon his Parole, a Man that had no Sense or Notion of the God that he worshipp'd. Oroonoko then reply'd, He was very sorry to hear that the Captain pretended to the Knowledge and Worship of any Gods, who had taught him no better Principles, than not to credit as he would be credited. But they told him, the Difference of their Faith occasion'd that Distrust: for the Captain had protested to him upon the Word of a Christian, and sworn in the Name of a great God; which if he should violate, he must expect eternal Torments in the World to come. 'Is that all the Obligations he has to be just to his Oath? (reply'd Oroonoko) Let him know, I swear by my Honour; which to violate, would not only render me contemptible and despised by all brave and honest Men, and so give my self perpetual Pain, but it would be eternally offending and displeasing all Mankind; harming, betraying, circumventing, and outraging all Men. But Punishments hereafter are suffer'd by one's self; and the World takes no Cognizance whether this God has reveng'd 'em or not, 'tis done so secretly, and defer'd so long; while the Man of no Honour suffers every Moment the Scorn and Contempt of the honester World, and dies every Day ignominiously in his Fame, which is more valuable than Life. I speak not this to move Belief, but to shew you how you mistake, when you imagine, that he who will violate his Honour, will keep his Word with his God's. So, turning from him with a disdainful Smile, he refused to answer him, when he urged him to know what Answer he should carry back to his Captain; so that he departed without saying any more.

The Captain pondering and consulting what to do, it was concluded, that nothing but Oroonoko's Liberty would encourage any of the rest to eat, except the Frenchman, whom the Captain could not pretend to keep Prisoner, but only told him, he was secur'd, because he might act something in Favour of the Prince; but that he should be freed as soon as they came to Land. So that they concluded it wholly necessary to free the Prince from his Irons, that he might shew himself to the rest; that they might have an Eye upon him, and that they could not fear a single Man.

This being resolved, to make the Obligation the greater, the Captain himself went to Oroonoko; where, after many Compliments, and Assurances of what he had already promis'd, he receiving from the Prince his Parole, and his Hand, for his good Behaviour, dismiss'd his Irons, and brought him to his own Cabin; where, after having treated and repos'd him a While, (for he had neither eat nor slept in four Days before) he besought him to visit those obstinate People in Chains, who refused all manner of Sustenance; and intreated him to oblige 'em to eat, and assure 'em of their Liberty the first Opportunity.

Oroonoko, who was too generous not to give Credit to his Words, shew'd himself to his People, who were transported with Excess of Joy at the Sight of their darling Prince; falling at his Feet, and kissing and embracing 'em; believing, as some divine Oracle, all he assur'd 'em. But he besought 'em to bear their Chains with that Bravery that became those whom he had seen act so nobly in Arms; and that they could not give him greater Proofs of their Love and Friendship, since 'twas all the Security the Captain (his Friend) could have against the Revenge, he said, they might possibly justly take for the Injuries sustained by him. And they all, with one Accord, assur'd him, that they could not suffer enough, when it was for his Repose and Safety.

After this, they no longer refus'd to eat, but took what was brought 'em, and were pleas'd with their Captivity, since by it they hoped to redeem the Prince, who, all the rest of the Voyage, was treated with all the Respect due to his Birth, tho' nothing could divert his Melancholy; and he would often sigh for Imoinda, and think this a Punishment due to his Misfortune, in having left that noble Maid behind him, that fatal Night, in the Otan, when he fled to the Camp.
Possess’d with a thousand Thoughts of past Joys with this fair young Person, and a thousand Griefs for her eternal Loss, he endure’d a tedious Voyage, and at last arriv’d at the Mouth of the River of Surinam, a Colony belonging to the King of England, and where they were to deliver some Part of their Slaves. There the Merchants and Gentlemen of the Country going on Board, to demand those Lots of Slaves they had already agree’d on; and, amongst those, the Overseers of those Plantations where I then chanc’d to be: The Captain, who had given the Word, order’d his Men to bring up those noble Slaves in Fetters, whom I have spoken of; and having put ‘em, some in one, and some in other Lots, with Women and Children, (which they call Pickaninies) they sold ‘em off, as Slaves to several Merchants and Gentlemen; not putting any two in one Lot, because they would separate ‘em far from each other; nor daring to trust ‘em together, lest Rage and Courage should put ‘em upon contriving some great Action, to the Ruin of the Colony.

Oroonoko was first seiz’d on, and sold to our Overseer, who had the first Lot, with seventeen more of all Sorts and Sizes, but not one of Quality with him. When he saw this, he found what they meant; for, as I said, he understood English pretty well; and being wholly unarm’d and defenceless, so as it was in vain to make any Resistance, he only beheld the Captain with a Look all fierce and disdainful, upbraiding him with Eyes that forc’d Blushes on his guilty Cheeks, he only cry’d in passing over the Side of the Ship; Farewel, Sir, ‘tis worth my Sufferings to gain so true a Knowledge, both of you, and of your Gods, by whom you swear. And desiring those that held him to forbear their Pains, and telling ‘em he would make no Resistance, he cry’d, Come, my Fellow-Slaves, let us descend, and see if we can meet with more Honour and Honesty in the next World we shall touch upon. So he nimbly leapt into the Boat, and shewing no more Concern, suffer’d himself to be row’d up the River, with his seventeen Companions.

The Gentleman that bought him, was a young Cornish Gentleman, whose Name was Trefry; a Man of great Wit, and fine Learning, and was carried into those Parts by the Lord — — Governor, to manage all his Affairs. He reflecting on the last Words of Oroonoko to the Captain, and beholding the Richness of his Vest, no sooner came into the Boat, but he fix’d his Eyes on him; and finding something so extraordinary in his Face, his Shape and Mein, a Greatness of Look, and Haughtiness in his Air, and finding he spoke English, had a great Mind to be enquiring into his Quality and Fortune; which, though Oroonoko endeavour’d to hide, by only confessing he was above the Rank of common Slaves, Trefry soon found he was yet something greater than he confess’d; and from that Moment began to conceive so vast an Esteem for him, that he ever after lov’d him as his dearest Brother, and shew’d him all the Civilities due to so great a Man.

Trefry was a very good Mathematician, and a Linguist; could speak French and Spanish; and in the three Days they remain’d in the Boat, (for so long were they going from the Ship to the Plantation) he entertain’d Oroonoko so agreeably with his Art and Discourse, that he was no less pleas’d with Trefry, than he was with the Prince; and he thought himself, at least, fortunate in this, that since he was a Slave, as long as he would suffer himself to remain so, he had a Man of so excellent Wit and Parts for a Master. So that before they had finish’d their Voyage up the River, he made no Scruple of declaring to Trefry all his Fortunes, and most Part of what I have here related, and put himself wholly into the Hands of his new Friend, who found resented all the Injuries were done him, and was charm’d with all the Greatnesses of his Actions; which were recited with that Modesty, and delicate Sense, as wholly vanquish’d him, and subdu’d him to his Interest. And he promis’d him, on his Word and Honour, he would find the Means to re-conduct him to his own Country again; assuring him, he had a perfect Abhorrence of so dishonourable an Action; and that he would sooner have dy’d, than have been the Author of such a Perfidy. He found the Prince was very much concerned to know what became of his Friends, and how they took their Slavery; and Trefry promised to take Care about the enquiring after their Condition, and that he should have an Account of ‘em.

Tho’, as Oroonoko afterwards said, he had little Reason to credit the Words of a Backearary; yet he knew not why, but he saw a kind of Sincerity, and aweful Truth in the Face of Trefry; he saw Honesty in his Eyes, and he found him wise and witty enough to understand Honour: for it was one of his Maxims, A Man of Wit could not be a Knave or Villain.

In their Passage up the River, they put in at several Houses for Refreshment; and ever when they landed, Numbers of People would flock to behold this Man: not but their Eyes were daily entertain’d with the Sight of Slaves; but the Fame of Oroonoko was gone before him, and all People were in Admiration of his Beauty. Besides, he had a rich Habit on, in which he was taken, so different from the rest, and which the Captain could not strip him of, because he was forc’d to surprize his Person in the Minute he sold him. When he found his Habit made him liable, as he thought, to be gazed at the more, he begged Trefry to give him something more befitting a Slave, which he did, and took off his Robes: Nevertheless, he shone thro’ all, and his Osenbrigs (a sort of brown Holland Suit he had on) could not conceal the Graces of his Looks and Mein; and he had no less Admirers than when he had his dazzling Habit on: The Royal Youth appear’d in spite of the Slave, and People could not help
treated him after a different Manner, without designing it. As soon as they approached him, they venerated and esteemed him; his Eyes insensibly commanded Respect, and his Behaviour insinuated it into every Soul. So that there was nothing talked of but this young and gallant Slave, even by those who yet knew not that he was a Prince.

I ought to tell you, that the Christians never buy any Slaves but they give ‘em some Name of their own, their native ones being likely very barbarous, and hard to pronounce; so that Mr. Trefry gave Oroonoko that of Cæsar, which name will live in that Country as long as that (scarce more) glorious one of the great Roman: for ‘tis most evident he wanted no Part of the personal Courage of that Cæsar, and acted Things as memorable, had they been done in some Part of the World replenished with People and Historians, that might have given him his Due. But his Misfortune was, to fall in an obscure World, that afforded only a Female Pen to celebrate his Fame: tho’ I doubt not but it had lived from others Endeavours, if the Dutch, who immediately after his Time took that Country, had not killed, banished and dispersed all those that were capable of giving the World this great Man’s Life, much better than I have done. And Mr. Trefry, who design’d it, died before he began it, and bemoan’d himself for not having undertook it in Time.

For the future therefore I must call Oroonoko Cæsar; since by that Name only he was known in our Western World, and by that Name he was received on Shore at Parham-House, where he was destin’d a Slave. But if the King himself (God bless him) had come ashore, there could not have been greater Expectation by all the whole Plantation, and those neighbouring ones, than was on ours at that Time; and he was received more like a Governor than a Slave: Notwithstanding, as the Custom was, they assigned him his Portion of Land, his House and his Business up in the Plantation. But as it was more for Form, than any Design to put him to his Task, he endured no more of the Slave but the Name, and remain’d some Days in the House, receiving all Visits that were made him, without stirring towards that Part of the Plantation where the Negroes were.

At last, he would needs go view his Land, his House, and the Business assign’d him. But he no sooner came to the Houses of the Slaves, which are like a little Town by itself, the Negroes all having left Work, but they all came forth to behold him, and found he was that Prince who had, at several Times, sold most of ‘em to these Parts; and from a Veneration they pay to great Men, especially if they know ‘em, and from the Surprize and Awe they had at the Sight of him, they all cast themselves at his Feet, crying out, in their Language, Live, O King! Long live, O King! and kissing his Feet, paid him even Divine Homage.

Several English Gentlemen were with him, and what Mr. Trefry had told ‘em was here confirm’d; of which he himself before had no other Witness than Cæsar himself: But he was infinitely glad to find his Grandeur confirmed by the Adoration of all the Slaves.

Cæsar, troubled with their Over-Joy, and Over-Ceremony, besought ‘em to rise, and to receive him as their Fellow-Slave; assuring them he was no better. At which they set up with one Accord a most terrible and hideous Mourning and Condoling, which he and the English had much ado to appease: but at last they prevailed with ‘em, and they prepared all their barbarous Musick, and every one kill’d and dress’d something of his own Stock (for every Family has its Land apart, on which, at their Leisure-times, they breed all eatable Things) and clubbing it together, made a most magnificent Supper, inviting their Grandee Captain, their Prince, to honour it with his Presence; which he did, and several English with him, where they all waited on him, some playing, others dancing before him all the Time, according to the Manners of their several Nations, and with unwearied Industry endeavouring to please and delight him.

While they sat at Meat, Mr. Trefry told Cæsar, that most of these young Slaves were undone in Love with a fine She-Slave, whom they had had about six Months on their Land; the Prince, who never heard the Name of Lovewithout a Sigh, nor any Mention of it without the Curiosity of examining further into that Tale, which of all Discourses was most agreeable to him, asked, how they came to be so unhappy, as to be all undone for one fair Slave? Trefry, who was naturally amorous, and delighted to talk of Love as well as any Body, proceeded to tell him, they had the most charming Black that ever was beheld on their Plantation, about fifteen or sixteen Years old, as he guess’d; that for his Part he had done nothing but sigh for her ever since she came; and that all the White Beauties he had seen, never charm’d him so absolutely as this fine Creature had done; and that no Man, of any Nation, ever beheld her, that did not fall in love with her; and that she had all the Slaves perpetually at her Feet; and the whole Country resounded with the Fame of Clemene, for so (said he) we have christen’d her: but she denies us all with such a noble Disdain, that ‘tis a Miracle to see, that she who can give such eternal Desires, should herself be all Ice and all Unconcern. She is adorn’d with the most graceful Modesty that ever beautify’d she denies us all with such a noble Disdain, that ‘tis a Miracle to see, that she who can give such eternal Desires, should herself be all Ice and all Unconcern. She is adorn’d with the most graceful Modesty that ever beautify’d
for her; which she accepts blushing, and with Reluctancy, for Fear he will ask her a Look for a Recompence, which he dares not presume to hope; so great an Awe she strikes into the Hearts of her Admirers. ‘I do not wonder (reply’d the Prince) that Clemene should refuse Slaves, being, as you say, so beautiful; but wonder how she escapes those that can entertain her as you can do: or why, being your Slave, you do not oblige her to yield?’ ‘I confess (said Trefry) when I have, against her Will, entertained her with Love so long, as to be transported with my Passion even above Dency, I have been ready to make Use of those Advantages of Strength and Force Nature has given me: But Oh! she disarms me with that Modesty and Weping, so tender and so moving, that I retire, and thank my Stars she overcame me.’ The Company laugh’d at his Civility to a Slave, and Cæsar only applauded the Nobleness of his Passion and Nature, since that Slave might be noble, or, what was better, have true Notions of Honour and Virtue in her. Thus passed they this Night, after having received from the Slaves all imaginable Respect and Obedience.

The next Day, Trefry ask’d Caesar to walk when the Heat was allay’d, and designedly carried him by the Cottage of the fair Slave; and told him she whom he spoke of last Night lived there retir’d: But (says he) I would not wish you to approach; for I am sure you will be in Love as soon as you behold her. Cæsar assured him, he was Proof against all the Charms of that Sex; and that if he imagined his Heart could be so perfidious to love again after Imoinda, he believed he should tear it from his Bosom. They had no sooner spoke, but a little Shock-Dog, that Clemene had presented her, which she took great Delight in, ran out; and she, not knowing any Body was there, ran to get it in again, and bolted out on those who were just speaking of her: when seeing them, she would have run in again, but Trefry caught her by the Hand, and cry’d, Clemene, however you fly a Lover, you ought to pay some Respect to this Stranger, (pointing to Cæsar.) But she, as if she had resolved never to raise her Eyes to the Face of a Man again, bent ’em the more to the Earth, when he spoke, and gave the Prince the Leisure to look the more at her. There needed no long gazing, or Consideration, to examine who this fair Creature was; he soon saw Imoinda all over her: in a Minute he saw her Face, her Shape, her Air, her Modesty, and all that call’d forth his Soul with Joy at his Eyes, and left his Body destitute of almost Life: it stood without Motion, and for a Minute knew not that it had a Being; and, I believe, he had never come to himself, so oppress’d he was with Over-joy, if he had not met with this Allay, that he perceived Imoinda fall dead in the Hands of Trefry. This awaken’d him, and he ran to her Aid, and caught her in his Arms, where by Degrees she came to her self; and ’tis needless to tell with what Transports, what Exasties of Joy, they both a While beheld each other, without speaking; then snatch’d each other to their Arms; then gaze again, as if they still doubted whether they possess’d the Blessing they grasped: but when they recover’d their Speech, ’tis not to be imagined what tender Things they express’d to each other; wondering what strange Fate had brought them again together. They soon inform’d each other of their Fortunes, and equally bewail’d their Fate; but at the same Time they mutually protested, that even Fetters and Slavery were soft and easy, and would be supported with Joy and Pleasure, while they could be so happy to possess each other, and to be able to make good their Vows. Caesar swore he disdained the Empire of the World, while he could behold his Imoinda; and she despis’d Grandeur and Pomp, those Vanities of her Sex, when she could gaze on Oroonoko. He ador’d the very Cottage where she resided, and said, That little Inch of the World would give him more Happiness than all the Universe could do; and she vow’d it was a Palace, while adorned with the Presence of Oroonoko.

Trefry was infinitely pleased with this Novel, and found this Clemene was the fair Mistress of whom Caesar had before spoke; and was not a little satisfy’d, that Heaven was so kind to the Prince as to sweeten his Misfortunes by so lucky an Accident; and leaving the Lovers to themselves, was impatient to come down to Parham-House (which was on the same Plantation) to give me an Account of what had happened. I was as impatient to make these Lovers a Visit, having already made a Friendship with Caesar, and from his own Mouth learned what I have related; which was confirmed by his Frenchman, who was set on shore to seek his Fortune, and of whom they could not make a Slave, because a Christian; and he came daily to Parham-Hill to see and pay his Respects to his Pupil Prince. So that concerning and interesting myself in all that related to Caesar, whom I had assure’d of Liberty as soon as the Governour arrived, I hasted presently to the Place where these Lovers were, and was infinitely glad to find this beautiful young Slave (who had already gain’d all our Esteems, for her Modesty and extraordinary Prettiness) to be the same I had heard Caesar speak so much of. One may imagine then we paid her a treble Respect; and tho’ from her being carv’d in fine Flowers and Birds all over her Body, we took her to be of Quality before, yet when we knew Clemene was Imoinda, we could not enough admire her.

I had forgot to tell you, that those who are nobly born of that Country, are so delicately cut and raised all over the Fore-part of the Trunk of their Bodies, that it looks as if it were Japan’d, the Works being raised like high Point round the Edges of the Flowers. Some are only carv’d with a little Flower, or Bird, at the Sides of the Temples, as was Caesar; and those who are so carv’d over the Body, resemble our antient Picts that are figur’d in the Chronicles, but these Carvings are more delicate.
From that happy Day Caesar took Clemene for his Wife, to the general Joy of all People; and there was as much Magnificence as the Country could afford at the Celebration of this Wedding: And in a very short Time after she conceived with Child, which made Caesar even adore her, knowing he was the last of his great Race. This new Accident made him more impatient of Liberty, and he was every Day treating with Trefrey for his and Clemene’s Liberty, and offer’d either Gold, or a vast Quantity of Slaves, which should be paid before they let him go, provided he could have any Security that he should go when his Ransom was paid. They fed him from Day to Day with Promises, and delay’d him till the Lord-Governor should come; so that he began to suspect them of Falsehood, and that they would delay him till the Time of his Wife’s Delivery, and make a Slave of the Child too; for all the Breed is theirs to whom the Parents belong. This Thought made him very uneasy, and his Sullenness gave them some Jealousies of him; so that I was obliged, by some Persons who fear’d a Mutiny (which is very fatal sometimes in those Colonies that abound so with Slaves, that they exceed the Whites in vast Numbers) to discourse with Caesar, and to give him all the Satisfaction I possibly could: They knew he and Clemene were scarce an Hour in a Day from my Lodgings; that they eat with me, and that I oblig’d them in all Things I was capable. I entertained them with the Lives of the Romans, and great Men, which charmed him to my Company; and her, with teaching her all the pretty Works that I was Mistress of, and telling her Stories of Nuns, and endeavouring to bring her to the Knowledge of the true God: But of all Discourses, Caesar liked that the worst, and would never be reconciled to our Notions of the Trinity, of which he ever made a Jest; it was a Riddle he said would turn his Brain to conceive, and one could not make him understand what Faith was. However, these Conversations fail’d not altogether so well to divert him, that he liked the Company of us Women much above the Men, for he could not drink, and he is but an ill Companion in that Country that cannot. So that obliging him to love us very well, we had all the Liberty of Speech with him, especially my self, whom he call’d his Great Mistress; and indeed my Word would go a great Way with him. For these Reasons I had Opportunity to take Notice to him, that he was not well pleased of late, as he used to be; was more retired and thoughtful; and told him, I took it ill he should suspect we would break our Words with him, and not permit both him and Clemene to return to his own Kingdom, which was not so long a Way, but when he was once on his Voyage he would quickly arrive there. He made me some Answers that shew’d a Doubt in him, which made me ask, what Advantage it would be to doubt? It would but give us a Fear of him, and possibly compel us to treat him so as I should be very loth to behold; that is, it might occasion his Confinement. Perhaps this was not so luckily spoke of me, for I perceiv’d he resented that Word, which I strove to soften again in vain: However, he assur’d me, that whatsoever Resolutions he should take, he would act nothing upon the White People; and as for myself, and those upon that Plantation where he was, he would sooner forfeit his eternal Liberty, and Life itself, than lift his Hand against his greatest Enemy on that Place. He besought me to suffer no Fears upon his Account, for he could do nothing that Honour should not dictate; but he accused himself for having suffer’d Slavery so long; yet he charg’d that Weakness on Love alone, who was capable of making him neglect even Glory itself; and, for which, now he reproaches himself every Moment of the Day. Much more to this Effect he spoke, with an Air impatient enough to make me know he would not be long in Bondage; and tho’ he suffer’d only the Name of a Slave, and had nothing of the Toil and Labour of one, yet that was sufficient to render him uneasy; and he had been too long idle, who us’d to be always in Action, and in Arms. He had a Spirit all rough and fierce, and that could not be tam’d to lazy Rest: And tho’ all Endeavours were us’d to exercise himself in such Actions and Sports as this World afforded, as Running, Wrestling, Pitching the Bar, Hunting and Fishing, Chasing and Killing Tygers of a monstrous Size, which this Continent affords in abundance; and wonderful Snakes, such as Alexander is reported to have encounter’d at the River of Amazons, and which Caesar took great Delight to overcome; yet these were not Actions great enough for his large Soul, which was still panting after more renown’d Actions.

Before I parted that Day with him, I got, with much ado, a Promise from him to rest yet a little longer with Patience, and wait the Coming of the Lord Governour, who was every Day expected on our Shore: He assur’d me he would, and this Promise he desired me to know was given perfectly in Complaisance to me, in whom he had an entire Confidence.

After this, I neither thought it convenient to trust him much out of our View, nor did the Country, who fear’d him; but with one Accord it was advis’d to treat him fairly, and oblige him to remain within such a Compass, and that he should be permitted, as seldom as could be, to go up to the Plantations of the Negroes; or, if he did, to be accompany’d by some that should be rather, in Appearance, Attendants than Spies. This Care was for some time taken, and Caesar look’d upon it as a Mark of extraordinary Respect, and was glad his Discontent had oblig’d ‘em to be more observant to him; he received new Assurance from the Overseer, which was confirmed to him by the Opinion of all the Gentlemen of the Country, who made their Court to him. During this Time that we had his Company more frequently than hitherto we had had, it may not be unpleasant to relate to you the Diversions we entertain’d him with, or rather he us.

My Stay was to be short in that Country; because my Father dy’d at Sea, and never arriv’d to possess the Honour design’d him, (which was Lieutenant-General of six and thirty Islands, besides the Continent of Surinam) nor the
Advantages he hop’d to reap by them: So that though we were oblig’d to continue on our Voyage, we did not intend to stay upon the Place. Though, in a Word, I must say thus much of it; That certainly had his late Majesty, of sacred Memory, but seen and known what a vast and charming World he had been Master of in that Continent, he would never have parted so easily with it to the Dutch. 'Tis a Continent, whose vast Extent was never yet known, and may contain more noble Earth than all the Universe beside; for, they say, it reaches from East to West one Way as far as China, and another to Peru: It affords all Things, both for Beauty and Use; 'tis there eternal Spring, always the very Months of April, May, and June; the Shades are perpetual, the Trees bearing at once all Degrees of Leaves, and Fruit, from blooming Buds to ripe Autumn: Groves of Oranges, Lemons, Citrons, Figs, Nutmegs, and noble Aromatkiks, continually bearing their Fragrances: The Trees appearing all like Nosegays, adorn’d with Flowers of different Kinds; some are all White, some Purple, some Scarlet, some Blue, some Yellow; bearing at the same Time ripe Fruit, and blooming young, or producing every Day new. The very Wood of all these Trees has an intrinsic Value, above common Timber; for they are, when cut, of different Colours, glorious to behold, and bear a Price considerable, to inlay withal. Besides this, they yield rich Balm, and Gums; so that we make our Candles of such an aromatic Substance, as does not only give a sufficient Light, but as they burn, they cast their Perfumes all about. Cedar is the common Firing, and all the Houses are built with it. The very Meat we eat, when set on the Table, if it be native, I mean of the Country, perfumes the whole Room; especially a little Beast call’d an Armadillo, a Thing which I can liken to nothing so well as a Rhinoceros; 'tis all in white Armour, so jointed, that it moves as well in it, as if it had nothing on: This Beast is about the Bigness of a Pig of six Weeks old. But it were endless to give an Account of all the divers wonderful and strange Things that Country affords, and which we took a great Delight to go in Search of; tho’ those Adventures are oftentimes fatal, and at least dangerous: But while we had Caesar in our Company on these Designs, we fear’d no Harm, nor suffer’d any.

As soon as I came into the Country, the best House in it was presented me, call’d St. John’s Hill: It stood on a vast Rock of white Marble, at the Foot of which, the River ran a vast Depth down, and not to be descended on that Side; the little Waves still dashing and washing the Foot of this Rock, made the softest Murmurs and Purlings in the World: and the opposite Bank was adorn’d with such vast Quantities of different Flowers eternally blowing, and every Day and Hour new, fenc’d behind ’em with lofty Trees of a thousand rare Forms and Colours, that the Prospect was the most ravishing that Sands can create. On the Edge of this white Rock, towards the River, was a Walk, or Grove, of Orange and Lemon-Trees, about half the Length of the Mall here, whose flowery and Fruit-bearing Branches met at the Top, and hinder’d the Sun, whose Rays are very fierce there, from entering a Beam into the Grove; and the cool Air that came from the River, made it not only fit to entertain People in, at all the hottest Hours of the Day, but refresh the sweet Blossoms, and made it always sweet and charming; and sure, the whole Globe of the World cannot shew so delightful a Place as this Grove was: Not all the Gardens of boasted Italy can produce a Shade to out-vie this, which Nature had join’d with Art to render so exceeding fine; and 'tis a Marvel to see how such vast Trees, as big as English Oaks, could take Footing on so solid a Rock, and in so little Earth as cover’d that Rock: But all Things by Nature there are rare, delightful, and wonderful. But to our Sports.

Sometimes we would go surprising, and in Search of young Tygers in their Dens, watching when the old ones went forth to forage for Prey; and oftentimes we have been in great Danger, and have fled apace for our Lives, when surpriz’d by the Dams. But once, above all other Times, we went on this Design, and Caesar was with us; who had no sooner stoyn a young Tyger from her Nest, but going off, we encounter’d the Dam, bearing a Buttock of a Cow, which she had torn off with her mighty Paw, and going with it towards her Den: We had only four Women, Caesar, and an English Gentleman, Brother to Harry Martin the great Oliverian; we found there was no escaping this enraged and ravenous Beast. However, we Women fled as fast as we could from it; but our Heels had not saved our Lives, if Caesar had not laid down her Cub, when he found the Tyger quit her Prey to make the more Speed towards him; and taking Mr. Martin’s Sword, desired him to stand aside, or follow the Ladies. He obey’d him; and Caesarmet this monstrous Beast of mighty Size, and vast Limbs, who came with open Jaws upon him; and fixing his aweful stern Eyes full upon those of the Beast, and putting himself into a very steady and good aiming Posture of Defence, ran his Sword quite through his Breast, down to his very Heart, home to the Hilt of the Sword: The dying Beast stretch’t forth her Paw, and going to grasp his Thigh, surpriz’d with Death in that very Moment, did him no other Harm than fixing her long Nails in his Flesh very deep, feebly wounded him, but could not grasp the Flesh to tear off any. When he had done this, he hallow’d to us to return; which, after some Assurance of his Victory, we did, and found him lifting out the Sword from the Bosom of the Tyger, who was laid in her Blood on the Ground. He took up the Cub, and with an Unconcern that had nothing of the Joy or Gladness of Victory, he came and laid the Whelp at my Feet. We all extremely wonder’d at his daring, and at the Bigness of the Beast, which was about the Height of an Heifer, but of mighty great and strong Limbs.

Another time, being in the Woods, he kill’d a Tyger, that had long infested that Part, and borne away abundance of Sheep and Oxen, and other Things, that were for the Support of those to whom they belong’d. Abundance of People assail’d this Beast, some affirming they had shot her with several Bullets quite through the Body at several
times; and some swearing they shot her through the very Heart; and they believed she was a Devil, rather than a mortal Thing. Cæsar had often said, he had a Mind to encounter this Monster, and spoke with several Gentlemen who had attempted her; one crying, I shot her with so many poison’d Arrows, another with his Gun in this Part of her, and another in that; so that he remarking all the Places where she was shot, fancy’d still he should overcome her, by giving her another Sort of a Wound than any had yet done; and one Day said (at the Table), ‘What Trophies and Garlands, Ladies, will you make me, if I bring you home the Heart of this ravenous Beast, that eats up all your Lambs and Pigs?’ We all promis’d he should be rewarded at our Hands. So taking a Bow, which he chose out of a great many, he went up into the Wood, with two Gentlemen, where he imagin’d this Devourer to be. They had not pass’d very far into it, but they heard her Voice, growling and grumbling, as if she were pleas’d with something she was doing. When they came in View, they found her muzzling in the Belly of a new ravish’d Sheep, which she had torn open; and seeing herself approach’d, she took fast hold of her Prey with her fore Paws, and set a very fierce raging Look on Cæsar, without offering to approach him, for Fear at the same Time of loosing what she had in Possession: So that Cæsar remain’d a good while, only taking Aim, and getting an Opportunity to shoot her where he design’d. ‘Twas some Time before he could accomplish it; and to wound her, and not kill her, would but have enrag’d her the more, and endanger’d him. He had a Quiver of Arrows at his Side, so that if one fail’d, he could be supply’d: At last, retiring a little, he gave her Opportunity to eat, for he found she was ravenous, and fell to as soon as she saw him retire, being more eager of her Prey, than of doing new Mischiefs; when he going softly to one Side of her, and hiding his Person behind certain Herbage, that grew high and thick, he took so good Aim, that, as he intended, he shot her just into the Eye, and the Arrow was sent with so good a Will, and so sure a Hand, that it stuck in her Brain, and made her caper, and become mad for a Moment or two; but being seconded by another Arrow, she fell dead upon the Prey. Cæsar cut her open with a Knife, to see where those Wounds were that had been reported to him, and why she did not die of ’em. But I shall now relate a Thing that, possibly, will find no Credit among Men; because ’tis a Notion commonly receiv’d with us, That nothing can receive a Wound in the Heart, and live: But when the Heart of this courageous Animal was taken out, there were seven Bullets of Lead in it, the Wound seam’d up with great Scars, and she liv’d with the Bullets a great While, for it was long since they were shot: This Heart the Conqueror brought up to us, and ’twas a very great Curiosity, which all the Country came to see; and which gave Cæsar Occasion of many fine Discourses of Accidents in War, and strange Escapes.

At other times he would go a Fishing; and discoursing on that Diversion, he found we had in that Country a very strange Fish, call’d a Numb-Eel, (an Eel of which I have eaten) that while it is alive, it has a Quality so cold, that those who are angling, tho’ with a Line of over so great a Length, with a Rod at the End of it, it shall in the same Minute the Bait is touch’d by this Eel, seize him or her that holds the Rod with a Numbness, that shall deprive ’em of Sense for a While; and some have fallen into the Water, and others drop’d, as dead, on the Banks of the Rivers where they stood, as soon as this Fish touches the Bait. Cæsar us’d to laugh at this, and believ’d it impossible a Man could lose his Force at the Touch of a Fish; and could not understand that Philosophy, that a cold Quality should be of that Nature; however, he had a great Curiosity to try whether it would have the same Effect on him it had on others, and often try’d, but in vain. At last, the sought-for Fish came to the Bait, as he stood angling on the Bank; and instead of throwing away the Rod, or giving it a sudden Twitch out of the Water, whereby he might have caught both the Eel, and have dismiss’d the Rod, before it could have too much Power over him; for Experiment-sake, he grasp’d it but the harder, and fainting, fell into the River; and being still possess’d of the Rod, the Tide carry’d him, senseless as he was, a great Way, till an Indian Boat took him up; and perceiv’d, when they touch’d him, a Numbness seize them, and by that knew the Rod was in his Hand; which with a Paddle, (that is a short Oar) they struck away, and snatch’d it into the Boat, Eel and all. If Cæsar was almost dead, with the Effect of this Fish, he was more so than of that of the Water, where he had remain’d the Space of going a League, and they found they had much ado to bring him back to Life; but at last they did, and brought him home, where he was in a few Hours well recover’d and refresh’d, and not a little asham’d to find he should be overcome by an Eel, and that all the People, who heard his Defiance, would laugh at him. But we cheer’d him up; and he being convinc’d, we had the Eel at Supper, which was a quarter of an Ell about, and most delicate Meat; and was of the more Value, since it cost so dear as almost the Life of so gallant a Man.

About this Time we were in many mortal Fears, about some Disputes the English had with the Indians; so that we could scarce trust our selves, without great Numbers, to go to any Indian Towns, or Place where they abode, for fear they should fall upon us, as they did immediately after my coming away; and the Place being in the Possession of the Dutch, they us’d them not so civilly as the English; so that they cut in Pieces all they could take, getting into Houses and hanging up the Mother, and all her Children about her; and cut a Footman, I left behind me, all in Joints, and nail’d him to Trees.

This Feud began while I was there; so that I lost half the Satisfaction I propos’d, in not seeing and visiting the Indian Towns. But one Day, bemoaning of our Misfortunes upon this Account, Cæsar told us, we need not fear, for if we had a Mind to go, he would undertake to be our Guard. Some would, but most would not venture:
About eighteen of us resolv’d, and took Barge; and after eight Days, arriv’d near an Indian Town: But approaching it, the Hearts of some of our Company fail’d, and they would not venture on Shore; so we poll’d, who would, and who would not. For my Part, I said, if Caesar would, I would go. He resolv’d; so did my Brother, and my Woman, a Maid of good Courage. Now none of us speaking the Language of the People, and imagining we should have a half Diversion in gazing only; and not knowing what they said, we took a Fisherman that liv’d at the Mouth of the River, who had been a long Inhabitant there, and oblig’d him to go with us: But because he was known to the Indians, as trading among ’em, and being, by long living there, become a perfect Indian in Colour, we, who had a Mind to surprize ’em, by making them see something they never had seen, (that is, White People) resolv’d only my self, my Brother and Woman should go: So Caesar, the Fisherman, and the rest, hiding behind some thick Reeds and Flowers that grew in the Banks, let us pass on towards the Town, which was on the Bank of the River all along. A little distant from the Houses, or Huts, we saw some dancing, others busy’d in fetching and carrying of Water from the River. They had no sooner spy’d us, but they set up a loud Cry, that frighted us at first; we thought it had been for those that should kill us, but it seems it was of Wonder and Amazement. They were all naked; and we were dress’d, so as is most commode for the hot Countries, very glittering and rich; so that we appeard extremely fine; my own Hair was cut short, and I had a Taffety Cap, with black Feathers on my Head; my Brother was in a Stuff-Suit, with Silver Loops and Buttons, and abundance of green Ribbon. This was all infinitely surprising to them; and because we saw them stand still till we approach’d ’em, we took Heart and advanc’d, came up to ’em, and offer’d ’em our Hands; which they took, and look’d on us round about, calling still for more Company; who came swarming out, all wondering, and crying out Tepeeme; taking their Hair up in their Hands, and spreading it wide to those they call’d out to; as if they would say (as indeed it signify’d) Numberless Wonders, or not to be recounted, no more than to number the Hair of their Heads. By Degrees they grew more bold, and from gaz Ing upon us round, they touch’d us, laying their Hands upon all the Features of our Faces, feeling our Breasts, and Arms, taking up one Petticoat, then wondering to see another; admiring our Shoes and Stockings, but more our Garters, which we gave ’em, and they ty’d about their Legs, being lac’d with Silver Lace at the Ends; for they much esteem any shining Things. In fine, we suffer’d ’em to survey us as they pleas’d, and we thought they would never have done admiring us. When Caesar, and the rest, saw we were receiv’d with such Wonder, they came up to us; and finding the Indian Trader whom they knew, (for ’tis by these Fishermen, call’d Indian Traders, we hold a Commerce with ’em; for they love not to go far from home, and we never go to them) when they saw him therefore, they set up a new Joy, and cry’d in their Language, Oh, here’s our Tiguamy, and we shall know whether those Things can speak. So advancing to him, some of ’em gave him their Hands, and cry’d, Amora Tiguamy; which is as much as, How do you do? or, Welcome Friend; and all, with one din, began to gabble to him, and ask’d, if we had Sense and Wit? If we could talk of Affairs of Life and War, as they could do? If we could hunt, swim, and do a thousand Things they use? He answer’d ’em, We could. Then they invited us into their Houses, and dress’d Venison and Buffalo for us; and going out, gather’d a Leaf of a Tree, called a Sarumbo Leaf, of six Yards long, and spread it on the Ground for a Table-Cloth; and cutting another in Pieces, instead of Plates, set us on little low Indian Stools, which they cut out of one entire Piece of Wood, and paint in a sort of Japan-Work. They serve every one their Mess on these Pieces of Leaves; and it was very good, but too high-season’d with Pepper. When we had eat, my Brother and I took out our Flutes, and play’d to ’em, which gave ’em new Wonder; and I soon perceiv’d, by an Advertisement that is natural to these People, and by the extreme Ignorance and Simplicity of ’em, it were not difficult to establish any unknown or extravagant Religion among them, and to impose any Notions or Fictions upon ’em. For seeing a Kinsman of mine set some Paper on Fire with a Burning-Glass, a Trick they had never before seen, they were like to have ador’d him for a God, and begg’d he would give ’em the Characters or Figures of his Name, that they might oppose it against Winds and Storms: which he did, and they held it up in those Seasons, and fancy’d it had a Charm to conquer them, and kept it like a holy Relique. They are very superstitious, and call’d him the Great Peeie, a Youth of about sixteen Years old, as handsome as Nature could make a Man. They consecrate a beautiful Youth from his Infancy, and all Arts are used to compleat him in the finest Manner, both in Beauty and Shape: He is bred to all the little Arts and Cunning they are capable of; to all the legerdemain Tricks, and Slight of Hand, whereby he imposes on the Rabble; and is both a Doctor in Physick and Divinity: And by these Tricks makes the Sick believe he sometimes eases their Pains, by drawing from the afflicted Part little Serpents, or odd Flies, or Worms, or any strange Thing; and though they have besides undoubted good Remedies for almost all their Diseases, they cure the Patient more by Fancy than by Medicines, and make themselves feared, loved, and reverenced. This young Peeie had a very young Wife, who seeing my Brother kiss her, came running and kiss’d me. After this they kiss’d one another, and made it a very great Jest, it being so novel; and new Admiration and Laughing went round the Multitude, that they never will forget that Ceremony, never before us’d or known. Caesar had a Mind to see and talk with their War-Captains, and we were conducted to one of their Houses, where we beheld several of the great Captains, who had been at Council: But so frightful a Vision it was to see ’em, no Fancy can create; no sad Dreams can represent so dreadful a Spectacle. For my Part, I took ’em for Hobgoblins, or Fiends, rather than Men; But however their Shapes appear’d, their Souls were very humane and noble; but some wanted their Noses, some their Lips, some their Ears, and others cut through
each Cheek, with long Slashes, through which their Teeth appear’d: They had several other formidable Wounds and Scars, or rather Dismembles. They had Comitias, or little Aprons before them; and Girdles of Cotton, with their Knives naked stuck in it; a Bow at their Back, and a Quiver of Arrows on their Thighs; and most had Feathers on their Heads of divers Colours. They cry’d Amora Tiguamy to us, at our Entrance, and were pleas’d we said as much to them: They seated us, and gave us Drink of the best Sort, and wonder’d as much as the others had done before to see us. Caesar was marvelling as much at their Faces, wondering how they should be all so wounded in War; he was impatient to know how they all came by those frightful Marks of Rage or Malice, rather than Wounds got in noble Battle: They told us by our Interpreter. That when any War was waging, two Men, chosen out by some old Captain whose fighting was past, and who could only teach the Theory of War, were to stand in Competition for the Generalship, or great War-Captain; and being brought before the old Judges, now past Labour, they are ask’d, What they dare do, to shew they are worthy to lead an Army? When he who is first ask’d, making no Reply, cuts off his Nose, and throws it contemptibly on the Ground; and the other does something to himself that he thinks surpasses him, and perhaps deprives himself of Lips and an Eye: So they slash on ’till one gives out, and many have dy’d in this Debate. And it’s by a passive Valour they shew and prove their Activity; a sort of Courage too brutal to be applauded by our Black Hero; nevertheless, he express’d his Esteem of ’em.

In this Voyage Caesar begat so good an Understanding between the Indians and the English, that there were no more Fears or Heart-burnings during our Stay, but we had a perfect, open, and free Trade with ’em. Many Things remarkable, and worthy reciting, we met with in this short Voyage; because Caesar made it his Business to search out and provide for our Entertainment, especially to please his dearly ador’d Imoinda, who was a Sharer in all our Adventures; we being resolv’d to make her Chains as easy as we could, and to compliment the Prince in that Manner that most oblig’d him.

As we were coming up again, we met with some Indians of strange Aspects; that is, of a larger Size, and other sort of Features, than those of our Country. Our Indian Slaves, that row’d us, ask’d ’em some Questions; but they could not understand us, but shew’d us a long Cotton String, with several Knots on it, and told us, they had been coming from the Mountains so many Moons as there were Knots: they were habited in Skins of a strange Beast, and brought along with ’em Bags of Gold-Dust; which, as well as they could give as to understand, came streaming in little small Channels down the high Mountains, when the Rains fell; and offer’d to be the Convoy to any Body, or Persons, that would go to the Mountains. We carry’d these Men up to Parham, where they were kept till the Lord-Governor came: And because all the Country was mad to be going on this Golden Adventure, the Governor, by his Letters, commanded (for they sent some of the Gold to him) that a Guard should be set at the Mouth of the River of Amazons (a River so call’d, almost as broad as the River of Thames) and prohibited all People from going up that River, it conducting to those Mountains or Gold. But we going off for England before the Project was further prosecuted, and the Governor being drown’d in a Hurricane, either the Design died, or the Dutch have the Advantage of it: And ’tis to be bemoan’d what his Majesty lost, by losing that Part of America.

Though this Digression is a little from my Story, however, since it contains some Proofs of the Curiosity and Daring of this great Man, I was content to omit nothing of his Character.

It was thus for some Time we diverted him; but now Imoinda began to shew she was with Child, and did nothing but sigh and weep for the Captivity of her Lord, herself, and the Infant yet unborn; and believ’d, if it were so hard to gain the Liberty of two, ’twould be more difficult to get that for three. Her Griefs were so many Darts in the great Heart of Caesar, and taking his Opportunity, one Sunday, when all the Whites were overtaken in Drink, as there were abundance of several Trades, and Slaves for four Years, that inhabited among the Negro Houses; and Sunday being their Day of Debauch, (otherwise they were a sort of Spies upon Caesar) he went, pretenting out of Goodness to ’em, to feast among ’em, and sent all his Musick, and order’d a great Treat for the whole Gang, about three hundred Negroes, and about an hundred and fifty were able to bear Arms, such as they had, which were sufficient to do Execution, with Spirits accordingly: For the English had none but rusty Swords, that no Strength could draw from a Scabbard; except the People of particular Quality, who took Care to oil ’em, and keep ’em in good Order: The Guns also, unless here and there one, or those newly carried from England, would do no Good or Harm; for ’tis the Nature of that Country to rust and eat up Iron, or any Metals but Gold and Silver. And they are very expert at the Bow, which the Negroes and Indians are perfect Masters of.

Caesar, having singled out these Men from the Women and Children, made an Harangue to ’em, of the Miseries and Ignominies of Slavery; counting up all their Toils and Sufferings, under such Loads, Burdens and Drudgeries, as were fitter for Beasts than Men; senseless Brutes, than human Souls. He told ’em, it was not for Days, Months or Years, but for Eternity; there was no End to be of their Misfortunes: They suffer’d not like Men, who might find a Glory and Fortitude in Oppression; but like Dogs, that lov’d the Whip and Bell, and fawn’d the more they were beaten: That they had lost the divine Quality of Men, and were become insensible Asses, fit only to bear: Nay, worse; an Ass, or Dog, or Horse, having done his Duty, could lie down in Retreat, and rise to work again, and
while he did his Duty, endur’d no Stripes; but Men, villainous, senseless Men, such as they, toil’d on all the tedious
Week ‘till Black Friday; and then, whether they work’d or not, whether they were faulty or meriting, they,
promiscuously, the Innocent with the Guilty, suffer’d the infamous Whip, the sordid Stripes, from their Fellow-
Slaves, ‘till their Blood trickled from all Parts of their Body; Blood, whose every Drop ought to be revenged with a
Life of some of those Tyrants that impose it. ‘And why (said he) my dear Friends and Fellow-sufferers, should we
be Slaves to an unknown People? Have they vanquished us nobly in Fight? Have they won us in Honourable
Battle? And are we by the Chance of War become their Slaves? This would not anger a noble Heart; this would
not animate a Soldier’s Soul: No, but we are bought and sold like Apes or Monkeys, to be the Sport of Women,
Fools and Cowards; and the Support of Rogues and Runagades, that have abandoned their own Countries for
Rapine, Murders, Theft and Villanies. Do you not hear every Day how they upbraid each other with Infamy of Life,
below the wildest Salvages? And shall we render Obedience to such a degenerate Race, who have no one
human Virtue left, to distinguish them from the vilest Creatures? Will you, I say, suffer the Lash from such
Hands?’ They all reply’d with one Accord, ‘No, No, No; Caesar has spoke like a great Captain, like a great King.’

After this he would have proceeded, but was interrupted by a tall Negro, of some more Quality than the rest, his
Name was Tuscan; who bowing at the Feet of Caesar, cry’d, ‘My Lord, we have listen’d with Joy and Attention to
what you have said; and, were we only Men, would follow so great a Leader through the World: But O! consider
we are Husbands and Parents too, and have Things more dear to us than Life; our Wives and Children, unfit for
Travel in those unpassable Woods, Mountains and Bogs. We have not only difficult Lands to overcome, but
Rivers to wade, and Mountains to encounter; ravenous Beasts of Prey.’—To this Caesar reply’d, ‘That Honour
was the first Principle in Nature, that was to be obey’d; but as no Man would pretend to that, without all the Acts of
Virtue, Compassion, Charity, Love, Justice and Reason, he found it not inconsistent with that, to take equal Care
of their Wives and Children as they would of themselves; and that he did not design, when he led them to
Freedom, and glorious Liberty, that they should leave that better Part of themselves to perish by the Hand of the
Tyrant’s Whip: But if there were a Woman among them so degenerate from Love and Virtue, to chuse Slavery
before the Pursuit of her Husband, and with the Hazard of her Life, to share with him in his Fortunes; that such a
one ought to be abandoned, and left as a Prey to the common Enemy.’

To which they all agreed—and bowed. After this, he spoke of the impassable Woods and Rivers; and convinced
them, the more Danger the more Glory. He told them, that he had heard of one Hannibal, a great Captain, had cut
his Way through Mountains of solid Rocks; and should a few Shrubs oppose them, which they could fire before
‘em? No, ‘twas a trifling Excuse to Men resolved to die, or overcome. As for Bogs, they are with a little Labour
filled and harden’d; and the Rivers could be no Obstacle, since they swam by Nature, at least by Custom, from
the first Hour of their Birth: That when the Children were weary, they must carry them by Turn’s, and the Woods
and their own Industry would afford them Food. To this they all assented with Joy.

Tuscan then demanded, what he would do: He said he would travel towards the Sea, plant a new Colony, and
defend it by their Valour; and when they could find a Ship, either driven by Stress of Weather, or guided by
Providence that Way, they would seize it, and make it a Prize, till it had transported them to their own Countries:
at least they should be made free in his Kingdom, and be esteem’d as his Fellow-Sufferers, and Men that had the
Courage and the Bravery to attempt, at least, for Liberty; and if they died in the Attempt, it would be more brave,
than to live in perpetual Slavery.

They bow’d and kiss’d his Feet at this Resolution, and with one Accord vow’d to follow him to Death; and that
Night was appointed to begin their March. They made it known to their Wives, and directed them to tie their
Hamocks about their Shoulders, and under their Arms, like a Scarf and to lead their Children that could go, and
carry those that could not. The Wives, who pay an entire Obedience to their Husbands, obey’d, and stay’d for ‘em
where they were appointed: The Men stay’d but to furnish themselves with what defensive Arms they could get;
and all met at the Rendezvouz, where Caesar made a new encouraging Speech to ‘em and led ‘em out.

But as they could not march far that Night, on Monday early, when the Overseers went to call ‘em all together, to
go to work, they were extremely surpriz’d, to find not one upon the Place, but all fled with what Baggage they
had. You may imagine this News was not only suddenly spread all over the Plantation, but soon reached the
neighbouring ones; and we had by Noon about 600 Men, they call the Militia of the Country, that came to assist
us in the Pursuit of the Fugitives: But never did one see so comical an Army march forth to War. The Men of any
Fashion would not concern themselves, tho’ it were almost the Common Cause; for such Revoltings are very ill
Examples, and have very fatal Consequences oftentimes, in many Colonies: But they had a Respect for Caesar,
and all Hands were against the Parhamites (as they called those of Parham-Plantation) because they did not in the
first Place love the Lord-Governor; and secondly, they would have it that Caesar was ill used, and baffled with:
and ’tis not impossible but some of the best in the Country was of his Council in this Flight, and depriving us of all
the Slaves; so that they of the better sort would not meddle in the Matter. The Deputy-Governor, of whom I have
had no great Occasion to speak, and who was the most fawning fair-tongu’d Fellow in the World, and one that pretended the most Friendship to Caesar, was now the only violent Man against him; and though he had nothing, and so need fear nothing, yet talked and looked bigger than any Man. He was a Fellow, whose Character is not fit to be mentioned with the worst of the Slaves: This Fellow would lead his Army forth to meet Caesar, or rather to pursue him. Most of their Arms were of those Sort of cruel Whips they call Cat with nine Tails; some had rusty useless Guns for Shew; others old Basket Hilts, whose Blades had never seen the Light in this Age; and others had long Staffs and Clubs. Mr. Trefry went along, rather to be a Mediator than a Conqueror in such a Battle; for he foresaw and knew, if by fighting they put the Negroes into Despair, they were a sort of sullen Fellows, that would drown or kill themselves before they would yield; and he advis’d that fair Means was best: But Byam was one that abundantly in his own Wit, and would take his own Measures.

It was not hard to find these Fugitives; for as they fled, they were forced to fire and cut the Woods before ’em: So that Night or Day they pursu’d ’em by the Light they made, and by the Path they had cleared. But as soon as Caesar found that he was pursu’d, he put himself in a Posture of Defence, placing all the Woman and Children in the Rear; and himself, with Tuscan by his Side, or next to him, all promising to die or conquer. Encouraged thus, they never stood to parley, but fell on pell-mell upon the English, and killed some, and wounded a great many; they having Recourse to their Whips, as the best of their Weapons. And as they observed no Order, they perplexed the Enemy so sorely, with lashing ’em in the Eyes; and the Women and Children seeing their Husbands so treated, being of fearful and cowardly Dispositions, and hearing the English cry out, Yield and Live! Yield, and be Pardon’d! they all ran in amongst their Husbands and Fathers, and hung about them, crying out, Yield! Yield, and leave Caesar to their Revenge; that by Degrees the Slaves abandon’d Caesar, and left him only Tuscan and his Heroick Imoinda, who grown as big as she was, did nevertheless press near her Lord, having a Bow and a Quiver full of poisoned Arrows, which she managed with such Dexterity, that she wounded several, and shot the Governor into the Shoulder; of which Wound he had like to have died, but that an Indian Woman, his Mistress, sucked the Wound, and cleans’d it from the Venom: But however, he stir’d not from the Place till he had parly’d with Caesar, who he found was resolved to die fighting, and would not be taken; no more would Tuscan or Imoinda. But he, more thirsting after Revenge of another Sort, than that of depriving him of Life, now made use of all his Art of Talking and Dissembling, and besought Caesar to yield himself upon Terms which he himself should propose, and should be sacredly assented to, and kept by him. He told him, It was not that he any longer fear’d him, or could believe the Force of two Men, and a young Heroine, could overthrow all them, and with all the Slaves now on their Side also; but it was the vast Esteem he had for his Person, the Desire he had to serve so gallant a Man, and to hinder himself from the Reproach hereafter, of having been the Occasion of the Death of a Prince, whose Valour and Magnanimity deserved the Empire of the World. He protested to him, he looked upon gallant a Man, and to hinder himself from the Reproach hereafter, of having been the Occasion of the Death of a Prince, whose Valour and Magnanimity deserved the Empire of the World. He protested to him, he looked upon his Action as gallant and brave, however tending to the Prejudice of his Lord and Master, who would by it have lost so considerable a Number of Slaves; that this Flight of his should be look’d on as a Heat of Youth, and a Rashness of a too forward Courage, and an unconsider’d Impatience of Liberty, and no more; and that he labour’d in vain to accomplish that which they would effectually perform as soon as any Ship arrived that would touch on his Coast: ‘So that if you will be pleased (continued he) to surrender yourself, all imaginable Respect shall be paid you; and your Self, your Wife and Child, if it be born here, shall depart free out of our Land.’ But Caesar would hear of no Composition; though Byam urged, if he pursued and went on in his Design, he would inevitably perish, either by great Snakes, wild Beasts or Hunger; and he ought to have Regard to his Wife, whose Condition requir’d Ease, and not the Fatigues of tedious Travel, where she could not be secured from being devoured. But Caesar told him, there was no Faith in the White men, or the Gods they ador’d; who instructed them in Principles so false, that honest Men could not live amongst them; though no People profess’d so much, none perform’d so little: That he knew what he had to do when he dealt with Men of Honour; but with them a Man ought to pursue him. Most of their Arms were of those Sort of cruel Whips they call Tuscan’s or Imoinda. But he, more thirsting after Revenge of another Sort, than that of depriving him of Life, now made use of all his Art of Talking and Dissembling, and besought Caesar to yield himself upon Terms which he himself should propose, and should be sacredly assented to, and kept by him. He told him, It was not that he any longer fear’d him, or could believe the Force of two Men, and a young Heroine, could overthrow all them, and with all the Slaves now on their Side also; but it was the vast Esteem he had for his Person, the Desire he had to serve so gallant a Man, and to hinder himself from the Reproach hereafter, of having been the Occasion of the Death of a Prince, whose Valour and Magnanimity deserved the Empire of the World. He protested to him, he looked upon
Cæsar was very much toil’d with the Bustle of the Day, for he had fought like a Fury; and what Mischief was done, he and Tuscan performed alone; and gave their Enemies a fatal Proof, that they durst do any Thing, and fear’d no mortal Force.

But they were no sooner arrived at the Place where all the Slaves receive their Punishments of Whipping, but they laid Hands on Cæsar and Tuscan, faint with Heat and Toil; and surprizing them, bound them to two several Stakes, and whipped them in a most deplorable and inhuman Manner, rending the very Flesh from their Bones, especially Cæsar, who was not perceived to make any Moan, or to alter his Face, only to roll his Eyes on the faithless Governor, and those he believed Guilty, with Fierceness and Indignation; and to complete his Rage, he saw every one of those Slaves who but a few Days before ador’d him as something more than Mortal, now had a Whip to give him some Lashes, while he strove not to break his Fetters; tho’ if he had, it were impossible: but he pronounced a Woe and Revenge from his Eyes, that darted Fire, which was at once both aweful and terrible to behold.

When they thought they were sufficiently revenged on him, they unt’y him, almost fainting with Loss of Blood, from a thousand Wounds all over his Body; from which they had rent his Clothes, and led him bleeding and naked as he was, and loaded him all over with Irons; and then rubb’d his Wounds, to complete their Cruelty, with Indian Pepper, which had like to have made him raving mad; and, in this Condition made him so fast to the Ground, that he could not stir, if his Pains and Wounds would have given him Leave. They spared Imoinda, and did not let her see this Barbarity committed towards her Lord, but carried her down to Parham, and shut her up; which was not in Kindness to her, but for Fear she should die with the Sight, or miscarry, and then they should lose a young Slave, and perhaps the Mother.

You must know, that when the News was brought on Monday Morning, that Cæsar had betaken himself to the Woods, and carry’d with him all the Negroes, we were possess’d with extreme Fear, which no Persuasions could dissipate, that he would secure himself till Night, and then would come down and cut all our Throats. This Apprehension made all the Females of us fly down the River, to be secured; and while we were away, they acted this Cruelty; for I suppose I had Authority and Interest enough there, had I suspected any such Thing, to have prevented it: but we had not gone many Leagues, but the News overtook us, that Cæsar was taken and whipped liked a common Slave. We met on the River with Colonel Martin, a Man of great Gallantry, Wit, and Goodness, and whom I have celebrated in a Character of my new Comedy, by his own Name, in Memory of so brave a Man: He was wise and eloquent, and, from the Fineness of his Parts, bore a great Sway over the Hearts of all the Colony: He was a Friend to Cæsar, and resented this false Dealing with him very much. We carried him back to Parham, thinking to have made an Accommodation; when he came, the first News we heard, was, That the Governor was dead of a Wound Imoinda had given him; but it was not so well. But it seems, he would have the Pleasure of beholding the Revenge he took on Cæsar; and before the cruel Ceremony was finished, he dropt down; and then they perceived the Wound he had on his Shoulder was by a venom’d Arrow, which, as I said, his Indian Mistress healed by sucking the Wound.

We were no sooner arrived, but we went up to the Plantation to see Cæsar; whom we found in a very miserable and unexpressible Condition; and I have a thousand Times admired how he lived in so much tormenting Pain. We said all Things to him, that Trouble, Pity and Good-Nature could suggest, protesting our Innocency of the Fact, and our Abhorrence of such Cruelties; making a thousand Professions and Services to him, and begging as many Stakes, and whipped them in a most deplorable and inhuman Manner, rending the very Flesh from their Bones, for speaking in his Defence: But for Byam, who was their Leader, their Head—and should, by his Justice and Honour, have been an Example to ‘em—for him, he wished to live to take a dire Revenge of him; and said, It had been well for him, if he had sacrificed me, instead of giving me the contemptible Whip. He refused to talk much; but begging us to give him our Hands, he took them, and protested never to lift up his to do us any Harm. He had a great Respect for Colonel Martin, and always took his Counsel like that of a Parent; and assured him, he would obey him in any Thing but his Revenge on Byam: ‘Therefore (said he) for his own Safety, let him speedy dispatch me; for if I could dispatch myself, I would not, till that Justice were done to my injured Person, and the Contempt of a Soldier: No, I would not kill myself, even after a Whipping, but will be content to live with that Infamy, and be pointed at by every grinning Slave, till I have completed my Revenge; and then you shall see, that Oroonoko scorns to live with the Indignity that was put on Cæsar.’ All we could do, could get no more Words from him; and we took Care to have him put immediately into a healing Bath, to rid him of his Pepper, and ordered a Chirurgeon to anoint him with healing Balm, which he suffer’d, and in some Time he began to be able to walk and eat. We failed not to visit him every Day, and to that End had him brought to an Apartment at Parham.
The Governor had no sooner recover'd, and had heard of the Menaces of Caesar, but he called his Council, who (not to disgrace them, or burlesque the Government there) consisted of such notorious Villains as Newgate never transported; and, possibly, originally were such who understood neither the Laws of God or Man, and had no sort of Principles to make them worthy the Name of Men; but at the very Council-Table would contradict and fight with one another, and swear so bloodily, that 'twas terrible to hear and see 'em. (Some of 'em were afterwards hanged, when the Dutch took Possession of the Place, others sent off in Chains.) But calling these special Rulers of the Nation together, and requiring their Counsel in this weighty Affair, they all concluded, that (damn 'em) it might be their own Cases; and that Caesar ought to be made an Example to all the Negroes, to fright 'em from daring to threaten their Betters, their Lords and Masters; and at this Rate no Man was safe from his own Slaves; and concluded, nemine contradictente, That Caesar should be hanged.

Trefry then thought it Time to use his Authority, and told Byam, his Command did not extend to his Lord's Plantation; and that Parham was as much exempt from the Law as White-Hall; and that they ought no more to touch the Servants of the Lord—(who there represented the King's Person) than they could those about the King himself; and that Parham was a Sanctuary; and tho' his Lord were absent in Person, his Power was still in being there, which he had entrusted with him, as far as the Dominions of his particular Plantations reached, and all that belonged to it; the rest of the Country, as Byam was Lieutenant to his Lord, he might exercise his Tyranny upon. Trefry had others as powerful, or more, that interested themselves in Caesar's Life, and absolutely said, he should be defended. So turning the Governor, and his wise Council, out of Doors, (for they sat at Parham-House) we set a Guard upon our Lodging-Place, and would admit none but those we called Friends to us and Caesar.

The Governor having remain'd wounded at Parham, till his Recovery was completed, Caesar did not know but he was still there, and indeed for the most Part, his Time was spent there: for he was one that loved to live at other Peoples Expence, and if he were a Day absent, he was ten present there; and us'd to play, and walk, and hunt, and fish with Caesar. So that Caesar did not at all doubt, if he once recover'd Strength, but he should find an Opportunity of being revenged on him; though, after such a Revenge, he could not hope to live: for if he escaped the Fury of the English Mobile, who perhaps would have been glad of the Occasion to have killed him, he was resolved not to survive his Whipping; yet he had some tender Hours, a repenting Softness, which he called his Fits of Cowardice, wherein he struggled with Love for the Victory of his Heart, which took Part with his charming Imoinda there; but for the most Part, his Time was pass'd in melancholy Thoughts, and black Designs. He consider'd, if he should do this Deed, and die either in the Attempt, or after it, he left his lovely Imoinda a Prey, or at best a Slave to the enraged Multitude; his great Heart could not endure that Thought: Perhaps (said he) she may be first ravish'd by every Brute; expos'd first to their nasty Lusts, and then a shameful Death: No, he could not live a Moment under that Apprehension, too insupportable to be borne. These were his Thoughts, and his silent Arguments with his Heart, as he told us afterwards: So that now resolving not only to kill Byam, but all those he thought had enraged him; pleasing his great Heart with the fancy'd Slaughter he should make over the whole Face of the Plantation; he first resolved on a Deed, (that however horrid it first appear'd to us all) when we had heard his Reasons, we thought it brave and just. Being able to walk, and, as he believed, fit for the Execution of his great Design, he begg'd Trefry to trust him into the Air, believing a Walk would do him good; which was granted him; and taking Imoinda with him, as he used to do in his more happy and calmer Days, he led her up into a Wood, where (after with a thousand Signs, and long gazing silently on her Face, while Tears gush'd, in spite of him, from his Eyes) he told her his Design, first of killing her, and then his Enemies, and next himself, and the Impossibility of escaping, and therefore he told her the Necessity of dying. He found the heroic Wife faster pleasing for Death, than he was to propose it, when she found his fix'd Resolution; and, on her Knees, besought him not to leave her a Prey to his Enemies. He (grieved to Death) yet pleased at her noble Resolution, took her up, and embracing of her with all the Passion and Languishment of a dying Lover, drew his Knife to kill this Treasure of his Soul, this Pleasure of his Eyes; while Tears trickled down his Cheeks, hers were smiling with Joy she should die by so noble a Hand, and be sent into her own Country (for that's their Notion of the next World) by him she so tenderly loved, and so truly ador'd in this: For Wives have a Respect for their Husbands equal to what any other People pay a Deity; and when a Man finds any Occasion to quit his Wife, if he love her, she dies by his Hand; if not, he sells her, or suffers some other to kill her. It being thus, you may believe the Deed was soon resolv'd on; and 'tis not to be doubted, but the parting, the eternal Leave-taking of two such Lovers, so greatly born, so sensible, so beautiful, so young, and so fond, must be very moving, as the Relation of it was to me afterwards.

All that Love could say in such Cases, being ended, and all the intermitting Irresolutions being adjusted, the lovely, young and ador'd Victim lays herself down before the Sacrificer; while he, with a Hand resolved, and a Heart-breaking within, gave the fatal Stroke, first cutting her Throat, and then severing her yet smiling Face from that delicate Body, pregnant as it was with the Fruits of tenderest Love. As soon as he had done, he laid the Body decently on Leaves and Flowers, of which he made a Bed, and conceal'd it under the same Cover-lid of Nature; only her Face he left yet bare to look on: But when he found she was dead, and past all Retrieve, never more to
bless him with her Eyes, and soft Language, his Grief swell’d up to Rage; he tore, he rav’d, he roar’d like some Monster of the Wood, calling on the lov’d Name of Imoinda. A thousand Times he turned the fatal Knife that did the Deed towards his own Heart, with a Resolution to go immediately after her; but dire Revenge, which was now a thousand Times more fierce in his Soul than before, prevents him; and he would cry out, ‘No, since I have sacrific’d Imoinda to my Revenge, shall I lose that Glory which I have purchased so dear, as at the Price of the fairest, dearest, softest Creature that ever Nature made? No, no!’ Then at her Name Grief would get the Ascendant of Rage, and he would lie down by her Side, and water her Face with Showers of Tears, which never were wont to fall from those Eyes; and however bent he was on his intended Slaughter, he had not Power to stir from the Sight of this dear Object, now more beloved, and more ador’d than ever.

He remained in this deplorable Condition for two Days, and never rose from the Ground where he had made her sad Sacrifice; at last rouzing from her Side, and accusing himself with living too long, now Imoinda was dead, and that the Deaths of those barbarous Enemies were deferred too long, he resolved now to finish the great Work: but offering to rise, he found his Strength so decay’d, that he reeled to and fro, like Boughs assailed by contrary Winds; so that he was forced to lie down again, and try to summon all his Courage to his Aid. He found his Brains turned round, and his Eyes were dizzy, and Objects appear’d not the same to him they were wont to do; his Breath was short, and all his Limbs surpriz’d with a Faintness he had never felt before. He had not eat in two Days, which was one Occasion of his Feebleness, but Excess of Grief was the greatest; yet still he hoped he should recover Vigour to act his Design, and lay expecting it yet six Days longer; still mourning over the dead Idol of his Heart, and striving every Day to rise, but could not.

In all this time you may believe we were in no little Affliction for Caesar and his Wife; some were of Opinion he was escaped, never to return; others thought some Accident had happened to him: But however, we fail’d not to send out a hundred People several Ways, to search for him. A Party of about forty went that Way he took, among whom was Tuscan, who was perfectly reconciled to Byarn: They had not gone very far into the Wood, but they smelt an unusual Smell, as of a dead Body; for Stinks must be very noisom, that can be distinguish’d among such a Quantity of natural Sweets, as every Inch of that Land produces: so that they concluded they should find him dead, or some body that was so; they pass’d on towards it, as loathsom as it was, and made such rustling among the Leaves that lie thick on the Ground, by continual falling, that Caesar heard he was approach’d; and though he had, during the Space of these eight Days, endeavour’d to rise, but found he wanted Strength, yet looking up, and seeing his Pursuers, he rose, and reel’d to a neighbouring Tree, against which he fix’d his Back; and being within a dozen Yards of those that advanc’d and saw him, he call’d out to them, and bid them approach no nearer, if they would be safe. So that they stood still, and hardly believing their Eyes, that would persuade them that it was Caesar that spoke to them, so much he was alter’d; they ask’d him, what he had done with his Wife, for they smelt a Stink that almost struck them dead? He pointing to the dead Body, sighing, cry’d, Behold her there. They put off the Flowers that cover’d her, with their Sticks, and found she was kill’d, and cry’d out, Oh, Monster! that hast murder’d thy Wife. Then asking him, why he did so cruel a Deed? He reply’d, He had no Leisure to answer impertinent Questions: ‘You may go back (continued he) and tell the faithless Governor, he may thank Fortune that I am breathing my last; and that my Arm is too feeble to obey my Heart, in what it had design’d him’: But his Tongue faultering, and trembling, he could scarce end what he was saying. The English taking Advantage by his Weakness, cry’d, Let us take him alive by all Means. He heard ‘em; and, as if he had reviv’d from a Fainting, or a Dream, he cried out, ‘No, Gentlemen, you are deceived; you will find no more Caesars to be whipt; no more find a Faith in me; Feeble as you think me, I have Strength yet left to secure me from a second Indignity.’ They swore all anew; and he only shook his Head, and beheld them with Scorn. Then they cry’d out, Who will venture on this single Man? Will nobody? They stood all silent, while Caesar reply’d, Fatal will be the Attempt of the first Adventurer, let him assure himself, (and, at that Word, held up his Knife in a menacing Posture:) Look ye, ye faithless Crew, said he, ‘tis not Life I seek, nor am I afraid of dying, (and at that Word, cut a Piece of Flesh from his own Throat, and threw it at ‘em) yet still I would live if I could, till I had perfected my Revenge: But, oh! it cannot be; I feel Life gliding from my Eyes and Heart; and if I make not haste, I shall fall a Victim to the shameful Whip. At that, he rip’d up his own Belly, and took his Bowels and pull’d ‘em out, with what Strength he could; while some, on their Knees imploring, besought him to hold his Hand. But when they saw him tottering, they cry’d out, Will none venture on him? A bold Englishman cry’d, Yes, if he were the Devil, (taking Courage when he saw him almost dead) and swearing a horrid Oath for his farewell to the World, he rush’d on him. Caesar with his arm’d Hand, met him so fairly, as struck him to the Heart, and he Fell dead at his feet. Tuscan seeing that, cry’d out, I love thee, O Caesar! and therefore will not let thee die, if possible; and running to him, took him in his Arms; but, at the same time, warding a Blow that Caesamade at his Bosom, he receiv’d it quite through his Arm; and Caesar having not Strength to pluck the Knife forth, tho’ he attempted it, Tuscan neither pull’d it out himself, nor suffer’d it to be pull’d out, but came down with it sticking in his Arm; and the Reason he gave for it, was, because the Air should not get into the Wound. They put their Hands a-cross, and carry’d Caesar between six of ‘em, fainting as he was, and they thought dead, or just dying; and they brought him to Parham, and laid him on a Couch, and had the Chirurgeon immediately to him, who dressed his Wounds, and sow’d up his Belly, and us’d Means to bring
him to Life, which they effected. We ran all to see him; and, if before we thought him so beautiful a Sight, he was now so alter’d, that his Face was like a Death’s-Head black’d over, nothing but Teeth and Eye-holes: For some Days we suffer’d no Body to speak to him, but caused Cordials to be poured down his Throat; which sustained his Life, and in six or seven Days he recovered his Senses: For, you must know, that Wounds are almost to a Miracle cur’d in the Indies; unless Wounds in the Legs, which they rarely ever cure.

When he was well enough to speak, we talk’d to him, and ask’d him some Questions about his Wife, and the Reasons why he kill’d her; and he then told us what I have related of that Resolution, and of his Parting, and he besought us we would let him die, and was extremely afflicted to think it was possible he might live: He assur’d us, if we did not dispatch him, he would prove very fatal to a great many. We said all we could to make him live, and gave him new Assurances; but he begg’d we would not think so poorly of him, or of his Love to Imoinda, to imagine we could flatter him to Life again: But the Chirurgeon assur’d him he could not live, and therefore he need not fear. We were all (but Cæsar) afflicted at this News, and the Sight was ghastly: His Discourse was sad; and the earthy Smell about him so strong, that I was persuaded to leave the Place for some time, (being my self but sickly, and very apt to fall into Fits of dangerous Illness upon any extraordinary Melancholy.) The Servants, and Trefry, and the Chirurgeons, promis’d all to take what possible Care they could of the Life of Cæsar; and I, taking Boat, went with other Company to Colonel Martin’s, about three Days Journey down the River. But I was no sooner gone, than the Governor taking Trefry, about some pretended earnest Business, a Day’s Journey up the River, having communicated his Design to one Banister, a wild Irish Man, one of the Council, a Fellow of absolute Barbarity, and fit to execute any Villany, he came up to Parham, and forcibly took Cæsar, and had him carried to the same Post where he was whipp’d; and causing him to be ty’d to it, and a great Fire made before him, he told him he should die like a Dog, as he was. Cæsar reply’d, This was the first piece of Bravery that ever Banister did, and he never spoke Sense till he pronounc’d that Word; and if he would keep it, he would declare, in the other World, that he was the only Man, of all the Whites, that ever he heard speak Truth. And turning to the Men that had bound him, he said, My Friends, am I to die, or to be whipt? And they cry’d, Whipt! no, you shall not escape so well. And then he reply’d, smiling, A Blessing on thee; and assur’d them they need not tie him, for he would stand fix’d like a Rock, and endure Death so as should encourage them to die: But if you whip me (said he) be sure you tie me fast.

He had learn’d to take Tobacco; and when he was assur’d he should die, he desir’d they would give him a Pipe in his Mouth, ready lighted; which they did: And the Executioner came, and first cut off his Members, and threw them into the Fire; after that, with an ill-favour’d Knife, they cut off his Ears and his Nose, and burn’d them; he still smoak’d on, as if nothing had touch’d him; then they hack’d off one of his Arms, and still he bore up and held his Pipe; but at the cutting off the other Arm, his Head sunk, and his Pipe dropt, and he gave up the Ghost, without a Groan, or a Reproach. My Mother and Sister were by him all the While, but not suffer’d to save him; so rude and wild were the Rabble, and so inhuman were the Justices who stood by to see the Execution, who after paid dear enough for their Insolence. They cut Cæsar into Quarters, and sent them to several of the chief Plantations: One Quarter was sent to Colonel Martin; who refus’d it, and swore, he had rather see the Quarters of Banister, and the Governor himself, than those of Cæsar, on his Plantations; and that he could govern his Negroes, without terrifying and grieving them with frightful Spectacles of a mangled King.

Thus died this great Man, worthy of a better Fate, and a more sublime Wit than mine to write his Praise: Yet, I hope, the Reputation of my Pen is considerable enough to make his glorious Name to survive to all Ages, with that of the brave, the beautiful and the constant Imoinda.

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### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Alternate Version of Text

University of Adelaide’s ebook of *Oroonoko*
A public domain version of Aphra Behn’s *Oroonoko, or the Royal Slave*, from the University of Adelaide. This website provides an onscreen version as well as several downloadable versions.

**Background and Interpretation**

*The Poetry Foundation’s article on “Aphra Behn 1640-1689”*

Biography of Aphra Behn from the Poetry Foundation.

**Reading Questions**

*Oroonoko* by Aphra Behn is a very interesting narrative that includes many genres, which, in the Norton Anthology of English Literature, the headnote on Behn states that the work, “cannot be classified as fact or fiction, realism or romance” (2309).

As you begin reading, you may find these reading questions about the first part of the book to be helpful.

1. How does the narrator express her claims of the truthfulness of the story?
2. Where is the story initially set? (That is, where is Oroonoko from?)
3. How is Oroonoko first described?
4. How does Oroonoko meet Imoinda?
5. What are Imoinda’s experiences in the otan? What happens when Oroonoko visits her there?
6. Who is Aboan? Who is Onahal?
7. What is Imoinda’s crime (in the eyes of the king)? What is her punishment?
8. After leaving Imoinda, how does Oroonoko show valor in the field of battle?
9. Who is Jamoan? How does he feel about Oroonoko?
10. How is Oroonoko captured and made a slave?
11. What is Oroonoko’s initial reaction to being enslaved?
12. What is the captain’s reaction?
13. Where is Oroonoko taken to be sold?
14. Who is Trefry?

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Jonathan Swift (30 November 1667 – 19 October 1745) was an Anglo-Irish satirist, essayist, political pamphleteer (first for the Whigs, then for the Tories), poet and cleric who became Dean of St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin.

Swift is remembered for works such as *Gulliver’s Travels*, *A Modest Proposal*, *A Journal to Stella*, *Drapier’s Letters*, *The Battle of the Books*, *An Argument Against Abolishing Christianity* and *A Tale of a Tub*. He is regarded by the *Encyclopædia Britannica* as the foremost prose satirist in the English language, and is less well known for his poetry. He originally published all of his works under pseudonyms – such as Lemuel Gulliver, Isaac Bickerstaff, MB Drapier – or anonymously. He is also known for being a master of two styles of satire, the Horatian and Juvenalian styles.

*Gulliver’s Travels*, a large portion of which Swift wrote at Woodbrook House in County Laois, was published in 1726. It is regarded as his masterpiece. As with his other writings, the *Travels* was published under a pseudonym, the fictional Lemuel Gulliver, a ship’s surgeon and later a sea captain. Some of the correspondence between printer Benj. Motte and Gulliver’s also-fictional cousin negotiating the book’s publication has survived. Though it has often been mistakenly thought of and published in bowdlerised form as a children’s book, it is a great and sophisticated satire of human nature based on Swift’s experience of his times. *Gulliver’s Travels* is an anatomy of human nature, a sardonic looking-glass, often criticised for its apparent misanthropy. It asks its readers to refute it, to deny that it has adequately characterised human nature and society. Each of the four books—recounting four voyages to mostly fictional exotic lands—has a different theme, but all are attempts to deflate human pride. Critics hail the work as a satiric reflection on the shortcomings of Enlightenment thought.

Additional information on Swift’s life, work, and influence can be found here.
INTRODUCTION TO GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS
into several
REMOTE NATIONS OF THE WORLD

BY JONATHAN SWIFT, D.D.,
DEAN OF ST. PATRICK'S, DUBLIN.

[First published in 1726–7.]

THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

[As given in the original edition.]

The author of these Travels, Mr. Lemuel Gulliver, is my ancient and intimate friend; there is likewise some relation between us on the mother’s side. About three years ago, Mr. Gulliver growing weary of the concourse of curious people coming to him at his house in Redriff, made a small purchase of land, with a convenient house, near Newark, in Nottinghamshire, his native country; where he now lives retired, yet in good esteem among his neighbours.

Although Mr. Gulliver was born in Nottinghamshire, where his father dwelt, yet I have heard him say his family came from Oxfordshire; to confirm which, I have observed in the churchyard at Banbury in that county, several tombs and monuments of the Gullivers.

Before he quitted Redriff, he left the custody of the following papers in my hands, with the liberty to dispose of them as I should think fit. I have carefully perused them three times. The style is very plain and simple; and the only fault I find is, that the author, after the manner of travellers, is a little too circumstantial. There is an air of truth apparent through the whole; and indeed the author was so distinguished for his veracity, that it became a sort of proverb among his neighbours at Redriff, when any one affirmed a thing, to say, it was as true as if Mr. Gulliver had spoken it.

By the advice of several worthy persons, to whom, with the author’s permission, I communicated these papers, I now venture to send them into the world, hoping they may be, at least for some time, a better entertainment to our young noblemen, than the common scribbles of politics and party.

This volume would have been at least twice as large, if I had not made bold to strike out innumerable passages relating to the winds and tides, as well as to the variations and bearings in the several voyages, together with the minute descriptions of the management of the ship in storms, in the style of sailors; likewise the account of longitudes and latitudes; wherein I have reason to apprehend, that Mr. Gulliver may be a little dissatisfied. But I was resolved to fit the work as much as possible to the general capacity of readers. However, if my own ignorance in sea affairs shall have led me to commit some mistakes, I alone am answerable for them. And if any traveller hath a curiosity to see the whole work at large, as it came from the hands of the author, I will be ready to gratify him.

As for any further particulars relating to the author, the reader will receive satisfaction from the first pages of the book.

RICHARD SYMPSON.
A LETTER FROM CAPTAIN GULLIVER TO HIS COUSIN SYMPSON.

Written in the Year 1727.

I hope you will be ready to own publicly, whenever you shall be called to it, that by your great and frequent urgency you prevailed on me to publish a very loose and uncorrect account of my travels, with directions to hire some young gentleman of either university to put them in order, and correct the style, as my cousin Dampier did, by my advice, in his book called “A Voyage round the world.” But I do not remember I gave you power to consent that any thing should be omitted, and much less that any thing should be inserted; therefore, as to the latter, I do here renounce every thing of that kind; particularly a paragraph about her majesty Queen Anne, of most pious and glorious memory; although I did reverence and esteem her more than any of human species. But you, or your interpolator, ought to have considered, that it was not my inclination, so was it not decent to praise any animal of our composition before my master Houyhnhnm: And besides, the fact was altogether false; for to my knowledge, being in England during some part of her majesty’s reign, she did govern by a chief minister; nay even by two successively, the first whereof was the lord of Godolphin, and the second the lord of Oxford; so that you have made me say the thing that was not. Likewise in the account of the academy of projectors, and several passages of my discourse to my master Houyhnhnm, you have either omitted some material circumstances, or minced or changed them in such a manner, that I do hardly know my own work. When I formerly hinted to you something of this in a letter, you were pleased to answer that you were afraid of giving offence; that people in power were very watchful over the press, and apt not only to interpret, but to punish every thing which looked like an innuendo (as I think you call it). But, pray how could that which I spoke so many years ago, and at about five thousand leagues distance, in another reign, be applied to any of the Yahoos, who now are said to govern the herd; especially at a time when I little thought, or feared, the unhappiness of living under them? Have not I the most reason to complain, when I see these very Yahoos carried by Houyhnhnms in a vehicle, as if they were brutes, and those the rational creatures? And indeed to avoid so monstrous and detestable a sight was one principal motive of my retirement hither.

Thus much I thought proper to tell you in relation to yourself, and to the trust I reposed in you.

I do, in the next place, complain of my own great want of judgment, in being prevailed upon by the entreaties and false reasoning of you and some others, very much against my own opinion, to suffer my travels to be published. Pray bring to your mind how often I desired you to consider, when you insisted on the motive of public good, that the Yahoos were a species of animals utterly incapable of amendment by precept or example: and so it has proved; for, instead of seeing a full stop put to all abuses and corruptions, at least in this little island, as I had reason to expect; behold, after above six months warning, I cannot learn that my book has produced one single effect according to my intentions. I desired you would let me know, by a letter, when party and faction were extinguished; judges learned and upright; pleaders honest and modest, with some tincture of common sense, and Smithfield blazing with pyramids of law books; the young nobility’s education entirely changed; the physicians banished; the female Yahoos abounding in virtue, honour, truth, and good sense; courts and levees of great ministers thoroughly weeded and swept; wit, merit, and learning rewarded; all disgracers of the press in prose and verse condemned to eat nothing but their own cotton, and quench their thirst with their own ink. These, and a thousand other reformations, I firmly counted upon by your encouragement; as indeed they were plainly deducible from the precepts delivered in my book. And it must be owned, that seven months were a sufficient time to correct every vice and folly to which Yahoos are subject, if their natures had been capable of the least disposition to virtue or wisdom. Yet, so far have you been from answering my expectation in any of your letters; that on the contrary you are loading our carrier every week with libels, and keys, and reflections, and memoirs, and second parts; wherein I see myself accused of reflecting upon great state folk; of degrading human nature (for so they have still the confidence to style it), and of abusing the female sex. I find likewise that the writers of those bundles are not agreed among themselves; for some of them will not allow me to be the author of my own travels; and others make me author of books to which I am wholly a stranger.

I find likewise that your printer has been so careless as to confound the times, and mistake the dates, of my several voyages and returns; neither assigning the true year, nor the true month, nor day of the month: and I hear the original manuscript is all destroyed since the publication of my book; neither have I any copy left: however, I have sent you some corrections, which you may insert, if ever there should be a second edition: and yet I cannot stand to them; but shall leave that matter to my judicious and candid readers to adjust it as they please.

I hear some of our sea Yahoos find fault with my sea-language, as not proper in many parts, nor now in use. I cannot help it. In my first voyages, while I was young, I was instructed by the oldest mariners, and learned to speak as they did. But I have since found that the sea Yahoos are apt, like the land ones, to become new-fangled
in their words, which the latter change every year; insomuch, as I remember upon each return to my own country their old dialect was so altered, that I could hardly understand the new. And I observe, when any Yahoo comes from London out of curiosity to visit me at my house, we neither of us are able to deliver our conceptions in a manner intelligible to the other.

If the censure of the Yahoos could any way affect me, I should have great reason to complain, that some of them are so bold as to think my book of travels a mere fiction out of mine own brain, and have gone so far as to drop hints, that the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos have no more existence than the inhabitants of Utopia.

Indeed I must confess, that as to the people of Lilliput, Brobdingrag (for so the word should have been spelt, and not erroneously Brobdingnag), and Laputa, I have never yet heard of any Yahoo so presumptuous as to dispute their being, or the facts I have related concerning them; because the truth immediately strikes every reader with conviction. And is there less probability in my account of the Houyhnhnms or Yahoos, when it is manifest as to the latter, there are so many thousands even in this country, who only differ from their brother brutes in Houyhnhnmland, because they use a sort of jabber, and do not go naked? I wrote for their amendment, and not their approbation. The united praise of the whole race would be of less consequence to me, than the neighing of those two degenerate Houyhnhnms I keep in my stable; because from these, degenerate as they are, I still improve in some virtues without any mixture of vice.

Do these miserable animals presume to think, that I am so degenerated as to defend my veracity? Yahoo as I am, it is well known through all Houyhnhnmland, that, by the instructions and example of my illustrious master, I was able in the compass of two years (although I confess with the utmost difficulty) to remove that infernal habit of lying, shuffling, deceiving, and equivocating, so deeply rooted in the very souls of all my species; especially the Europeans.

I have other complaints to make upon this vexatious occasion; but I forbear troubling myself or you any further. I must freely confess, that since my last return, some corruptions of my Yahoo nature have revived in me by conversing with a few of your species, and particularly those of my own family, by an unavoidable necessity; else I should never have attempted so absurd a project as that of reforming the Yahoo race in this kingdom: But I have now done with all such visionary schemes for ever.

April 2, 1727

PART I, CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER I.

The author gives some account of himself and family. His first inducements to travel. He is shipwrecked, and swims for his life. Gets safe on shore in the country of Lilliput; is made a prisoner, and carried up the country.

My father had a small estate in Nottinghamshire: I was the third of five sons. He sent me to Emanuel College in Cambridge at fourteen years old, where I resided three years, and applied myself close to my studies; but the charge of maintaining me, although I had a very scanty allowance, being too great for a narrow fortune, I was bound apprentice to Mr. James Bates, an eminent surgeon in London, with whom I continued four years. My father now and then sending me small sums of money, I laid them out in learning navigation, and other parts of the mathematics, useful to those who intend to travel, as I always believed it would be, some time or other, my fortune to do. When I left Mr. Bates, I went down to my father: where, by the assistance of him and my uncle
John, and some other relations, I got forty pounds, and a promise of thirty pounds a year to maintain me at Leyden: there I studied physic two years and seven months, knowing it would be useful in long voyages.

Soon after my return from Leyden, I was recommended by my good master, Mr. Bates, to be surgeon to the Swallow, Captain Abraham Pannel, commander; with whom I continued three years and a half, making a voyage or two into the Levant, and some other parts. When I came back I resolved to settle in London; to which Mr. Bates, my master, encouraged me, and by him I was recommended to several patients. I took part of a small house in the Old Jewry; and being advised to alter my condition, I married Mrs. Mary Burton, second daughter to Mr. Edmund Burton, hosier, in Newgate-street, with whom I received four hundred pounds for a portion.

But my good master Bates dying in two years after, and I having few friends, my business began to fail; for my conscience would not suffer me to imitate the bad practice of too many among my brethren. Having therefore consulted with my wife, and some of my acquaintance, I determined to go again to sea. I was surgeon successively in two ships, and made several voyages, for six years, to the East and West Indies, by which I got some addition to my fortune. My hours of leisure I spent in reading the best authors, ancient and modern, being always provided with a good number of books; and when I was ashore, in observing the manners and dispositions of the people, as well as learning their language; wherein I had a great facility, by the strength of my memory.

The last of these voyages not proving very fortunate, I grew weary of the sea, and intended to stay at home with my wife and family. I removed from the Old Jewry to Fetter Lane, and from thence to Wapping, hoping to get business among the sailors; but it would not turn to account. After three years expectation that things would mend, I accepted an advantageous offer from Captain William Prichard, master of the Antelope, who was making a voyage to the South Sea. We set sail from Bristol, May 4, 1699, and our voyage was at first very prosperous.

It would not be proper, for some reasons, to trouble the reader with the particulars of our adventures in those seas; let it suffice to inform him, that in our passage from thence to the East Indies, we were driven by a violent storm to the north-west of Van Diemen’s Land. By an observation, we found ourselves in the latitude of 30 degrees 2 minutes south. Twelve of our crew were dead by immoderate labour and ill food; the rest were in a very weak condition. On the 5th of November, which was the beginning of summer in those parts, the weather being very hazy, the seamen spied a rock within half a cable’s length of the ship; but the wind was so strong, that we were driven directly upon it, and immediately split. Six of the crew, of whom I was one, having let down the boat into the sea, made a shift to get clear of the ship and the rock. We rowed, by my computation, about three leagues, till we were able to work no longer, being already spent with labour while we were in the ship. We therefore trusted ourselves to the mercy of the waves, and in about half an hour the boat was overset by a sudden flurry from the north. What became of my companions in the boat, as well as of those who escaped on the rock, or were left in the vessel, I cannot tell; but conclude they were all lost. For my own part, I swam as fortune directed me, and was pushed forward by wind and tide. I often let my legs drop, and could feel no bottom; but when I was almost gone, and able to struggle no longer, I found myself within my depth; and by this time the storm was much abated. The declivity was so small, that I walked near a mile before I got to the shore, which I discovered the methods they had taken to bind me, and at the same time with a violent pull, which gave me excessive pain, I a little loosened the strings that tied down my hair on the left side, so that I was just able to see my face, I discovered the methods they had taken to bind me, and at the same time with a violent pull, which gave me excessive pain, I a little loosened the strings that tied down my hair on the left side, so that I was just able to view my face, lifting up his hands and eyes by way of admiration, cried out in a shrill but distinct voice, Hekinah degul: the others repeated the same words several times, but then I knew not what they meant. I lay all this while, as the reader may believe, in great uneasiness. I slept sounder than ever I remembered to have done in my life, and, as I reckoned, about nine hours; for when I left the ship, I found myself much inclined to sleep. I was extremely tired, and with that, and the heat of the weather, and about half a pint of brandy that I drank as I was ashore, in observing the manners and dispositions of the people, as well as learning their language; wherein I had a great facility, by the strength of my memory.

The storm was much abated. I then advanced forward near half a mile, but could not discover any sign of houses or inhabitants; at least I was in so weak a condition, that I did not observe them. I was extremely tired, and with that, and the heat of the weather, and about half a pint of brandy that I drank as I left the ship, I found myself much inclined to sleep. I lay down on the grass, which was very short and soft, where I slept sounder than ever I remembered to have done in my life, and, as I reckoned, about nine hours; for when I awakened, it was just day-light. I attempted to rise, but was not able to stir: for, as I happened to lie on my back, I could only look upwards; the sun began to grow hot, and the light offended my eyes. I took part of a small meal, and went to sleep again. I awoke the second time near six o’clock in the evening, and then I saw all the people, with whom I was acquainted, came to see me. They all ran back in a fright; and some of them, as I was afterwards told, were hurt with the falls they got by the same kind (as I conjectured) following the first. The chief of them was a young gentleman, who was standing upon a hill, with a bow and arrow in his hands, and a quiver at his back. He had a great deal of hair on his chin; when, bending my eyes downwards as much as I could, I perceived it to be a human creature not six inches high, with a bow and arrow in his hands, and a quiver at his back. In the mean time, I felt at least forty more of the same kind (as I conjectured) following the first. I was in the utmost astonishment, and roared so loud, that

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turn my head about two inches. But the creatures ran off a second time, before I could seize them; whereupon there was a great shout in a very shrill accent, and after it ceased I heard one of them cry aloud Tolgo phonac; when in an instant I felt above a hundred arrows discharged on my left hand, which, pricked me like so many needles; and besides, they shot another flight into the air, as we do bombs in Europe, whereof many, I suppose, fell on my body, (though I felt them not), and some on my face, which I immediately covered with my left hand. When this shower of arrows was over, I fell a groaning with grief and pain; and then striving again to get loose, they discharged another volley larger than the first, and some of them attempted with spears to stick me in the sides; but by good luck I had on a buff jerkin, which they could not pierce. I thought it the most prudent method to lie still, and my design was to continue so till night, when, my left hand being already loose, I could easily free myself: and as for the inhabitants, I had reason to believe I might be a match for the greatest army they could bring against me, if they were all of the same size with that I saw. But fortune disposed otherwise of me. When the people observed I was quiet, they discharged no more arrows; but, by the noise I heard, I knew their numbers increased; and about four yards from me, over against my right ear, I heard a knocking for above an hour, like that of people at work; when turning my head that way, as well as the pegs and strings would permit me, I saw a stage erected about a foot and a half from the ground, capable of holding four of the inhabitants, with two or three ladders to mount it: from whence one of them, who seemed to be a person of quality, made me a long speech, wherein I understood not one syllable. But I should have mentioned, that before the principal person began his oration, he cried out three times, Langro dehul san (these words and the former were afterwards repeated and explained to me); whereupon, immediately, about fifty of the inhabitants came and cut the strings that fastened the left side of my head, which gave me the liberty of turning it to the right, and of observing the person and gesture of him that was to speak. He appeared to be of a middle age, and taller than any of the other three who attended him, whereof one was a page that held up his train, and seemed to be somewhat longer than my middle finger; the other two stood one on each side to support him. He acted every part of an orator, and I could observe many periods of threatenings, and others of promises, pity, and kindness. I answered in a few words, but in the most submissive manner, lifting up my left hand, and both my eyes to the sun, as calling him for a witness; and being almost famished with hunger, having not eaten a morsel for some hours before I left the ship, I found the demands of nature so strong upon me, that I could not forbear showing my impatience (perhaps against the strict rules of decency) by putting my finger frequently to my mouth, to signify that I wanted food. The hurgo (for so they call a great lord, as I afterwards learnt) understood me very well. He descended from the stage, and commanded that several ladders should be applied to my sides, on which above a hundred of the inhabitants mounted and walked towards my mouth, laden with baskets full of meat, which had been provided and sent thither by the king's orders, upon the first intelligence he received of me. I observed there was the flesh of several animals, but could not distinguish them by the taste. There were shoulders, legs, and loins, shaped like those of mutton, and very well dressed, but smaller than the wings of a lark. I ate them by two or three at a mouthful, and took three loaves at a time, about the bigness of musket bullets. They supplied me as fast as they could, showing a thousand marks of wonder and astonishment at my bulk and appetite. I then made another sign, that I wanted drink. They found by my eating that a small quantity would not suffice me; and being a most ingenious people, they lens up, with great dexterity, one of their largest hogsheads, then rolled it towards another sign, that I wanted drink. They brought me a second hogshead, which I observed there

Hekinah degul. They made me a sign that I should throw down the two hogsheads, but first warning the people below to stand out of the way, crying aloud, Hekinah degul; and when they saw the vessels in the air, there was a universal shout of Hekinah degul. I confess I was often tempted, while they were passing backwards and forwards on my body, to seize forty or fifty of the first that came in my reach, and dash them against the ground. But the remembrance of what I had felt, which probably might not be the worst they could do, and the promise of honour I made them—for so I interpreted my submissive behaviour—soon drove out these imaginations. Besides, I now considered myself as bound by the laws of hospitality, to a people who had treated me with so much expense and magnificence. However, in my thoughts I could not sufficiently wonder at the intrepidity of these diminutive mortals, who durst venture to mount and walk upon my body, while one of my hands was at his imperial majesty. His excellency, having mounted on the small of my right leg, advanced forwards up to my face, with about a dozen of his retinue; and producing his credentials under the signet royal, which he applied close to my eyes, spoke about ten minutes without any signs of anger, but with a kind of determinate resolution, often pointing forwards, which, as I afterwards found, was towards the capital city, about half a mile distant; whither it was agreed by his majesty in council that I must be conveyed. I answered in few words, but to no purpose, and made a sign with my hand that was loose, putting it to the other (but over his excellency's head for fear of hurting him or his train) and then to my own head and body, to signify that I desired my liberty. It appeared
However, he made other signs to let me understand that I should have meat and drink enough, and very good treatment. Whereupon I once more thought of attempting to break my bonds; but again, when I felt the smart of their arrows upon my face and hands, which were all in blisters, and many of the darts still sticking in them, and observing likewise that the number of my enemies increased, I gave tokens to let them know that they might do with me what they pleased. Upon this, the hurgo and his train withdrew, with much civility and cheerful countenances. Soon after I heard a general shout, with frequent repetitions of the words Peplom selan; and I felt great numbers of people on my left side relaxing the cords to such a degree, that I was able to turn upon my right, and to ease myself with making water; which I very plentifully did, to the great astonishment of the people; who, conjecturing by my motion what I was going to do, immediately opened to the right and left on that side, to avoid the torrent, which fell with such noise and violence from me. But before this, they had daubed my face and both my hands with a sort of ointment, very pleasant to the smell, which, in a few minutes, removed all the smart of their arrows. These circumstances, added to the refreshment I had received by their victuals and drink, which were very nourishing, disposed me to sleep. I slept about eight hours, as I was afterwards assured; and it was no wonder, for the physicians, by the emperor’s order, had mingled a sleepy potion in the hogsheads of wine.

It seems, that upon the first moment I was discovered sleeping on the ground, after my landing, the emperor had early notice of it by an express; and determined in council, that I should be tied in the manner I have related, (which was done in the night while I slept;) that plenty of meat and drink should be sent to me, and a machine prepared to carry me to the capital city.

This resolution perhaps may appear very bold and dangerous, and I am confident would not be imitated by any prince in Europe on the like occasion. However, in my opinion, it was extremely prudent, as well as generous: for, supposing these people had endeavoured to kill me with their spears and arrows, while I was asleep, I should certainly have awaked with the first sense of smart, which might so far have roused my rage and strength, as to have enabled me to break the strings wherewith I was tied; after which, as they were not able to make resistance, so they could expect no mercy.

These people are most excellent mathematicians, and arrived to a great perfection in mechanics, by the countenance and encouragement of the emperor, who is a renowned patron of learning. This prince has several machines fixed on wheels, for the carriage of trees and other great weights. He often builds his largest men of war, whereof some are nine feet long, in the woods where the timber grows, and has them carried on these engines three or four hundred yards to the sea. Five hundred carpenters and engineers were immediately set at work to prepare the greatest engine they had. It was a frame of wood raised three inches from the ground, about seven feet long, and four wide, moving upon twenty-two wheels. The shout I heard was upon the arrival of this engine, which, it seems, set out in four hours after my landing. It was brought parallel to me, as I lay. But the principal difficulty was to raise and place me in this vehicle. Eighty poles, each of one foot high, were erected for this purpose, and very strong cords, of the bigness of packthread, were fastened by hooks to many bandages, which the workmen had girt round my neck, my hands, my body, and my legs. Nine hundred of the strongest men were employed to draw up these cords, by many pulleys fastened on the poles; and thus, in less than three hours, I was raised and slung into the engine, and there tied fast. All this I was told; for, while the operation was performing, I lay in a profound sleep, by the force of that soporiferous medicine infused into my liquor. Fifteen hundred of the emperor’s largest horses, each about four inches and a half high, were employed to draw me towards the metropolis, which, as I said, was half a mile distant.

About four hours after we began our journey, I awaked by a very ridiculous accident; for the carriage being stopped a while, to adjust something that was out of order, two or three of the young natives had the curiosity to see how I looked when I was asleep; they climbed up into the engine, and advancing very softly to my face, one of them, an officer in the guards, put the sharp end of his half-pike a good way up into my left nostril, which tickled my nose like a straw, and made me sneeze violently; whereupon they stole off unperceived, and it was three weeks before I knew the cause of my waking so suddenly. We made a long march the remaining part of the day, and, rested at night with five hundred guards on each side of me, half with torches, and half with bows and arrows, ready to shoot me if I should offer to stir. The next morning at sun-rise we continued our march, and arrived within two hundred yards of the city gates about noon. The emperor, and all his court, came out to meet us; but his great officers would by no means suffer his majesty to endanger his person by mounting on my body.

At the place where the carriage stopped there stood an ancient temple, esteemed to be the largest in the whole kingdom; which, having been polluted some years before by an unnatural murder, was, according to the zeal of those people, looked upon as profane, and therefore had been applied to common use, and all the ornaments and furniture carried away. In this edifice it was determined I should lodge. The great gate fronting to the north
PART I, CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER II.

The emperor of Lilliput, attended by several of the nobility, comes to see the author in his confinement.
The emperor’s person and habit described. Learned men appointed to teach the author their language. He gains favour by his mild disposition. His pockets are searched, and his sword and pistols taken from him.

When I found myself on my feet, I looked about me, and must confess I never beheld a more entertaining prospect. The country around appeared like a continued garden, and the enclosed fields, which were generally forty feet square, resembled so many beds of flowers. These fields were intermingled with woods of half a stang, [301] and the tallest trees, as I could judge, appeared to be seven feet high. I viewed the town on my left hand, which looked like the painted scene of a city in a theatre.

I had been for some hours extremely pressed by the necessities of nature; which was no wonder, it being almost two days since I had last disburdened myself. I was under great difficulties between urgency and shame. The best expedient I could think of, was to creep into my house, which I accordingly did; and shutting the gate after me, I went as far as the length of my chain would suffer, and discharged my body of that uneasy load. But this was the only time I was ever guilty of so uncleanly an action; for which I cannot but hope the candid reader will give some allowance, after he has maturely and impartially considered my case, and the distress I was in. From this time my constant practice was, as soon as I rose, to perform that business in open air, at the full extent of my chain; and due care was taken every morning before company came, that the offensive matter should be carried off in wheel-barrows, by two servants appointed for that purpose. I would not have dwelt so long upon a circumstance that, perhaps, at first sight, may appear not very momentous, if I had not thought it necessary to justify my character, in point of cleanliness, to the world; which, I am told, some of my maligners have been pleased, upon this and other occasions, to call in question.

When this adventure was at an end, I came back out of my house, having occasion for fresh air. The emperor was already descended from the tower, and advancing on horseback towards me, which had like to have cost him dear; for the beast, though very well trained, yet wholly unused to such a sight, which appeared as if a mountain moved before him, reared up on its hinder feet: but that prince, who is an excellent horseman, kept his seat, till his attendants ran in, and held the bridle, while his majesty had time to dismount. When he alighted, he surveyed me round with great admiration; but kept beyond the length of my chain. He ordered his cooks and butlers, who were already prepared, to give me victuals and drink, which they pushed forward in a sort of vehicles upon wheels, till I could reach them. I took these vehicles and soon emptied them all; twenty of them were filled with meat, and ten

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with liquor; each of the former afforded me two or three good mouthfuls; and I emptied the liquor of ten vessels, which was contained in earthen vials, into one vehicle, drinking it off at a draught; and so I did with the rest. The empress, and young princes of the blood of both sexes, attended by many ladies, sat at some distance in their chairs; but upon the accident that happened to the emperor's horse, they alighted, and came near his person, which I am now going to describe. He is taller by almost the breadth of my nail, than any of his court; which alone is enough to strike an awe into the beholders. His features are strong and masculine, with an Austrian lip and arched nose, his complexion olive, his countenance erect, his body and limbs well proportioned, all his motions graceful, and his deportment majestic. He was then past his prime, being twenty-eight years and three quarters old, of which he had reigned about seven in great felicity, and generally victorious. For the better convenience of beholding him, I lay on my side, so that my face was parallel to his, and he stood but three yards off: however, I have had him since many times in my hand, and therefore cannot be deceived in the description. His dress was very plain and simple, and the fashion of it between the Asiatic and the European; but he had on his head a light helmet of gold, adorned with jewels, and a plume on the crest. He held his sword drawn in his hand to defend himself, if I should happen to break loose; it was almost three inches long; the hilt and scabbard were gold enriched with diamonds. His voice was shrill, but very clear and articulate; and I could distinctly hear it when I stood up. The ladies and courtiers were all most magnificently clad; so that the spot they stood upon seemed to resemble a petticoat spread upon the ground, embroidered with figures of gold and silver. His imperial majesty spoke often to me, and I returned answers: but neither of us could understand a syllable. There were several of his priests and lawyers present (as I conjectured by their habits), who were commanded to address themselves to me; and I spoke to them in as many languages as I had the least smattering of, which were High and Low Dutch, Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, and Lingua Franca, but all to no purpose. After about two hours the court retired, and I was left with a strong guard, to prevent the impertinence, and probably the malice of the rabble, who were very impatient to crowd about me as near as they durst; and some of them had the impudence to shoot their arrows at me, as I sat on the ground by the door of my house, whereof one very narrowly missed my left eye. But the colonel ordered six of the ringleaders to be seized, and thought no punishment so proper as to deliver them bound into my hands; which some of his soldiers accordingly did, pushing them forward with the butt-ends of their pikes into my reach. I took them all in my right hand, put five of them into my coat-pocket; and as to the sixth, I made a countenance as if I would eat him alive. The poor man squallted terribly, and the colonel and his officers were in much pain, especially when they saw me take out my penknife: but I soon put them out of fear; for, looking mildly, and immediately cutting the strings he was bound with, I set him gently on the ground, and away he ran. I treated the rest in the same manner, taking them one by one out of my pocket; and I observed both the soldiers and people were highly delighted at this mark of my clemency, which was represented very much to my advantage at court.

Towards night I got with some difficulty into my house, where I lay on the ground, and continued to do so about a fortnight; during which time, the emperor gave orders to have a bed prepared for me. Six hundred beds of the common measure were brought in carriages, and worked up in my house; a hundred and fifty of their beds, sewn together, made up the breadth and length; and these were four double: which, however, kept me but very indifferently from the hardness of the floor, that was of smooth stone. By the same computation, they provided me with sheets, blankets, and coverlets, tolerable enough for one who had been so long inured to hardships.

As the news of my arrival spread through the kingdom, it brought prodigious numbers of rich, idle, and curious people to see me; so that the villages were almost emptied; and great neglect of tillage and household affairs must have ensued, if his imperial majesty had not provided, by several proclamations and orders of state, against this inconveniency. He directed that those who had already beheld me should return home, and not presume to come within fifty yards of my house, without license from the court; whereby the secretaries of state got considerable fees.

In the mean time the emperor held frequent councils, to debate what course should be taken with me; and I was afterwards assured by a particular friend, a person of great quality, who was as much in the secret as any, that the court was under many difficulties concerning me. They apprehended my breaking loose; that my diet would be very expensive, and might cause a famine. Sometimes they determined to starve me; or at least to shoot me if they should happen to break loose; it was almost three inches long; the hilt and scabbard were gold enriched with diamonds. His voice was shrill, but very clear and articulate; and I could distinctly hear it when I stood up. The ladies and courtiers were all most magnificently clad; so that the spot they stood upon seemed to resemble a petticoat spread upon the ground, embroidered with figures of gold and silver. His imperial majesty spoke often to me, and I returned answers: but neither of us could understand a syllable. There were several of his priests and lawyers present (as I conjectured by their habits), who were commanded to address themselves to me; and I spoke to them in as many languages as I had the least smattering of, which were High and Low Dutch, Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, and Lingua Franca, but all to no purpose. After about two hours the court retired, and I was left with a strong guard, to prevent the impertinence, and probably the malice of the rabble, who were very impatient to crowd about me as near as they durst; and some of them had the impudence to shoot their arrows at me, as I sat on the ground by the door of my house, whereof one very narrowly missed my left eye. But the colonel ordered six of the ringleaders to be seized, and thought no punishment so proper as to deliver them bound into my hands; which some of his soldiers accordingly did, pushing them forward with the butt-ends of their pikes into my reach. I took them all in my right hand, put five of them into my coat-pocket; and as to the sixth, I made a countenance as if I would eat him alive. The poor man squallted terribly, and the colonel and his officers were in much pain, especially when they saw me take out my penknife: but I soon put them out of fear; for, looking mildly, and immediately cutting the strings he was bound with, I set him gently on the ground, and away he ran. I treated the rest in the same manner, taking them one by one out of my pocket; and I observed both the soldiers and people were highly delighted at this mark of my clemency, which was represented very much to my advantage at court.

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An establishment was also made of six hundred persons to be my domestics, who had board-wages allowed for their maintenance, and tents built for them very conveniently on each side of my door. It was likewise ordered, that three hundred tailors should make me a suit of clothes, after the fashion of the country; that six of his majesty’s greatest scholars should be employed to instruct me in their language; and lastly, that the emperor’s horses, and those of the nobility and troops of guards, should be frequently exercised in my sight, to accustom themselves to me. All these orders were duly put in execution; and in about three weeks I made a great progress in learning their language; during which time the emperor frequently honoured me with his visits, and was pleased to assist my masters in teaching me. We began already to converse together in some sort; and the first words I learnt, were to express my desire “that he would please give me my liberty;” which I every day repeated on my knees. His answer, as I could comprehend it, was, “that this must be a work of time, not to be thought on without the advice of his council, and that first I must lumos kelmin pesso desmar lon emposo;” that is, swear a peace with him and his kingdom. However, that I should be used with all kindness. And he advised me to “acquire, by my patience and discreet behaviour, the good opinion of himself and his subjects.” He desired “I would not take it ill, if he gave orders to certain proper officers to search me; for probably I might carry about me several weapons, which must needs be dangerous things, if they answered the bulk of so prodigious a person.” I said, “His majesty should be satisfied; for I was ready to strip myself, and turn up my pockets before him.” This I delivered part in words, and part in signs. He replied, “that, by the laws of the kingdom, I must be searched by two of his officers; that he knew this could not be done without my consent and assistance; and he had so good an opinion of my generosity and justice, as to trust their persons in my hands; that whatever they took from me, should be returned when I left the country, or paid for at the rate which I would set upon them.” I took up the two officers in my hands, put them first into my coat-pockets, and then into every other pocket about me, except my two fobs, and another secret pocket, which I had no mind should be searched, wherein I had some little necessaries that were of no consequence to any but myself. In one of my fobs there was a silver watch, and in the other a small quantity of gold in a purse. These gentlemen, having pen, ink, and paper, about them, made an exact inventory of every thing they saw; and when they had done, desired I would set them down, that they might deliver it to the emperor. This inventory I afterwards translated into English, and is, word for word, as follows:

“Imprimis: In the right coat-pocket of the great man-mountain” (for so I interpret the words quinbus flestrin,) “after the strictest search, we found only one great piece of coarse-cloth, large enough to be a foot-cloth for your majesty’s chief room of state. In the left pocket we saw a huge silver chest, with a cover of the same metal, which we, the searchers, were not able to lift. We desired it should be opened, and one of us stepping into it, found himself up to the mid leg in a sort of dust, some part whereof flying up to our faces set us both a sneezing for several times together. In his right waistcoat-pocket we found a prodigious bundle of white thin substances, folded one over another, about the bigness of three men, tied with a strong cable, and marked with black figures; which we humbly conceive to be writings, every letter almost half as large as the palm of our hands. In the left there was a sort of engine, from the back of which were extended twenty long poles, resembling the pallisados before your majesty’s court: wherewith we conjecture the man-mountain combs his head; for we did not always trouble him with questions, because we found it a great difficulty to make him understand us. In the large pocket, on the right side of his middle cover” (so I translate the word ranfulo, by which they meant my breeches,) “we saw a hollow pillar of iron, about the length of a man, fastened to a strong piece of timber larger than the pillar; and upon one side of the pillar, were huge pieces of iron sticking out, cut into strange figures, which we know not what to make of. In the left pocket, another engine of the same kind. In the smaller pocket on the right side, were several round flat pieces of white and red metal, of different bulk; some of the white, which seemed to be silver, were so large and heavy, that my comrade and I could hardly lift them. In the left pocket were two black pillars irregularly shaped: we could not, without difficulty, reach the top of them, as we stood at the bottom of his pocket. One of them was covered, and seemed all of a piece: but at the upper end of the other there appeared a white round substance, about twice the bigness of our heads. Within each of these was enclosed a prodigious plate of steel; which, by our orders, we obliged him to show us, because we apprehended they might be dangerous engines. He took them out of their cases, and told us, that in his own country his practice was to shave his beard with one of these, and cut his meat with the other. There were two pockets which we could not enter: these he called his fobs; they were two large slits cut into the top of his middle cover, but squeezed close by the pressure of his belly. Out of the right fob hung a great silver chain, with a wonderful kind of engine at the bottom. We directed him to draw out whatever was at the end of that chain; which appeared to be a globe, half silver, and half of some transparent metal; for, on the transparent side, we saw certain strange figures circularly drawn, and thought we could touch them, till we found our fingers stopped by the lucid substance. He put this engine into our ears, which made an incessant noise, like that of a water-mill: and we conjecture it is either some unknown
animal, or the god that he worships; but we are more inclined to the latter opinion, because he assured us, (if we understood him right, for he expressed himself very imperfectly) that he seldom did any thing without consulting it. He called it his oracle, and said, it pointed out the time for every action of his life. From the left fob he took out a net almost large enough for a fisherman, but contrived to open and shut like a purse, and served him for the same use: we found therein several massy pieces of yellow metal, which, if they be real gold, must be of immense value.

"Having thus, in obedience to your majesty's commands, diligently searched all his pockets, we observed a girdle about his waist made of the hide of some prodigious animal, from which, on the left side, hung a sword of the length of five men; and on the right, a bag or pouch divided into two cells, each cell capable of holding three of your majesty's subjects. In one of these cells were several globes, or balls, of a most ponderous metal, about the bigness of our heads, and requiring a strong hand to lift them: the other cell contained a heap of certain black grains, but of no great bulk or weight, for we could hold above fifty of them in the palms of our hands.

"This is an exact inventory of what we found about the body of the man-mountain, who used us with great civility, and due respect to your majesty's commission. Signed and sealed on the fourth day of the eighty-ninth moon of your majesty's auspicious reign.

Clefrin Frelock, Marsi Frelock."

When this inventory was read over to the emperor, he directed me, although in very gentle terms, to deliver up the several particulars. He first called for my scimitar, which I took out, scabbard and all. In the mean time he ordered three thousand of his choicest troops (who then attended him) to surround me at a distance, with their bows and arrows just ready to discharge; but I did not observe it, for mine eyes were wholly fixed upon his majesty. He then desired me to draw my scimitar, which, although it had got some rust by the sea water, was, in most parts, exceeding bright. I did so, and immediately all the troops gave a shout between terror and surprise; for the sun shone clear, and the reflection dazzled their eyes, as I waved the scimitar to and fro in my hand. His majesty, who is a most magnanimous prince, was less daunted than I could expect: he ordered me to return it into the scabbard, and cast it on the ground as gently as I could, about six feet from the end of my chain. The next thing he demanded was one of the hollow iron pillars; by which he meant my pocket pistols. I drew it out, and at his desire, as well as I could, expressed to him the use of it; and charging it only with powder, which, by the closeness of my pouch, happened to escape wetting in the sea (an inconvenience against which all prudent mariners take special care to provide,) I first cautioned the emperor not to be afraid, and then I let it off in the air. The astonishment here was much greater than at the sight of my scimitar. Hundreds fell down as if they had been struck dead; and even the emperor, although he stood his ground, could not recover himself for some time. I delivered up both my pistols in the same manner as I had done my scimitar, and then my pouch of powder and bullets; begging him that the former might be kept from fire, for it would kindle with the smallest spark, and blow up his imperial palace into the air. I likewise delivered up my watch, which the emperor was very curious to see, and commanded two of his tallest yeomen of the guards to bear it on a pole upon their shoulders, as draymen in England do a barrel of ale. He was amazed at the continual noise it made, and the motion of the minute-hand, which he could easily discern; for their sight is much more acute than ours: he asked the opinions of his learned men about it, which were various and remote, as the reader may well imagine without my repeating; although indeed I could not very perfectly understand them. I then gave up my silver and copper money, my purse, with nine large pieces of gold, and some smaller ones; my knife and razor, my comb and silver snuff-box, my handkerchief and journal-book. My scimitar, pistols, and pouch, were conveyed in carriages to his majesty's stores; but the rest of my goods were returned me.

I had as I before observed, one private pocket, which escaped their search, wherein there was a pair of spectacles (which I sometimes use for the weakness of mine eyes,) a pocket perspective, and some other little conveniences; which, being of no consequence to the emperor, I did not think myself bound in honour to discover, and I apprehended they might be lost or spoiled if I ventured them out of my possession.
CHAPTER III.

The author diverts the emperor, and his nobility of both sexes, in a very uncommon manner. The diversions of the court of Lilliput described. The author has his liberty granted him upon certain conditions.

My gentleness and good behaviour had gained so far on the emperor and his court, and indeed upon the army and people in general, that I began to conceive hopes of getting my liberty in a short time. I took all possible methods to cultivate this favourable disposition. The natives came, by degrees, to be less apprehensive of any danger from me. I would sometimes lie down, and let five or six of them dance on my hand; and at last the boys and girls would venture to come and play at hide-and-seek in my hair. I had now made a good progress in understanding and speaking the language. The emperor had a mind one day to entertain me with several of the country shows, wherein they exceed all nations I have known, both for dexterity and magnificence. I was diverted with none so much as that of the rope-dancers, performed upon a slender white thread, extended about two feet, and twelve inches from the ground. Upon which I shall desire liberty, with the reader's patience, to enlarge a little.

This diversion is only practised by those persons who are candidates for great employments, and high favour at court. They are trained in this art from their youth, and are not always of noble birth, or liberal education. When a great office is vacant, either by death or disgrace (which often happens,) five or six of those candidates petition the emperor to entertain his majesty and the court with a dance on the rope; and whoever jumps the highest, without falling, succeeds in the office. Very often the chief ministers themselves are commanded to show their skill, and to convince the emperor that they have not lost their faculty. Flimnap, the treasurer, is allowed to cut a caper on the straight rope, at least an inch higher than any other lord in the whole empire. I have seen him do the summerset several times together, upon a trencher fixed on a rope which is no thicker than a common packthread in England. My friend Reldresal, principal secretary for private affairs, is, in my opinion, if I am not partial, the second after the treasurer; the rest of the great officers are much upon a par.

These diversions are often attended with fatal accidents, whereof great numbers are on record. I myself have seen two or three candidates break a limb. But the danger is much greater, when the ministers themselves are commanded to show their dexterity; for, by contending to excel themselves and their fellows, they strain so far that there is hardly one of them who has not received a fall, and some of them two or three. I was assured that, a year or two before my arrival, Flimnap would infallibly have broke his neck, if one of the king's cushions, that accidentally lay on the ground, had not weakened the force of his fall.

There is likewise another diversion, which is only shown before the emperor and empress, and first minister, upon particular occasions. The emperor lays on the table three fine silken threads of six inches long; one is blue, the other red, and the third green. These threads are proposed as prizes for those persons whom the emperor has a mind to distinguish by a peculiar mark of his favour. The ceremony is performed in his majesty's great chamber of state, where the candidates are to undergo a trial of dexterity very different from the former, and such as I have not observed the least resemblance of in any other country of the new or old world. The emperor holds a stick in his hands, both ends parallel to the horizon, while the candidates advancing, one by one, sometimes leap over the stick, sometimes creep under it, backward and forward, several times, according as the stick is advanced or depressed. Sometimes the emperor holds one end of the stick, and his first minister the other; sometimes the minister has it entirely to himself. Whoever performs his part with most agility, and holds out the longest in leaping and creeping, is rewarded with the blue-coloured silk; the red is given to the next, and the green to the third, which they all wear girt twice round about the middle; and you see few great persons about this court who are not adorned with one of these girdles.

The horses of the army, and those of the royal stables, having been daily led before me, were no longer shy, but would come up to my very feet without starting. The riders would leap them over my hand, as I held it on the ground; and one of the emperor's huntsmen, upon a large courser, took my foot, shoe and all; which was indeed a prodigious leap. I had the good fortune to divert the emperor one day after a very extraordinary manner. I desired he would order several sticks of two feet high, and the thickness of an ordinary cane, to be brought me;
whereupon his majesty commanded the master of his woods to give directions accordingly; and the next morning six woodmen arrived with as many carriages, drawn by eight horses to each. I took nine of these sticks, and fixing them firmly in the ground in a quadrangular figure, two feet and a half square, I took four other sticks, and tied them parallel at each corner, about two feet from the ground; then I fastened my handkerchief to the nine sticks that stood erect; and extended it on all sides, till it was tight as the top of a drum; and the four parallel sticks, rising about five inches higher than the handkerchief, served as ledges on each side. When I had finished my work, I desired the emperor to let a troop of his best horses twenty-four in number, come and exercise upon this plain. His majesty approved of the proposal, and I took them up, one by one, in my hands, ready mounted and armed, with the proper officers to exercise them. As soon as they got into order they divided into two parties, performed mock skirmishes, discharged blunt arrows, drew their swords, fled and pursued, attacked and retired, and in short discovered the best military discipline I ever beheld. The parallel sticks secured them and their horses from falling over the stage; and the emperor was so much delighted, that he ordered this entertainment to be repeated several days, and once was pleased to be lifted up and give the word of command; and with great difficulty persuaded even the empress herself to let me hold her in her close chair within two yards of the stage, when she was able to take a full view of the whole performance. It was my good fortune, that no ill accident happened in these entertainments; only once a fiery horse, that belonged to one of the captains, pawing with his hoof, struck a hole in my handkerchief, and his foot slipping, he overthrew his rider and himself; but I immediately relieved them both, and covering the hole with one hand, I set down the troop with the other, in the same manner as I took them up. The horse that fell was strained in the left shoulder, but the rider got no hurt; and I repaired my handkerchief as well as I could; however, I would not trust to the strength of it any more, in such dangerous enterprises.

About two or three days before I was set at liberty, as I was entertaining the court with this kind of feat, there arrived an express to inform his majesty, that some of his subjects, riding near the place where I was first taken up, had seen a great black substance lying on the around, very odd in shape, extending its edges round, as wide as his majesty’s bedchamber, and rising up in the middle as high as a man; that it was no living creature, as they at first apprehended, for it lay on the grass without motion; and some of them had walked round it several times; that, by mounting upon each other’s shoulders, they had got to the top, which was flat and even, and, stamping upon it, they found that it was hollow within; that they humbly conceived it might be something belonging to the man-mountain; and if his majesty pleased, they would undertake to bring it with only five horses. I presently knew what they meant, and was glad at heart to receive this intelligence. It seems, upon my first reaching the shore after our shipwreck, I was in such confusion, that before I came to the place where I went to sleep, my hat, which I had sent so many memorials and petitions for my liberty, that his majesty at length mentioned the matter, first in

Two days after this adventure, the emperor, having ordered that part of his army which quarters in and about his metropolis, to be in readiness, took a fancy of diverting himself in a very singular manner. He desired I should stand like a Colossus, with my legs as far asunder as I conveniently could. He then commanded his general (who was an old experienced leader, and a great patron of mine) to draw up the troops in close order, and march them under me; the foot by twenty-four abreast, and the horse by sixteen, with drums beating, colours flying, and pikes advanced. This body consisted of three thousand foot, and a thousand horse. His majesty gave orders, upon pain of death, that every soldier in his march should observe the strictest decency with regard to my person; which however could not prevent some of the younger officers from turning up their eyes as they passed under me; and, to confess the truth, my breeches were at that time in so ill a condition, that they afforded some opportunities for laughter and admiration.

I had sent so many memorials and petitions for my liberty, that his majesty at length mentioned the matter, first in the cabinet, and then in a full council; where it was opposed by none, except Skyresh Bolgolam, who was pleased, without any provocation, to be my mortal enemy. But it was carried against him by the whole board, and confirmed by the emperor. That minister was galbet, or admiral of the realm, very much in his master’s confidence, and a person well versed in affairs, but of a morose and sour complexion. However, he was at length persuaded to comply; but prevailed that the articles and conditions upon which I should be set free, and to which I must swear, should be drawn up by himself. These articles were brought to me by Skyresh Bolgolam in person attended by two under-secretaries, and several persons of distinction. After they were read, I was demanded to swear to the performance of them; first in the manner of my own country, and afterwards in the method prescribed

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by their laws; which was, to hold my right foot in my left hand, and to place the middle finger of my right hand on the crown of my head, and my thumb on the tip of my right ear. But because the reader may be curious to have some idea of the style and manner of expression peculiar to that people, as well as to know the article upon which I recovered my liberty, I have made a translation of the whole instrument, word for word, as near as I was able, which I here offer to the public.

“Golbasto Momarem Evlame Gurdilo Shefin Mully Ully Gue, most mighty Emperor of Lilliput, delight and terror of the universe, whose dominions extend five thousand blustrugs (about twelve miles in circumference) to the extremities of the globe; monarch of all monarchs, taller than the sons of men; whose feet press down to the centre, and whose head strikes against the sun; at whose nod the princes of the earth shake their knees; pleasant as the spring, comfortable as the summer, fruitful as autumn, dreadful as winter: his most sublime majesty proposes to the man-mountain, lately arrived at our celestial dominions, the following articles, which, by a solemn oath, he shall be obliged to perform:—

“1st, The man-mountain shall not depart from our dominions, without our license under our great seal.

“2d, He shall not presume to come into our metropolis, without our express order; at which time, the inhabitants shall have two hours warning to keep within doors.

“3d, The said man-mountain shall confine his walks to our principal high roads, and not offer to walk, or lie down, in a meadow or field of corn.

“4th, As he walks the said roads, he shall take the utmost care not to trample upon the bodies of any of our loving subjects, their horses, or carriages, nor take any of our subjects into his hands without their own consent.

“5th, If an express requires extraordinary despatch, the man-mountain shall be obliged to carry, in his pocket, the messenger and horse a six days journey, once in every moon, and return the said messenger back (if so required) safe to our imperial presence.

“6th, He shall be our ally against our enemies in the island of Blefuscu, and do his utmost to destroy their fleet, which is now preparing to invade us.

“7th, That the said man-mountain shall, at his times of leisure, be aiding and assisting to our workmen, in helping to raise certain great stones, towards covering the wall of the principal park, and other our royal buildings.

“8th, That the said man-mountain shall, in two moons’ time, deliver in an exact survey of the circumference of our dominions, by a computation of his own paces round the coast.

“Lastly, That, upon his solemn oath to observe all the above articles, the said man-mountain shall have a daily allowance of meat and drink sufficient for the support of 1724 of our subjects, with free access to our royal person, and other marks of our favour. Given at our palace at Belfaborac, the twelfth day of the ninety-first moon of our reign.”

I swore and subscribed to these articles with great cheerfulness and content, although some of them were not so honourable as I could have wished; which proceeded wholly from the malice of Skyresh Bolgolam, the high-admiral: whereupon my chains were immediately unlocked, and I was at full liberty. The emperor himself, in person, did me the honour to be by at the whole ceremony. I made my acknowledgements by prostrating myself at his majesty’s feet: but he commanded me to rise; and after many gracious expressions, which, to avoid the censure of vanity, I shall not repeat, he added, “that he hoped I should prove a useful servant, and well deserve all the favours he had already conferred upon me, or might do for the future.”

The reader may please to observe, that, in the last article of the recovery of my liberty, the emperor stipulates to allow me a quantity of meat and drink sufficient for the support of 1724 Lilliputians. Some time after, asking a friend at court how they came to fix on that determinate number, he told me that his majesty’s mathematicians, having taken the height of my body by the help of a quadrant, and finding it to exceed theirs in the proportion of twelve to one, they concluded from the similarity of their bodies, that mine must contain at least 1724 of theirs, and consequently would require as much food as was necessary to support that number of Lilliputians. By which the reader may conceive an idea of the ingenuity of that people, as well as the prudent and exact economy of so great a prince.
PART I, CHAPTER 4

CHAPTER IV.

Mildendo, the metropolis of Lilliput, described, together with the emperor’s palace. A conversation between the author and a principal secretary, concerning the affairs of that empire. The author’s offers to serve the emperor in his wars.

The first request I made, after I had obtained my liberty, was, that I might have license to see Mildendo, the metropolis; which the emperor easily granted me, but with a special charge to do no hurt either to the inhabitants or their houses. The people had notice, by proclamation, of my design to visit the town. The wall which encompassed it is two feet and a half high, and at least eleven inches broad, so that a coach and horses may be driven very safely round it; and it is flanked with strong towers at ten feet distance. I stepped over the great western gate, and passed very gently, and sidling, through the two principal streets, only in my short waistcoat, for fear of damaging the roofs and eaves of the houses with the skirts of my coat. I walked with the utmost circumspection, to avoid treading on any stragglers who might remain in the streets, although the orders were very strict, that all people should keep in their houses, at their own peril. The garret windows and tops of houses were so crowded with spectators, that I thought in all my travels I had not seen a more populous place. The city is an exact square, each side of the wall being five hundred feet long. The two great streets, which run across and divide it into four quarters, are five feet wide. The lanes and alleys, which I could not enter, but only view as I passed, are from twelve to eighteen inches. The town is capable of holding five hundred thousand souls: the houses are from three to five stories: the shops and markets well provided.

The emperor’s palace is in the centre of the city where the two great streets meet. It is enclosed by a wall of two feet high, and twenty feet distance from the buildings. I had his majesty’s permission to step over this wall; and, the space being so wide between that and the palace, I could easily view it on every side. The outward court is a square of forty feet, and includes two other courts: in the inmost are the royal apartments, which I was very desirous to see, but found it extremely difficult; for the great gates, from one square into another, were but eighteen inches high, and seven inches wide. Now the buildings of the outer court were at least five feet high, and it was impossible for me to stride over them without infinite damage to the pile, though the walls were strongly built of hewn stone, and four inches thick. At the same time the emperor had a great desire that I should see the magnificence of his palace; but this I was not able to do till three days after, which I spent in cutting down with my knife some of the largest trees in the royal park, about a hundred yards distant from the city. Of these trees I made two stools, each about three feet high, and strong enough to bear my weight. The people having received notice a second time, I went again through the city to the palace with my two stools in my hands. When I came to the side of the outer court, I stood upon one stool, and took the other in my hand; this I lifted over the roof, and gently set it down on the space between the first and second court, which was eight feet wide. I then stept over the building very conveniently from one stool to the other, and drew up the first after me with a hooked stick. By this contrivance I got into the inmost court; and, lying down upon my side, I applied my face to the windows of the middle stories, which were left open on purpose, and discovered the most splendid apartments that can be imagined. There I saw the empress and the young princes, in their several lodgings, with their chief attendants about them. Her imperial majesty was pleased to smile very graciously upon me, and gave me out of the window her hand to kiss.

But I shall not anticipate the reader with further descriptions of this kind, because I reserve them for a greater work, which is now almost ready for the press; containing a general description of this empire, from its first erection, through along series of princes; with a particular account of their wars and politics, laws, learning, and religion; their plants and animals; their peculiar manners and customs, with other matters very curious and useful; my chief design at present being only to relate such events and transactions as happened to the public or to myself during a residence of about nine months in that empire.
One morning, about a fortnight after I had obtained my liberty, Reldresal, principal secretary (as they style him) for private affairs, came to my house attended only by one servant. He ordered his coach to wait at a distance, and desired I would give him an hours audience; which I readily consented to, on account of his quality and personal merits, as well as of the many good offices he had done me during my solicitations at court. I offered to lie down that he might the more conveniently reach my ear, but he chose rather to let me hold him in my hand during our conversation. He began with compliments on my liberty; said “he might pretend to some merit in it;” but, however, added, “that if it had not been for the present situation of things at court, perhaps I might not have obtained it so soon. For,” said he, “as flourishing a condition as we may appear to be in to foreigners, we labour under two mighty evils: a violent faction at home, and the danger of an invasion, by a most potent enemy, from abroad. As to the first, you are to understand, that for about seventy moons past there have been been two struggling parties in this empire, under the names of Tramecksan and Slamecksan, from the high and low heels of their shoes, by which they distinguish themselves. It is alleged, indeed, that the high heels are most agreeable to our ancient constitution; but, however this be, his majesty has determined to make use only low heels in the administration of the government, and all offices in the gift of the crown, as you cannot but observe; and particularly that his majesty’s imperial heels are lower at least by a drurr than any of his court (drurr is a measure about the fourteenth part of an inch). The animosities between these two parties run so high, that they will neither eat, nor drink, nor talk with each other. We compute the Tramecksan, or high heels, to exceed us in number; but the power is wholly on our side. We apprehend his imperial highness, the heir to the crown, to have some tendency towards the high heels; at least we can plainly discover that one of his heels is higher than the other, which gives him a hobble in his gait. Now, in the midst of these intestine disquiets, we are threatened with an invasion from the island of Blefuscu, which is the other great empire of the universe, almost as large and powerful as this of his majesty. For as to what we have heard you affirm, that there are other kingdoms and states in the world inhabited by human creatures as large as yourself, our philosophers are in much doubt, and would rather conjecture that you dropped from the moon, or one of the stars; because it is certain, that a hundred mortals of your bulk would in a short time destroy all the fruits and cattle of his majesty’s dominions: besides, our histories of six thousand moons make no mention of any other regions than the two great empires of Lilliput and Blefuscu. Which two mighty powers have, as I was going to tell you, been engaged in a most obstinate war for six-and-thirty moons past. It began upon the following occasion. It is allowed on all hands, that the primitive way of breaking eggs, before we eat them, was upon the larger end; but his present majesty’s grandfather, while he was a boy, going to eat an egg, and breaking it according to the ancient practice, happened to cut one of his fingers. Whereupon the emperor his father published an edict, commanding all his subjects, upon great penalties, to break the smaller end of their eggs. The people so highly resented this law, that our histories tell us, there have been six rebellions raised on that account; wherein one emperor lost his life, and another his crown. These civil commotions were constantly fomented by the monarchs of Blefuscu; and when they were quelled, the exiles always fled for refuge to that empire. It is computed that eleven thousand persons have at several times suffered death, rather than submit to break their eggs at the smaller end. Many hundred large volumes have been published upon this controversy: but the books of the Big-endians have been long forbidden, and the whole party rendered incapable by law of holding employments. During the course of these troubles, the emperors of Blefusca did frequently expostulate by their ambassadors, accusing us of making a schism in religion, by offending against a fundamental doctrine of our great prophet Llstrog, in the fifty-fourth chapter of the Blundecral (which is their Alcoran). This, however, is thought to be a mere strain upon the text; for the words are these: ‘that all true believers break their eggs at the convenient end.’ And which is the convenient end, seems, in my humble opinion to be left to every man’s conscience, or at least in the power of the chief magistrate to determine. Now, the Big-endian exiles have found so much credit in the emperor of Blefuscu’s court, and so much private assistance and encouragement from their party here at home, that a bloody war has been carried on between the two empires for six-and-thirty moons, with various success; during which time we have lost forty capital ships, and a much a greater number of smaller vessels, together with thirty thousand of our best seamen and soldiers; and the damage received by the enemy is reckoned to be somewhat greater than ours. However, they have now equipped a numerous fleet, and are just preparing to make a descent upon us; and his imperial majesty, placing great confidence in your valour and strength, has commanded me to lay this account of his affairs before you.”

I desired the secretary to present my humble duty to the emperor; and to let him know, “that I thought it would not become me, who was a foreigner, to interfere with parties; but I was ready, with the hazard of my life, to defend his person and state against all invaders.”
PART I, CHAPTER 5

CHAPTER V.

The author, by an extraordinary stratagem, prevents an invasion. A high title of honour is conferred upon him. Ambassadors arrive from the emperor of Blefuscu, and sue for peace. The empress's apartment on fire by an accident; the author instrumental in saving the rest of the palace.

The empire of Blefuscu is an island situated to the north-east of Lilliput, from which it is parted only by a channel of eight hundred yards wide. I had not yet seen it, and upon this notice of an intended invasion, I avoided appearing on that side of the coast, for fear of being discovered, by some of the enemy's ships, who had received no intelligence of me; all intercourse between the two empires having been strictly forbidden during the war, upon pain of death, and an embargo laid by our emperor upon all vessels whatsoever. I communicated to his majesty a project I had formed of seizing the enemy's whole fleet; which, as our scouts assured us, lay at anchor in the harbour, ready to sail with the first fair wind. I consulted the most experienced seamen upon the depth of the channel, which they had often plumbed; who told me, that in the middle, at high-water, it was seventy glumgluffs deep, which is about six feet of European measure; and the rest of it fifty glumgluffs at most. I walked towards the north-east coast, over against Blefuscu, where, lying down behind a hillock, I took out my small perspective glass, and viewed the enemy's fleet at anchor, consisting of about fifty men of war, and a great number of transports: I then came back to my house, and gave orders (for which I had a warrant) for a great quantity of the strongest cable and bars of iron. I trebled the cable to make it stronger, and for the same reason I twisted three of the iron bars together, bending the extremities into a hook. Having thus fixed fifty hooks to as many cables, I went back to the north-east coast, and putting off my coat, shoes, and stockings, walked into the sea, in my leathern jerkin, about half an hour before high water. I waded with what haste I could, and swam in the middle about thirty yards, till I felt ground. I arrived at the fleet in less than half an hour. The enemy was so frightened when they saw me, that they leaped out of their ships, and swam to shore, where there could not be fewer than thirty thousand souls. I then took my tackling, and, fastening a hook to the hole at the prow of each, I tied all the cords together at the end. While I was thus employed, the enemy discharged several thousand arrows, many of which stuck in my hands and face, and, beside the excessive smart, gave me much disturbance in my work. My greatest apprehension was for mine eyes, which I should have infallibly lost, if I had not suddenly thought of an expedient. I kept, among other little necessaries, a pair of spectacles in a private pocket, which, as I observed before, had escaped the emperor's searchers. These I took out and fastened as strongly as I could upon my nose, and thus armed, went on boldly with my work, in spite of the enemy's arrows, many of which struck against the glasses of my spectacles, but without any other effect, further than a little to discompose them. I had now fastened all the hooks, and, taking the knot in my hand, began to pull; but not a ship would stir, for they were all too fast held by their anchors, so that the boldest part of my enterprise remained. I therefore let go the cord, and leaving the looks fixed to the ships, I resolutely cut with my knife the cables that fastened the anchors, receiving about two hundred shots in my face and hands; then I took up the knotted end of the cables, to which my hooks were tied, and with great ease drew fifty of the enemy's largest men of war after me. The Blefuscuans, who had not the least imagination of what I intended, were at first confounded with astonishment. They had seen me cut the cables, and thought my design was only to let the ships run adrift or fall foul on each other: but when they perceived the whole fleet moving in order, and saw me pulling at the end, they set up such a scream of grief and despair as it is almost impossible to describe or conceive. When I had got out of danger, I stopped awhile to pick out the arrows that stuck in my hands and face; and rubbed on some of the same ointment that was given me at my first arrival, as I have formerly mentioned. I then took off my spectacles, and waiting about an hour, till the tide was a little fallen, I waded through the middle with my cargo, and arrived safe at the royal port of Lilliput. The emperor and his whole court stood on the shore, expecting the issue of this great adventure. They saw the ships move forward in a large half-moon, but could not discern me, who was up to my breast in water. When I advanced to the middle of the channel, they were yet more in pain, because I was under water to my neck. The emperor concluded me to be drowned, and that the enemy's fleet was approaching in a hostile manner: but he was soon eased of his fears; for the channel growing shallower every step I made, I came in a short time within
This great prince received me at my landing with all possible encomiums, and created me a nardac upon the spot, which is the highest title of honour among them.

His majesty desired I would take some other opportunity of bringing all the rest of his enemy's ships into his ports. And so unmeasurable is the ambition of princes, that he seemed to think of nothing less than reducing the whole empire of Blefuscu into a province, and governing it, by a viceroy; of destroying the Big-endian exiles, and compelling that people to break the smaller end of their eggs, by which he would remain the sole monarch of the whole world. But I endeavoured to divert him from this design, by many arguments drawn from the topics of policy as well as justice; and I plainly protested, “that I would never be an instrument of bringing a free and brave people into slavery.” And, when the matter was debated in council, the wisest part of the ministry were of my opinion.

This open bold declaration of mine was so opposite to the schemes and politics of his imperial majesty, that he could never forgive me. He mentioned it in a very artful manner at council, where I was told that some of the wisest appeared, at least by their silence, to be of my opinion; but others, who were my secret enemies, could not forbear some expressions which, by a side-wind, reflected on me. And from this time began an intrigue between his majesty and a junto of ministers, maliciously bent against me, which broke out in less than two months, and had like to have ended in my utter destruction. Of so little weight are the greatest services to princes, when put into the balance with a refusal to gratify their passions.

About three weeks after this exploit, there arrived a solemn embassy from Blefuscu, with humble offers of a peace, which was soon concluded, upon conditions very advantageous to our emperor, wherewith I shall not trouble the reader. There were six ambassadors, with a train of about five hundred persons, and their entry was very magnificent, suitable to the grandeur of their master, and the importance of their business. When their treaty was finished, wherein I did them several good offices by the credit I now had, or at least appeared to have, at court, their excellencies, who were privately told how much I had been their friend, made me a visit in form. They began with many compliments upon my valour and generosity, invited me to that kingdom in the emperor their master's name, and desired me to show them some proofs of my prodigious strength, of which they had heard so many wonders; wherein I readily obliged them, but shall not trouble the reader with the particulars.

When I had for some time entertained their excellencies, to their infinite satisfaction and surprise, I desired they would do me the honour to present my most humble respects to the emperor their master, the renown of whose virtues had so justly filled the whole world with admiration, and whose royal person I resolved to attend, before I returned to my own country. Accordingly, the next time I had the honour to see our emperor, I desired his general license to wait on the Blefuscudian monarch, which he was pleased to grant me, as I could perceive, in a very cold manner; but could not guess the reason, till I had a whisper from a certain person, “that Flimnap and Bolgolam had represented my intercourse with those ambassadors as a mark of disaffection;” from which I am sure my heart was wholly free. And this was the first time I began to conceive some imperfect idea of courts and ministers.

It is to be observed, that these ambassadors spoke to me, by an interpreter, the languages of both empires differing as much from each other as any two in Europe, and each nation priding itself upon the antiquity, beauty, and energy of their own tongue, with an avowed contempt for that of their neighbour; yet our emperor, standing upon the advantage he had got by the seizure of their fleet, obliged them to deliver their credentials, and make their speech, in the Lilliputian tongue. And it must be confessed, that from the great intercourse of trade and commerce between both realms, from the continual reception of exiles which is mutual among them, and from the custom, in each empire, to send their young nobility and richer gentry to the other, in order to polish themselves by seeing the world, and understanding men and manners; there are few persons of distinction, or merchants, or seamen, who dwell in the maritime parts, but what can hold conversation in both tongues; as I found some weeks after, when I went to pay my respects to the emperor of Blefuscu, which, in the midst of great misfortunes, through the malice of my enemies, proved a very happy adventure to me, as I shall relate in its proper place.

The reader may remember, that when I signed those articles upon which I recovered my liberty, there were some which I disliked, upon account of their being too servile; neither could anything but an extreme necessity have forced me to submit. But being now a nardac of the highest rank in that empire, such offices were looked upon as below my dignity, and the emperor (to do him justice), never once mentioned them to me. However, it was not long before I had an opportunity of doing his majesty, at least as I then thought, a most signal service. I was alarmed at midnight with the cries of many hundred people at my door; by which, being suddenly awaked, I was in some kind of terror. I heard the word Burglum repeated incessantly; several of the emperor's court, making their way through the crowd, entreated me to come immediately to the palace, where her imperial majesty's apartment
was on fire, by the carelessness of a maid of honour, who fell asleep while she was reading a romance. I got up in an instant; and orders being given to clear the way before me, and it being likewise a moonshine night, I made a shift to get to the palace without trampling on any of the people. I found they had already applied ladders to the walls of the apartment, and were well provided with buckets, but the water was at some distance. These buckets were about the size of large thimbles, and the poor people supplied me with them as fast as they could: but the flame was so violent that they did little good. I might easily have stifled it with my coat, which I unfortunately left behind me for haste, and came away only in my leathern jerkin. The case seemed wholly desperate and deplorable; and this magnificent palace would have infallibly been burnt down to the ground, if, by a presence of mind unusual to me, I had not suddenly thought of an expedient. I had, the evening before, drunk plentifully of a most delicious wine called glimigrim, (the Blefuscudians call it flunec, but ours is esteemed the better sort,) which is very diuretic. By the luckiest chance in the world, I had not discharged myself of any part of it. The heat I had contracted by coming very near the flames, and by labouring to quench them, made the wine begin to operate by urine; which I voided in such a quantity, and applied so well to the proper places, that in three minutes the fire was wholly extinguished, and the rest of that noble pile, which had cost so many ages in erecting, preserved from destruction.

It was now day-light, and I returned to my house without waiting to congratulate with the emperor: because, although I had done a very eminent piece of service, yet I could not tell how his majesty might resent the manner by which I had performed it: for, by the fundamental laws of the realm, it is capital in any person, of what quality soever, to make water within the precincts of the palace. But I was a little comforted by a message from his majesty, “that he would give orders to the grand justiciary for passing my pardon in form:” which, however, I could not obtain; and I was privately assured, “that the empress, conceiving the greatest abhorrence of what I had done, removed to the most distant side of the court, firmly resolved that those buildings should never be repaired for her use: and, in the presence of her chief confidents could not forbear vowing revenge.”

PART I, CHAPTER 6

CHAPTER VI.

Of the inhabitants of Lilliput; their learning, laws, and customs; the manner of educating their children. The author’s way of living in that country. His vindication of a great lady.

Although I intend to leave the description of this empire to a particular treatise, yet, in the mean time, I am content to gratify the curious reader with some general ideas. As the common size of the natives is somewhat under six inches high, so there is an exact proportion in all other animals, as well as plants and trees: for instance, the tallest horses and oxen are between four and five inches in height, the sheep an inch and half, more or less: their geese about the bigness of a sparrow, and so the several gradations downwards till you come to the smallest, which to my sight, were almost invisible; but nature has adapted the eyes of the Lilliputians to all objects proper for their view: they see with great exactness, but at no great distance. And, to show the sharpness of their sight towards objects that are near, I have been much pleased with observing a cook pulling a lark, which was not so large as a common fly; and a young girl threading an invisible needle with invisible silk. Their tallest trees are about seven feet high: I mean some of those in the great royal park, the tops whereof I could but just reach with my fist clenched. The other vegetables are in the same proportion; but this I leave to the reader’s imagination.

I shall say but little at present of their learning, which, for many ages, has flourished in all its branches among them: but their manner of writing is very peculiar, being neither from the left to the right, like the Europeans, nor from the right to the left, like the Arabians, nor from up to down, like the Chinese, but aslant, from one corner of the paper to the other, like ladies in England.
They bury their dead with their heads directly downward, because they hold an opinion, that in eleven thousand moons they are all to rise again; in which period the earth (which they conceive to be flat) will turn upside down, and by this means they shall, at their resurrection, be found ready standing on their feet. The learned among them confess the absurdity of this doctrine; but the practice still continues, in compliance to the vulgar.

There are some laws and customs in this empire very peculiar; and if they were not so directly contrary to those of my own dear country, I should be tempted to say a little in their justification. It is only to be wished they were as well executed. The first I shall mention, relates to informers. All crimes against the state, are punished here with the utmost severity; but, if the person accused makes his innocence plainly to appear upon his trial, the accuser is immediately put to an ignominious death; and out of his goods or lands the innocent person is quadruply recompensed for the loss of his time, for the danger he underwent, for the hardship of his imprisonment, and for all the charges he has been at in making his defence; or, if that fund be deficient, it is largely supplied by the crown. The emperor also confers on him some public mark of his favour, and proclamation is made of his innocence through the whole city.

They look upon fraud as a greater crime than theft, and therefore seldom fail to punish it with death; for they allege, that care and vigilance, with a very common understanding, may preserve a man's goods from thieves, but honesty has no defence against superior cunning; and, since it is necessary that there should be a perpetual intercourse of buying and selling, and dealing upon credit, where fraud is permitted and connived at, or has no law to punish it, the honest dealer is always undone, and the knave gets the advantage. I remember, when I was once interceding with the emperor for a criminal who had wronged his master of a great sum of money, which he had received by order and ran away with; and happening to tell his majesty, by way of extenuation, that it was only a breach of trust, the emperor thought it monstrous in me to offer as a defence the greatest aggravation of the crime; and truly I had little to say in return, farther than the common answer, that different nations had different customs; for, I confess, I was heartily ashamed.

Although we usually call reward and punishment the two hinges upon which all government turns, yet I could never observe this maxim to be put in practice by any nation except that of Lilliput. Whoever can there bring sufficient proof, that he has strictly observed the laws of his country for seventy-three moons, has a claim to certain privileges, according to his quality or condition of life, with a proportionable sum of money out of a fund appropriated for that use: he likewise acquires the title of snipall, or legal, which is added to his name, but does not descend to his posterity. And these people thought it a prodigious defect of policy among us, when I told them that our laws were enforced only by penalties, without any mention of reward. It is upon this account that the image of Justice, in their courts of judicature, is formed with six eyes, two before, as many behind, and on each side one, to signify circumspection; with a bag of gold open in her right hand, and a sword sheathed in her left, to show she is more disposed to reward than to punish.

In choosing persons for all employments, they have more regard to good morals than to great abilities; for, since government is necessary to mankind, they believe, that the common size of human understanding is fitted to some station or other; and that Providence never intended to make the management of public affairs a mystery to be comprehended only by a few persons of sublime genius, of which there seldom are three born in an age: but they suppose truth, justice, temperance, and the like, to be in every man's power; the practice of which virtues, assisted by experience and a good intention, would qualify any man for the service of his country, except where a course of study is required. But they thought the want of moral virtues was so far from being supplied by superior endowments of the mind, that employments could never be put into such dangerous hands as those of persons so qualified; and, at least, that the mistakes committed by ignorance, in a virtuous disposition, would never be of such fatal consequence to the public weal, as the practices of a man, whose inclinations led him to be corrupt, and who had great abilities to manage, to multiply, and defend his corruptions.

In like manner, the disbelief of a Divine Providence renders a man incapable of holding any public station; for, since kings avow themselves to be the deputies of Providence, the Lilliputians think nothing can be more absurd than for a prince to employ such men as disown the authority under which he acts.

In relating these and the following laws, I would only be understood to mean the original institutions, and not the most scandalous corruptions, into which these people are fallen by the degenerate nature of man. For, as to that infamous practice of acquiring great employments by dancing on the ropes, or badges of favour and distinction by leaping over sticks and creeping under them, the reader is to observe, that they were first introduced by the grandfather of the emperor now reigning, and grew to the present height by the gradual increase of party and faction.
Ingratitude is among them a capital crime, as we read it to have been in some other countries: for they reason thus: that whoever makes ill returns to his benefactor, must needs be a common enemy to the rest of mankind, from whom he has received no obligation, and therefore such a man is not fit to live.

Their notions relating to the duties of parents and children differ extremely from ours. For, since the conjunction of male and female is founded upon the great law of nature, in order to propagate and continue the species, the Lilliputians will needs have it, that men and women are joined together, like other animals, by the motives of concupiscence; and that their tenderness towards their young proceeds from the like natural principle: for which reason they will never allow that a child is under any obligation to his father for begetting him, or to his mother for bringing him into the world; which, considering the miseries of human life, was neither a benefit in itself, nor intended so by his parents, whose thoughts, in their love encounters, were otherwise employed. Upon these, and the like reasonings, their opinion is, that parents are the last of all others to be trusted with the education of their own children; and therefore they have in every town public nurseries, where all parents, except cottagers and labourers, are obliged to send their infants of both sexes to be reared and educated, when they come to the age of twenty moons, at which time they are supposed to have some rudiments of docility. These schools are of several kinds, suited to different qualities, and both sexes. They have certain professors well skilled in preparing children for such a condition of life as befits the rank of their parents, and their own capacities, as well as inclinations. I shall first say something of the male nurseries, and then of the female.

The nurseries for males of noble or eminent birth, are provided with grave and learned professors, and their several deputies. The clothes and food of the children are plain and simple. They are bred up in the principles of honour, justice, courage, modesty, clemency, religion, and love of their country; they are always employed in some business, except in the times of eating and sleeping, which are very short, and two hours for diversions consisting of bodily exercises. They are dressed by men till four years of age, and then are obliged to dress themselves, although their quality be ever so great; and the women attendant, who are aged proportionably to ours at fifty, perform only the most menial offices. They are never suffered to converse with servants, but go together in smaller or greater numbers to take their diversions, and always in the presence of a professor, or one of his deputies; whereby they avoid those early bad impressions of folly and vice, to which our children are subject. Their parents are suffered to see them only twice a year; the visit is to last but an hour; they are allowed to kiss the child at meeting and parting; but a professor, who always stands by on those occasions, will not suffer them to whisper, or use any fondling expressions, or bring any presents of toys, sweetmeats, and the like.

The pension from each family for the education and entertainment of a child, upon failure of due payment, is levied by the emperor’s officers.

The nurseries for children of ordinary gentlemen, merchants, traders, and handicrafts, are managed proportionably after the same manner; only those designed for trades are put out apprentices at eleven years old, whereas those of persons of quality continue in their exercises till fifteen, which answers to twenty-one with us: but the confinement is gradually lessened for the last three years.

In the female nurseries, the young girls of quality are educated much like the males, only they are dressed by orderly servants of their own sex; but always in the presence of a professor or deputy, till they come to dress themselves, which is at five years old. And if it be found that these nurses ever presume to entertain the girls with frightful or foolish stories, or the common follies practised by chambermaids among us, they are publicly whipped thrice about the city, imprisoned for a year, and banished for life to the most desolate part of the country. Thus the young ladies are as much ashamed of being cowards and fools as the men, and despise all personal ornaments, beyond decency and cleanliness: neither did I perceive any difference in their education made by their difference of sex, only that the exercises of the females were not altogether so robust; and that some rules were given them relating to domestic life, and a smaller compass of learning was enjoined them: for their maxim is, that among peoples of quality, a wife should be always a reasonable and agreeable companion, because she cannot always be young. When the girls are twelve years old, which among them is the marriageable age, their parents or guardians take them home, with great expressions of gratitude to the professors, and seldom without tears of the young lady and her companions.

In the nurseries of females of the meaner sort, the children are instructed in all kinds of works proper for their sex, and their several degrees: those intended for apprentices are dismissed at seven years old, the rest are kept to eleven.

The meaner families who have children at these nurseries, are obliged, besides their annual pension, which is as low as possible, to return to the steward of the nursery a small monthly share of their gettings, to be a portion for the child; and therefore all parents are limited in their expenses by the law. For the Lilliputians think nothing can
be more unjust, than for people, in subservience to their own appetites, to bring children into the world, and leave the burthen of supporting them on the public. As to persons of quality, they give security to appropriate a certain sum for each child, suitable to their condition; and these funds are always managed with good husbandry and the most exact justice.

The cottagers and labourers keep their children at home, their business being only to till and cultivate the earth, and therefore their education is of little consequence to the public: but the old and diseased among them, are supported by hospitals; for begging is a trade unknown in this empire.

And here it may, perhaps, divert the curious reader, to give some account of my domestics, and my manner of living in this country, during a residence of nine months, and thirteen days. Having a head mechanically turned, and being likewise forced by necessity, I had made for myself a table and chair convenient enough, out of the largest trees in the royal park. Two hundred sempstresses were employed to make me shirts, and linen for my bed and table, all of the strongest and coarsest kind they could get; which, however, they were forced to quit together in several folds, for the thickest was some degrees finer than lawn. Their linen is usually three inches wide, and three feet make a piece. The sempstresses took my measure as I lay on the ground, one standing at my neck, and another at my mid-leg, with a strong cord extended, that each held by the end, while a third measured the length of the cord with a rule of an inch long. Then they measured my right thumb, and desired no more; for by a mathematical computation, that twice round the thumb is once round the wrist, and so on to the neck and the waist, and by the help of my old shirt, which I displayed on the ground before them for a pattern, they fitted me exactly. Three hundred tailors were employed in the same manner to make me clothes; but they had another contrivance for taking my measure. I kneeled down, and they raised a ladder from the ground to my neck; upon this ladder one of them mounted, and let fall a plumb-line from my collar to the floor, which just answered the length of my coat: but my waist and arms I measured myself. When my clothes were finished, which was done in my house (for the largest of theirs would not have been able to hold them), they looked like the patch-work made by the ladies in England, only that mine were all of a colour.

I had three hundred cooks to dress my victuals, in little convenient huts built about my house, where they and their families lived, and prepared me two dishes a-piece. I took up twenty waiters in my hand, and placed them on the table: a hundred more attended below on the ground, some with dishes of meat, and some with barrels of wine and other liquors slung on their shoulders; all which the waiters above drew up, as I wanted, in a very ingenious manner, by certain cords, as we draw the bucket up a well in Europe. A dish of their meat was a good mouthful, and a barrel of their liquor a reasonable draught. Their mutton yields to ours, but their beef is excellent.

One day his imperial majesty, being informed of my way of living, desired “that himself and his royal consort, with the young princes of the blood of both sexes, might have the happiness,” as he was pleased to call it, “of dining with me.” They came accordingly, and I placed them in chairs of state, upon my table, just over against me, with their guards about them. Flimnap, the lord high treasurer, attended there likewise with his white staff; and I observed he often looked on me with a sour countenance, which I would not seem to regard, but ate more than usual, in honour to my dear country, as well as to fill the court with admiration. I have some private reasons to believe, that this visit from his majesty gave Flimnap an opportunity of doing me ill offices to his master. That minister had always been my secret enemy, though he outwardly caressed me more than was usual to the moroseness of his nature. He represented to the emperor “the low condition of his treasury; that he was forced to take up money at a great discount; that exchequer bills would not circulate under nine per cent. below par; that I had cost his majesty above a million and a half of sprugs” (their greatest gold coin, about the bigness of a spangle) “and, upon the whole, that it would be advisable in the emperor to take the first fair occasion of dismissing me.”

I am here obliged to vindicate the reputation of an excellent lady, who was an innocent sufferer upon my account. The treasurer took a fancy to be jealous of his wife, from the malice of some evil tongues, who informed him that her grace had taken a violent affection for my person; and the court scandal ran for some time, that she once came privately to my lodging. This I solemnly declare to be a most infamous falsehood, without any grounds, further than that her grace was pleased to treat me with all innocent marks of freedom and friendship. I own she came often to my house, but always publicly, nor ever without three more in the coach, who were usually her sister and young daughter, and some particular acquaintance; but this was common to many other ladies of the court. And I still appeal to my servants round, whether they at any time saw a coach at my door, without knowing what persons were in it. On those occasions, when a servant had given me notice, my custom was to go
immediately to the door, and, after paying my respects, to take up the coach and two horses very carefully in my hands (for, if there were six horses, the postillion always unharnessed four,) and place them on a table, where I had fixed a movable rim quite round, of five inches high, to prevent accidents. And I have often had four coaches and horses at once on my table, full of company, while I sat in my chair, leaning my face towards them; and when I was engaged with one set, the coachmen would gently drive the others round my table. I have passed many an afternoon very agreeably in these conversations. But I defy the treasurer, or his two informers (I will name them, and let them make the best of it) Clustril and Drunlo, to prove that any person ever came to me incognito, except the secretary Reldresal, who was sent by express command of his imperial majesty, as I have before related. I should not have dwelt so long upon this particular, if it had not been a point wherein the reputation of a great lady is so nearly concerned, to say nothing of my own; though I then had the honour to be a nardac, which the treasurer himself is not; for all the world knows, that he is only a glumglum, a title inferior by one degree, as that of a marquis is to a duke in England; yet I allow he preceded me in right of his post. These false informations, which I afterwards came to the knowledge of by an accident not proper to mention, made the treasurer show his lady for some time an ill countenance, and me a worse; and although he was at last undeceived and reconciled to her, yet I lost all credit with him, and found my interest decline very fast with the emperor himself, who was, indeed, too much governed by that favourite.

CHAPTER VII.

The author, being informed of a design to accuse him of high-treason, makes his escape to Blefuscu. His reception there.

Before I proceed to give an account of my leaving this kingdom, it may be proper to inform the reader of a private intrigue which had been for two months forming against me.

I had been hitherto, all my life, a stranger to courts, for which I was unqualified by the meanness of my condition. I had indeed heard and read enough of the dispositions of great princes and ministers, but never expected to have found such terrible effects of them, in so remote a country, governed, as I thought, by very different maxims from those in Europe.

When I was just preparing to pay my attendance on the emperor of Blefuscu, a considerable person at court (to whom I had been very serviceable, at a time when he lay under the highest displeasure of his imperial majesty) came to my house very privately at night, in a close chair, and, without sending his name, desired admittance. The chairmen were dismissed; I put the chair, with his lordship in it, into my coat-pocket: and, giving orders to a trusty servant, to say I was indisposed and gone to sleep, I fastened the door of my house, placed the chair on the table, according to my usual custom, and sat down by it. After the common salutations were over, observing his lordship’s countenance full of concern, and inquiring into the reason, he desired “I would hear him with patience, in a matter that highly concerned my honour and my life.”

“Your are to know,” said he, “that several committees of council have been lately called, in the most private manner, on your account; and it is but two days since his majesty came to a full resolution.

“You are very sensible that Skyresh Bolgolam” (galbet, or high-admiral) “has been your mortal enemy, almost ever since your arrival. His original reasons I know not; but his hatred is increased since your great success against Blefuscu, by which his glory as admiral is much obscured. This lord, in conjunction with Flimnap the high-treasurer, whose enmity against you is notorious on account of his lady, Limtoc the general, Lalcon the chamberlain, and Balmuff the grand justiciary, have prepared articles of impeachment against you, for treason and other capital crimes.”
This preface made me so impatient, being conscious of my own merits and innocence, that I was going to interrupt him; when he entreated me to be silent, and thus proceeded:—

"Out of gratitude for the favours you have done me, I procured information of the whole proceedings, and a copy of the articles; wherein I venture my head for your service.

"**Articles of Impeachment against QUINBUS FLESTRIN, (the Man-Mountain.)**

Article I.

"Whereas, by a statute made in the reign of his imperial majesty Calin Deffar Plune, it is enacted, that, whoever shall make water within the precincts of the royal palace, shall be liable to the pains and penalties of high-treason; notwithstanding, the said Quinbus Flestrin, in open breach of the said law, under colour of extinguishing the fire kindled in the apartment of his majesty’s most dear imperial consort, did maliciously, traitorously, and devilishly, by discharge of his urine, put out the said fire kindled in the said apartment, lying and being within the precincts of the said royal palace, against the statute in that case provided, etc. against the duty, etc.

Article II.

"That the said Quinbus Flestrin, having brought the imperial fleet of Blefuscu into the royal port, and being afterwards commanded by his imperial majesty to seize all the other ships of the said empire of Blefuscu, and reduce that empire to a province, to be governed by a viceroy from hence, and to destroy and put to death, not only all the Big-endian exiles, but likewise all the people of that empire who would not immediately forsake the Big-endian heresy; he, the said Flestrin, like a false traitor against his most auspicious, serene, imperial majesty, did petition to be excused from the said service, upon pretence of unwillingness to force the consciences, or destroy the liberties and lives of an innocent people.

Article III.

"That, whereas certain ambassadors arrived from the Court of Blefuscu, to sue for peace in his majesty’s court, he, the said Flestrin, did, like a false traitor, aid, abet, comfort, and divert, the said ambassadors, although he knew them to be servants to a prince who was lately an open enemy to his imperial majesty, and in an open war against his said majesty.

Article IV.

"That the said Quinbus Flestrin, contrary to the duty of a faithful subject, is now preparing to make a voyage to the court and empire of Blefuscu, for which he has received only verbal license from his imperial majesty; and, under colour of the said license, does falsely and traitorously intend to take the said voyage, and thereby to aid, comfort, and abet the emperor of Blefuscu, so lately an enemy, and in open war with his imperial majesty aforesaid."

"There are some other articles; but these are the most important, of which I have read you an abstract.

"In the several debates upon this impeachment, it must be confessed that his majesty gave many marks of his great lenity; often urging the services you had done him, and endeavouring to extenuate your crimes. The treasurer and admiral insisted that you should be put to the most painful and ignominious death, by setting fire to your house at night, and the general was to attend with twenty thousand men, armed with poisoned arrows, to shoot you on the face and hands. Some of your servants were to have private orders to strew a poisonous juice on your shirts and sheets, which would soon make you tear your own flesh, and die in the utmost torture. The general came into the same opinion; so that for a long time there was a majority against you; but his majesty resolving, if possible, to spare your life, at last brought off the chamberlain.

"Upon this incident, Reldresal, principal secretary for private affairs, who always approved himself your true friend, was commanded by the emperor to deliver his opinion, which he accordingly did; and therein justified the good thoughts you have of him. He allowed your crimes to be great, but that still there was room for mercy, the most commendable virtue in a prince, and for which his majesty was so justly celebrated. He said, the friendship between you and him was so well known to the world, that perhaps the most honourable board might think him partial; however, in obedience to the command he had received, he would freely offer his sentiments. That if his majesty, in consideration of your services, and pursuant to his own merciful disposition, would please to spare your life, and only give orders to put out both your eyes, he humbly conceived, that by this expedient justice might
in some measure be satisfied, and all the world would applaud the lenity of the emperor, as well as the fair and
generous proceedings of those who have the honour to be his counsellors. That the loss of your eyes would be
no impediment to your bodily strength, by which you might still be useful to his majesty; that blindness is an
addition to courage, by concealing dangers from us; that the fear you had for your eyes, was the greatest difficulty
in bringing over the enemy’s fleet, and it would be sufficient for you to see by the eyes of the ministers, since the
greatest princes do no more.

“This proposal was received with the utmost disapprobation by the whole board. Bolgolam, the admiral, could not
preserve his temper, but, rising up in fury, said, he wondered how the secretary durst presume to give his opinion
for preserving the life of a traitor; that the services you had performed were, by all true reasons of state, the great
aggravation of your crimes; that you, who were able to extinguish the fire by discharge of urine in her majesty’s
apartment (which he mentioned with horror), might, at another time, raise an inundation by the same means, to
drown the whole palace; and the same strength which enabled you to bring over the enemy’s fleet, might serve,
upon the first discontent, to carry it back; that he had good reasons to think you were a Big-endian in your heart;
and, as treason begins in the heart, before it appears in overt-acts, so he accused you as a traitor on that
account, and therefore insisted you should be put to death.

“The treasurer was of the same opinion: he showed to what straits his majesty’s revenue was reduced, by the
charge of maintaining you, which would soon grow insupportable; that the secretary’s expedient of putting out
your eyes, was so far from being a remedy against this evil, that it would probably increase it, as is manifest from
the common practice of blinding some kind of fowls, after which they fed the faster, and grew sooner fat; that his
sacred majesty and the council, who are your judges, were, in their own consciences, fully convinced of your guilt,
which was a sufficient argument to condemn you to death, without the formal proofs required by the strict letter of
the law.

“But his imperial majesty, fully determined against capital punishment, was graciously pleased to say, that since
the council thought the loss of your eyes too easy a censure, some other way may be inflicted hereafter. And
your friend the secretary, humbly desiring to be heard again, in answer to what the treasurer had objected,
concerning the great charge his majesty was at in maintaining you, said, that his excellency, who had the sole
disposal of the emperor’s revenue, might easily provide against that evil, by gradually lessening your
establishment; by which, for want of sufficient for you would grow weak and faint, and lose your appetite, and
consequently, decay, and consume in a few months; neither would the stench of your carcass be then so
dangerous, when it should become more than half diminished; and immediately upon your death five or six
thousand of his majesty’s subjects might, in two or three days, cut your flesh from your bones, take it away by
cart-loads, and bury it in distant parts, to prevent infection, leaving the skeleton as a monument of admiration to
posterity.

“Thus, by the great friendship of the secretary, the whole affair was compromised. It was strictly enjoined, that the
project of starving you by degrees should be kept a secret; but the sentence of putting out your eyes was entered
on the books; none dissenting, except Bolgolam the admiral, who, being a creature of the empress, was
perpetually instigated by her majesty to insist upon your death, she having borne perpetual malice against you, on
account of that infamous and illegal method you took to extinguish the fire in her apartment.

“In three days your friend the secretary will be directed to come to your house, and read before you the articles of
impeachment; and then to signify the great lenity and favour of his majesty and council, whereby you are only
condemned to the loss of your eyes, which his majesty does not question you will gratefully and humbly submit to;
and twenty of his majesty’s surgeons will attend, in order to see the operation well performed, by discharging very
sharp-pointed arrows into the balls of your eyes, as you lie on the ground.

“I leave to your prudence what measures you will take; and to avoid suspicion, I must immediately return in as
private a manner as I came.”

His lordship did so; and I remained alone, under many doubts and perplexities of mind.

It was a custom introduced by this prince and his ministry (very different, as I have been assured, from the
practice of former times,) that after the court had decreed any cruel execution, to gratify the monarch’s
resentment, or the malice of a favourite, the emperor always made a speech to his whole council, expressing his
great lenity and tenderness, as qualities known and confessed by all the world. This speech was immediately
published throughout the kingdom; nor did any thing terrify the people so much as those encomiums on his
majesty’s mercy; because it was observed, that the more these praises were enlarged and insisted on, the more
inhuman was the punishment, and the sufferer more innocent. Yet, as to myself, I must confess, having never
been designed for a courtier, either by my birth or education, I was so ill a judge of things, that I could not discover the lenity and favour of this sentence, but conceived it (perhaps erroneously) rather to be rigorous than gentle. I sometimes thought of standing my trial, for, although I could not deny the facts alleged in the several articles, yet I hoped they would admit of some extenuation. But having in my life perused many state-trials, which I ever observed to terminate as the judges thought fit to direct, I durst not rely on so dangerous a decision, in so critical a juncture, and against such powerful enemies. Once I was strongly bent upon resistance, for, while I had liberty the whole strength of that empire could hardly subdue me, and I might easily with stones pelt the metropolis to pieces; but I soon rejected that project with horror, by remembering the oath I had made to the emperor, the favours I received from him, and the high title of nardac he conferred upon me. Neither had I so soon learned the gratitude of courtiers, to persuade myself, that his majesty's present seventies acquitted me of all past obligations.

At last, I fixed upon a resolution, for which it is probable I may incur some censure, and not unjustly; for I confess I owe the preserving of mine eyes, and consequently my liberty, to my own great rashness and want of experience; because, if I had then known the nature of princes and ministers, which I have since observed in many other courts, and their methods of treating criminals less obnoxious than myself, I should, with great alacrity and readiness, have submitted to so easy a punishment. But hurried on by the precipitancy of youth, and having his imperial majesty's license to pay my attendance upon the emperor of Blefuscu, I took this opportunity, before the three days were elapsed, to send a letter to my friend the secretary, signifying my resolution of setting out that morning for Blefuscu, pursuant to the leave I had got; and, without waiting for an answer, I went to that side of the island where our fleet lay. I seized a large man of war, tied a cable to the prow, and, lifting up the anchors, I stripped myself, put my clothes (together with my coverlet, which I carried under my arm) into the vessel, and, drawing it after me, between wading and swimming arrived at the royal port of Blefuscu, where the people had long expected me: they lent me two guides to direct me to the capital city, which is of the same name. I held them in my hands, till I came within two hundred yards of the gate, and desired them “to signify my arrival to one of the secretaries, and let him know, I there waited his majesty's command.” I had an answer in about an hour, “that his majesty, attended by the royal family, and great officers of the court, was coming out to receive me.” I advanced a hundred yards. The emperor and his train alighted from their horses, the empress and ladies from their coaches, and I did not perceive they were in any fright or concern. I lay on the ground to kiss his majesty's and the empress's hands. I told his majesty, “that I was come according to my promise, and with the license of the emperor my master, to have the honour of seeing so mighty a monarch, and to offer him any service in my power, consistent with my duty to my own prince;” not mentioning a word of my disgrace, because I had hitherto no regular information of it, and might suppose myself wholly ignorant of any such design; neither could I reasonably conceive that the emperor would discover the secret, while I was out of his power; wherein, however, it soon appeared I was deceived.

I shall not trouble the reader with the particular account of my reception at this court, which was suitable to the generosity of so great a prince; nor of the difficulties I was in for want of a house and bed, being forced to lie on the ground, wrapped up in my coverlet.

PART I, CHAPTER 8

CHAPTER VIII.

The author, by a lucky accident, finds means to leave Blefuscu; and, after some difficulties, returns safe to his native country.

Three days after my arrival, walking out of curiosity to the north-east coast of the island, I observed, about half a league off in the sea, somewhat that looked like a boat overturned. I pulled off my shoes and stockings, and, wailing two or three hundred yards, I found the object to approach nearer by force of the tide; and then plainly saw it to be a real boat, which I supposed might by some tempest have been driven from a ship. Whereupon, I returned immediately towards the city, and desired his imperial majesty to lend me twenty of the tallest vessels he
had left, after the loss of his fleet, and three thousand seamen, under the command of his vice-admiral. This fleet sailed round, while I went back the shortest way to the coast, where I first discovered the boat. I found the tide had driven it still nearer. The seamen were all provided with cordage, which I had beforehand twisted to a sufficient strength. When the ships came up, I stripped myself, and waded till I came within a hundred yards off the boat, after which I was forced to swim till I got up to it. The seamen threw me the end of the cord, which I fastened to a hole in the fore-part of the boat, and the other end to a man of war; but I found all my labour to little purpose; for, being out of my depth, I was not able to work. In this necessity I was forced to swim behind, and push the boat forward, as often as I could, with one of my hands; and the tide favouring me, I advanced so far that I could just hold up my chin and feel the ground. I rested two or three minutes, and then gave the boat another shove, and so on, till the sea was no higher than my arm-pits; and now, the most laborious part being over, I took out my other cables, which were stowed in one of the ships, and fastened them first to the boat, and then to nine of the vessels which attended me; the wind being favourable, the seamen towed, and I shoved, until we arrived within forty yards of the shore; and, waiting till the tide was out, I got dry to the boat, and by the assistance of two thousand men, with ropes and engines, I made a shift to turn it on its bottom, and found it was but little damaged.

I shall not trouble the reader with the difficulties I was under, by the help of certain paddles, which cost me ten days making, to get my boat to the royal port of Blefuscu, where a mighty concourse of people appeared upon my arrival, full of wonder at the sight of so prodigious a vessel. I told the emperor “that my good fortune had thrown this boat in my way, to carry me to some place whence I might return into my native country; and begged his majesty's orders for getting materials to fit it up, together with his license to depart;” which, after some kind expostulations, he was pleased to grant.

I did very much wonder, in all this time, not to have heard of any express relating to me from our emperor to the court of Blefuscu. But I was afterward given privately to understand, that his imperial majesty, never imagining I had the least notice of his designs, believed I was only gone to Blefuscu in performance of my promise, according to the license he had given me, which was well known at our court, and would return in a few days, when the ceremony was ended. But he was at last in pain at my long absence; and after consulting with the treasurer and the rest of that cabal, a person of quality was dispatched with the copy of the articles against me. This envoy had instructions to represent to the monarch of Blefuscu, “the great lenity of his master, who was content to punish me no farther than with the loss of mine eyes; that I had fled from justice; and if I did not return in two hours, I should be deprived of my title of nardac, and declared a traitor.” The envoy further added, “that in order to maintain the peace and amity between both empires, his master expected that his brother of Blefuscu would give orders to have me sent back to Lilliput, bound hand and foot, to be punished as a traitor.”

The emperor of Blefuscu, having taken three days to consult, returned an answer consisting of many civilities and excuses. He said, “that as for sending me bound, his brother knew it was impossible; that, although I had deprived him of his fleet, yet he owed great obligations to me for many good offices I had done him in making the peace. That, however, both their majesties would soon be made easy; for I had found a prodigious vessel on the shore, able to carry me on the sea, which he had given orders to fit up, with my own assistance and direction; and he hoped, in a few weeks, both empires would be freed from so insupportable an encumbrance.”

With this answer the envoy returned to Lilliput; and the monarch of Blefuscu related to me all that had passed; offering me at the same time (but under the strictest confidence) his gracious protection, if I would continue in his service; wherein, although I believed him sincere, yet I resolved never more to put any confidence in princes or ministers, where I could possibly avoid it; and therefore, with all due acknowledgments for his favourable intentions, I humbly begged to be excused. I told him, “that since fortune, whether good or evil, had thrown a vessel in my way, I was resolved to venture myself on the ocean, rather than be an occasion of difference between two such mighty monarchs.” Neither did I find the emperor at all displeased; and I discovered, by a certain accident, that he was very glad of my resolution, and so were most of his ministers.

These considerations moved me to hasten my departure somewhat sooner than I intended; to which the court, impatient to have me gone, very readily contributed. Five hundred workmen were employed to make two sails to my boat, according to my directions, by quilting thirteen folds of their strongest linen together. I was at the pains of making ropes and cables, by twisting ten, twenty, or thirty of the thickest and strongest of theirs. A great stone that I happened to find, after a long search, by the sea-shore, served me for an anchor. I had the tallow of three hundred cows, for greasing my boat, and other uses. I was at incredible pains in cutting down some of the largest timber-trees, for cars and masts, wherein I was, however, much assisted by his majesty’s ship-carpenters, who helped me in smoothing them, after I had done the rough work.

In about a month, when all was prepared, I sent to receive his majesty’s commands, and to take my leave. The emperor and royal family came out of the palace; I lay down on my face to kiss his hand, which he very graciously
gave me: so did the empress and young princes of the blood. His majesty presented me with fifty purses of two hundred sprugs a-piece, together with his picture at full length, which I put immediately into one of my gloves, to keep it from being hurt. The ceremonies at my departure were too many to trouble the reader with at this time.

I stored the boat with the carcases of a hundred oxen, and three hundred sheep, with bread and drink proportionable, and as much meat ready dressed as four hundred cooks could provide. I took with me six cows and two bulls alive, with as many ewes and rams, intending to carry them into my own country, and propagate the breed. And to feed them on board, I had a good bundle of hay, and a bag of corn. I would gladly have taken a dozen of the natives, but this was a thing the emperor would by no means permit; and besides a diligent search into my pockets, his majesty engaged my honour “not to carry away any of his subjects, although with their own consent and desire.”

Having thus prepared all things as well as I was able, I set sail on the twenty-fourth day of September 1701, at six in the morning; and when I had gone about four-leagues to the northward, the wind being at south-east, at six in the evening I descried a small island, about half a league to the north-west. I advanced forward, and cast anchor on the lee-side of the island, which seemed to be uninhabited. I then took some refreshment, and went to my rest. I slept well, and as I conjectured at least six hours, for I found the day broke in two hours after I awaked. It was a clear night. I ate my breakfast before the sun was up; and heaving anchor, the wind being favourable, I steered the same course that I had done the day before, wherein I was directed by my pocket compass. My intention was to reach, if possible, one of those islands which I had reason to believe lay to the north-east of Van Diemen’s Land. I discovered nothing all that day; but upon the next, about three in the afternoon, when I had by my computation made twenty-four leagues from Blefuscu, I descried a sail steering to the south-east; my course was due east. I hailed her, but could get no answer; yet I found I gained upon her, for the wind slackened. I made all the sail I could, and in half an hour she spied me, then hung out her ancient, and discharged a gun. It is not easy to express the joy I was in, upon the unexpected hope of once more seeing my beloved country, and the dear pledges I left in it. The ship slackened her sails, and I came up with her between five and six in the evening, September 26th; but my heart leaped within me to see her English colours. I put my cows and sheep into my coat-pockets, and got on board with all my little cargo of provisions. The vessel was an English merchantman, returning from Japan by the North and South seas; the captain, Mr. John Biddel, of Deptford, a very civil man, and an excellent sailor.

We were now in the latitude of 30 degrees south; there were about fifty men in the ship; and here I met an old comrade of mine, one Peter Williams, who gave me a good character to the captain. This gentleman treated me with kindness, and desired I would let him know what place I came from last, and whither I was bound; which I did in a few words, but he thought I was raving, and that the dangers I underwent had disturbed my head; whereupon I took my black cattle and sheep out of my pocket, which, after great astonishment, clearly convinced him of my veracity. I then showed him the gold given me by the emperor of Blefuscu, together with his majesty’s picture at full length, and some other rarities of that country. I gave him two purses of two hundreds sprugs each, and promised, when we arrived in England, to make him a present of a cow and a sheep big with young.

I shall not trouble the reader with a particular account of this voyage, which was very prosperous for the most part. We arrived in the Downs on the 13th of April, 1702. I had only one misfortune, that the rats on board carried away one of my sheep; I found her bones in a hole, picked clean from the flesh. The rest of my cattle I got safe ashore, and set them a-grazing in a bowling-green at Greenwich, where the fineness of the grass made them feed very heartily, though I had always feared the contrary: neither could I possibly have preserved them in so long a voyage, if the captain had not allowed me some of his best biscuit, which, rubbed to powder, and mingled with water, was their constant food. The short time I continued in England, I made a considerable profit by showing my cattle to many persons of quality and others: and before I began my second voyage, I sold them for six hundred pounds. Since my last return I find the breed is considerably increased, especially the sheep, which I hope will prove much to the advantage of the woollen manufacture, by the fineness of the fleeces.

I stayed but two months with my wife and family, for my insatiable desire of seeing foreign countries, would suffer me to continue no longer. I left fifteen hundred pounds with my wife, and fixed her in a good house at Redriff. My remaining stock I carried with me, part in money and part in goods, in hopes to improve my fortunes. My eldest uncle John had left me an estate in land, near Epping, of about thirty pounds a-year; and I had a long lease of the Black Bull in Fetter-Lane, which yielded me as much more; so that I was not in any danger of leaving my family upon the parish. My son Johnny, named so after his uncle, was at the grammar-school, and a towardly child. My daughter Betty (who is now well married, and has children) was then at her needle-work. I took leave of my wife, and boy and girl, with tears on both sides, and went on board the Adventure, a merchant ship of three hundred tons, bound for Surat, captain John Nicholas, of Liverpool, commander. But my account of this voyage must be referred to the Second Part of my Travels.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Background and Interpretation

*The Victorian Web's article on “Satire”*

Satire, as explained on the Victorian Web.

*The Victorian Web's article on “Narrators, Masks, and Speakers in Satire”*

Narrators in satire, as explained on the Victorian Web.

Audio Files

*LibriVox's files for Gulliver's Travels*

An audio version is available from LibriVox. You can listen online or download audio files from this page. Remember that you’re only reading Part 1, Chapters 1-8.
Eliza Haywood (c. 1693 – 25 February 1756), born Elizabeth Fowler, was an English writer, actress and publisher. An increase in interest and recognition of Haywood’s literary works began in the 1980’s. Described as “prolific even by the standards of a prolific age” (Blouch, intro 7), Haywood wrote and published over seventy works during her lifetime including fiction, drama, translations, poetry, conduct literature and periodicals. Haywood is a significant figure of the 18th century as one of the important founders of the novel in English. Today she is studied primarily as a novelist.

Biography

Haywood gave conflicting accounts of her own life; her origins remain unclear and there are presently contending versions of her biography. For example, it was once mistakenly believed that she married the Rev. Valentine Haywood.

Some details have been widely accepted however: She was probably born in either Shropshire or London, England. Her first entry into the public record is in Dublin, Ireland, in 1715 when she was listed as “Mrs. Haywood” in Thomas Shadwell’s Shakespeare adaptation, Timon of Athens; or, The Man-Hater at the Smock Alley Theatre. She had an open live-in relationship with William Hatchett, the father of her second child. She also had a child with Richard Savage.

William Hatchett was a bookseller who shared a stage career with Haywood, and the couple were lovers and companions for more than twenty years. They collaborated on an adaptation of The Tragedy of Tragedies by Henry Fielding and an opera, The Opera of Operas; or, Tom Thumb the Great (1733).

Haywood’s writing career began in 1719 with the first instalment of Love in Excess, a novel, and ended in the year she died with conduct books The Wife and The Husband, and the biweekly periodical The Young Lady. She wrote in several genres and many of her works were published anonymously. There is much of Haywood’s writing career that still remains unknown.

She fell ill in October 1755 and died on 25 February 1756. She was buried in Westminster. For unknown reasons, her burial was delayed by about a week and her death duties remain unpaid.
Fiction

Haywood, Delarivier Manley and Aphra Behn were known as “The fair triumvirate of wit” and are considered the most prominent writers of amatory fiction. Eliza Haywood’s prolific fiction develops from titillating romance novels and amatory fiction during the early 1720s to works focused more on “women’s rights and position” (Schofield, Haywood 63) in the later 1720s into the 1730s. In the middle novels of her career, women were locked up, tormented and beleaguered by domineering men. In the later novels of the 1740s and 1750s however, marriage was viewed as a positive situation between men and women.

Due to the economy of publishing in the 18th century, her novels often ran to multiple volumes. Authors were paid only once for a book and received no royalties; a second volume meant a second payment.

_Fantomina; or Love in a Maze_ (1724) is a short story about a woman who assumes the roles of a prostitute, a maid, a widow, and a Lady to repeatedly seduce a man named Beauplaisir. Schofield points out that, “Not only does she satisfy her own sexual inclinations, she smugly believes that ‘while he thinks to fool me, [he] is himself the only beguiled Person’” (50). This novel asserts that women have some access to power in the social sphere, one of the recurring themes in Haywood’s work. It has been argued that it is indebted to the interpolated tale of the “Invisible Mistress” in Paul Scarron’s _Roman Comique._

Additional information on Haywood’s life, work, and influence can be found here.

FANTOMINA, OR LOVE IN A MAZE

Fantomina:

or, 
Love in a Maze.

being
A Secret History

of an

Amour
Between Two

Persons of Condition.

By Mrs. _Eliza Haywood._

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_In Love the Victors from the Vanquish’d fly.
They fly that wound, and they pursue that dye._ —Waller

[1] A young Lady of distinguished Birth, Beauty, Wit, and Spirit, happened to be in a Box one Night at the Playhouse; where, though there were a great Number of celebrated Toasts, she perceived several Gentlemen extremely pleased themselves with entertaining a Woman who sat in a Corner of the Pit, and, by her Air and
Manner of receiving them, might easily be known to be one of those who come there for no other Purpose, than to create Acquaintance with as many as seem desirous of it. She could not help testifying her Contempt of Men, who, regardless either of the Play, or Circle, threw away their Time in such a Manner, to some Ladies that sat by her: But they, either less surprised by being more accustomed to such Sights, than she who had been bred for the most Part in the Country, or not of a Disposition to consider any Thing very deeply, took but little Notice of it. She still thought of it, however; and the longer she reflected on it, the greater was her Wonder, that Men, some of whom she knew were account'd to have Wit, should have Tastes so very deprav'd. — This excited a Curiosity in her to know in what Manner these Creatures were address'd: — She was young, a Stranger to the World, and consequently to the Dangers of it; and having no Body in Town, at that Time, to whom she was oblig'd to be accountable for her Actions, did in every Thing as her Inclinations or Humours render'd most agreeable to her: Therefore thought it not in the least a Fault to put in practice a little Whim which came immediately into her Head, to dress herself as near as she cou'd in the Fashion of those Women who make sale of their Favourites, and set herself in the Way of being accosted as such a one, having at that Time no other Aim, than the Gratification of an innocent Curiosity. — She no sooner design'd this Frolick, than she put it in Execution; and muffling her Hoods over her Face, went the next Night into the Gallery-Box, and practising as much as she had observ'd, at that Distance, the Behaviour of that Woman, was not long before she found her Disguise had answer'd the Ends she wore it for: — A Crow'd of Purchasers of all Degrees and Capacities were in a Moment gather'd about her, each endeavouring to out-bid the other, in offering her a Price for her Embraces. — She listen'd to 'em all, and was not a little diverted in her Mind at the Disappointment she shou'd give to so many, each of which thought himself secure of gaining her. — She was told by 'em all, that she was the most lovely Woman in the World; and some cry'd, Gad, she is mighty like my fine Lady Such-a-one, — naming her own Name. She was naturally vain, and receiv'd no small Pleasure in hearing herself praiz'd, tho' in the Person of another, and a suppos'd Prostitute; but she dispatch'd as soon as she cou'd all that had hitherto attack'd her, when she saw the accomplish'd Beauplaisir was making his Way thro' the Crowd as fast as he was able, to reach the Bench she sat on. She had often seen him in the Drawing-Room, had talk'd with him; but then her Quality and reputed Virtue kept him from using her with that Freedom she now expected he wou'd do, and had discover'd something in him, which had made her often think she shou'd not be displeas'd, if he wou'd abate some Part of his Reserve. — Now was the Time to have her Wishes answer'd: — He look'd in her Face, and fancy'd, as many others had done, that she very much resembled that Lady whom she really was; but the vast Disparity there appear'd between their Characters, prevented him from entertaining even the most distant Thought that they cou'd be the same. — He address'd her at first with the usual Salutations of her pretended Profession, as, Are you engag'd, Madam? — Would you permit me to wait on you home after the Play? — By Heaven, you are a fine Girl! — How long have you us'd this House? — And such like Questions; but perceiv'd she had a Turn of Wit, and a genteel Manner in her Rai lery, beyond what is frequently to be found among those Wretches, who are for the most part Gentlewomen but by Necessity, few of 'em having had an Education suitable to what they affect to appear, he chang'd the Form of his Conversation, and shew'd her it was not because he understood no better, that he had made use of Expressions so little polite. — In fine, they were infinitely charm'd with each other: He was transported to find so much Beauty and Wit in a Woman, who he doubted not but on very easy Terms he might enjoy; and she found a vast deal of Pleasure in conversing with him in this free and unrestrain'd Manner. They pass'd their Time all the Play with an equal Satisfaction; but when it was over, she found herself involv'd in a Difficulty, which before never enter'd into her Head, but which she knew not well how to get over. — The Passion he profess'd for her, was not of that humble Nature which can be content with distant Adorations: — He resolv'd not to part from her without the Gratifications of those Desires she had inspir'd: and presuming on the Liberties which her suppos'd Function allow'd of, told her she must either go with him to some convenient House of his procuring, or permit him to wait on her to her own Lodgings. — Never had she been in such a Dilemma: Three or four Times did she open her Mouth to confess her real Quality; but the Influence of her ill Stars prevented it, by putting an Excuse into her Head, which did the Business as well, and at the same Time did not take from her the Power of seeing and entertaining him a second Time with the same Freedom she had done this. — She told him, she was under Obligations to a Man who maintain'd her, and whom she durst not disappoint, having promis'd to meet him that Night at a House hard by. — This Story so like what those Ladies sometimes tell, was not at all suspected by Beauplaisir; and assuring her he wou'd be far from doing her a Prejudice, desir'd that in return for the Pain he shou'd suffer in being depriv'd of her Company that Night, that she wou'd order her Affairs, so as not to render him unhappy the next. She gave a solemn Promise to be in the same Box on the Morrow Evening; and they took Leave of each other; he to the Tavern to drown the Remembrance of his Disappointment; she in a Hackney-Chair hurry'd home to indulge Contemplation on the Frolick she had taken, designing nothing less on her first Reflections, than to keep the Promise she had made him, and hugging herself with Joy, that she had the good Luck to come off undiscover'd.

[2] But these Cogitations were but of a short Continuance, they vanish'd with the Hurry of her Spirits, and were succeeded by others vastly different and ruinous: — All the Charms of Beauplaisir came fresh into her Mind; she
languish'd, she almost dy'd for another Opportunity of conversing with him; and not all the Admonitions of her Discretion were effectual to oblige her to deny laying hold of that which offer'd itself the next Night. — She depended on the Strength of her Virtue, to bear her safe thro' Tryals more dangerous than she apprehended this to be, and never having been address'd by him as Lady, — was resolv'd to receive his Devoirs as a Town-Mistress, imagining a world of Satisfaction to herself in engaging him in the Character of such a one, and in observing the Surprise he would be in to find himself refused by a Woman, who he supposed granted her Favours without Exception. — Strange and unaccountable were the Whimsies she was possess'd of, — wild and incoherent her Desires, — unfix'd and undetermin'd her Resolutions, but in that of seeing Beauplaisir in the Manner she had lately done. As for her Accomplishments with him, or how a second Time to escape him, without discovering who she was, she cou'd neither assure herself, nor whether or not in the last Extremity she wou'd do so. — Bent, however, on meeting him, whatever shou'd be the Consequence, she went out some Hours before the Time of going to the Playhouse, and took Lodgings in a House not very far from it, intending, that if he shou'd insist on passing some Part of the Night with her, to carry him there, thinking she might with more Security to her Honour entertain him at a Place where she was Mistress, than at any of his own chusing.

[3] The appointed Hour being arriv'd, she had the Satisfaction to find his Love in his Assiduity: He was there before her; and nothing cou'd be more tender than the Manner in which he accosted her: But from the first Moment she came in, to that of the Play being done, he continued to assure her no Consideration shou'd prevail with him to part from her again, as she had done the Night before; and she rejoic'd to think she had taken that Precaution of providing herself with a Lodging, to which she thought she might invite him, without running any Risque, either of her Virtue or Reputation. — Having told him she wou'd admit of his accompanying her home, he seem'd perfectly satisfy'd; and leading her to the Place, which was not above twenty Houses distant, wou'd have order'd a Collation to be brought after them. But she wou'd not permit it, telling him she was not one of those who suffer'd themselves to be treated at their own Lodgings; and as soon she was come in, sent a Servant, belonging to the House, to provide a very handsome Supper, and Wine, and every Thing was serv'd to Table in a Manner which shou'd the Director neither wanted Money, nor was ignorant how it shou'd be laid out.

[4] This Proceeding, though it did not take from him the Opinion that she was what she appeared to be, yet it gave him Thoughts of her, which he had not before. — He believ'd her a Mistress, but believ'd her to be one of a superior Rank, and began to imagine the Possession of her would be much more Expensive than at first he had expected: But not being of a Humour to grudge any Thing for his Pleasures, he gave himself no farther Trouble, than what were occasioned by Fears of not having Money enough to reach her Price, about him.

[5] Supper being over, which was intermixed with a vast deal of amorous Conversation, he began to explain himself more than he had done; and both by his Words and Behaviour let her know, he would not be denied that Happiness the Freedoms she allow'd had made him hope. — It was in vain; she would have retract'd the Encouragement she had given: — In vain she endeavoured to delay, till the next Meeting, the fulfilling of his Wishes: — She had now gone too far to retract: — He was bold; — he was resolute: She fearful, — confus'd, altogether unprepar'd to resist in such Encounters, and rendered more so, by the extreme Liking she had to him. — Shock'd, however, at the Apprehension of really losing her Honour, she struggled all she could, and was just going to reveal the whole Secret of her Name and Quality, when the Thoughts of the Liberty he had taken with her, and those he still continued to prosecute, prevented her, with representing the Danger of being expos'd, and the whole Affair made a Theme for publick Ridicule. — Thus much, indeed, she told him, that she was a Virgin, and had assumed this Manner of Behaviour only to engage him. But that he little regarded, or if he had, would have been far from obliging him to desist; — nay, in the present burning Eagerness of Desire, 'tis probable, that had he been acquainted both with who and what she really was, the Knowledge of her Birth would not have influenc'd him with Respect sufficient to have curb'd the wild Exuberance of his luxurious Wishes, or made him in that longing, — that impatient Moment, change the Form of his Addressers. In fine, she was undone; and he gain'd a Victory, so highly rapturous, that had he known over whom, scarce could he have triumphed more. Her Tears, however, and the Destruction she appeared in, after the ruinous Extasy was past, as it heighten'd his Wonder, so it abated his Satisfaction: — He could not imagine for what Reason a Woman, who, if she intended not to be a Mistress, had counterfeited the Part of one, and taken so much Pains to engage him, should lament a Consequence which she could not but expect, and till the last Test, seem'd inclinable to grant; and was both surpris'd and troubled at the Mystery. — He omitted nothing that he thought might make her easy; and still retaining an Opinion that the Hope of Interest had been the chief Motive which had led her to act in the Manner she had done, and believing that she might know so little of him, as to suppose, now she had nothing left to give, he might not make that Recompence she expected for her Favours: To put her out of that Pain, he pulled out of his Pocket a Purse of Gold, entreat'ing her to accept of that as an Earnest of what he intended to do for her; assuring her, with ten thousand Protestations, that he would spare nothing, which his whole Estate could purchase, to procure her Content and Happiness. This Treatment made her quite forget the Part she had assum'd, and throwing it from her with an Air of Disdain, Is this a Reward (said she) for Condescentions, such as I
have yeilded to? — Can all the Wealth you are possess’d of, make a Reparation for my Loss of Honour? — Oh! no, I am undone beyond the Power of Heaven itself to help me! — She uttered many more such Exclamations; which the amaz’d Beauplaisir heard without being able to reply to, till by Degrees sinking from that Rage of Temper, her Eyes resumed their softning Glances, and guessing at the Consternation he was in, No, my dear Beauplaisir, (added she,) your Love alone can compensate for the Shame you have involved me in: be you sincere and constant, and I hereafter shall, perhaps, be satisfy’d with my Fate, and forgive myself the Folly that betray’d me to you.

[6] Beauplaisir thought he could not have a better Opportunity than these Words gave him of enquiring who she was, and wherefore she had feigned herself to be of a Profession which he was now convinc’d she was not; and after he had made a her thousand Vows of an Affection, as inviolable and ardent as she could wish to find in him, entreated she would inform him by what Means his Happiness had been brought about, and also to whom he was indebted for the Bliss he had enjoy’d. — Some Remains of yet unextinguished Modesty, and Sense of Shame, made her blush exceedingly at this Demand; but recollecting herself in a little Time, she told him so much of the Truth, as to what related to the Frolick she had taken of satisfying her Curiosity in what Manner Mistresses, of the Sort she appeared to be, were treated by those who addressed them; but forbore discovering her true Name and Quality, for the Reasons she had done before, resolving, if he boasted of this Affair, he should not have it in his Power to touch her Character: She therefore said she was the Daughter of a Country Gentleman, who was come to Town to buy Cloaths, and that she was call’d Fantomina. He had no Reason to distrust the Truth of this Story, and was therefore satisfy’d with it; but did not doubt by the Beginning of her Conduct, but that in the End she would be in Reality, the Thing she so artfully had counterfeited; and had good Nature enough to pity the Misfortunes he imagin’d would be her Lot: but to tell her so, or offer his Advice in that Point, was not his Business, at least, as yet.

[7] They parted not till towards Morning; and she oblig’d him to a willing Vow of visiting her the next Day at Three in the Afternoon. It was too late for her to go home that Night, therefore contented herself with lying there. In the Morning she sent for the Woman of the House to come up to her; and easily perceiving, by her Manner, that she was a Woman who might be influenced by Gifts, made her a Present of a Couple of Broad Pieces, and desir’d her, that if the Gentleman, who had been there the Night before, should ask any Questions concerning her, that he should be told, she was lately come out of the Country, had lodg’d there about a Fortnight, and that her Name was Fantomina. I shall (also added she) lie but seldom here; nor, indeed, ever come but in those Times when I expect to meet him: I would, therefore, have you order it so, that he may think I am but just gone out, if he should happen by any Accident to call when I am not here; for I would not, for the World, have him imagine I do not constantly lodge here. The Landlady assur’d her she would do every Thing as she desired, and gave her to understand she wanted not the Gift of Secrecy.

[8] Every Thing being ordered at this Home for the Security of her Reputation, she repaired to the other, where she easily excused to an unsuspecting Aunt, with whom she boarded, her having been abroad all Night, saying, she went with a Gentleman and his Lady in a Barge, to a little Country Seat of theirs up the River, all of them designing to return the same Evening; but that one of the Bargemen happ’ning to be taken ill on the sudden, and no other Waterman to be got that Night, they were oblig’d to tarry till Morning. Thus did this Lady’s Wit and Vivacity assist her in all, but where it was most needful. — She had Discernment to foresee, and avoid all those Ills which might attend the Loss of her Reputation, but was wholly blind to those of the Ruin of her Virtue; and having managed her Affairs so as to secure the one, grew perfectly easy with the Remembrance she had forfeited the other. — The more she reflected on the Merits of Beauplaisir, the more she excused herself for what she had done; and the Prospect of that continued Bliss she expected to share with him, took from her all Remorse for having engaged in an Affair which promised her so much Satisfaction, and in which she found not the least Danger of Misfortune. — If he is really (said she, to herself) the faithful, the constant Lover he has sworn to be, how charming will be our Amour? — And if he should be false, grow satiated, like other Men, I shall but, at the worst, have the private Vexation of knowing I have lost him; — the Intreague being a Secret, my Disgrace will be so too: — I shall hear no Whispers as I pass, — She is Forsaken: — The odious Word Forsaken will never wound my Ears; nor will my Wrongs excite either the Mirth or Pity of the talking World: — It will not be even in the Power of my Undoer himself to triumph over me; and while he laughs at, and perhaps despises the fond, the yeidding Fantomina, he will revere and esteem the virtuous, the reserv’d Lady. — In this Manner did she applaud her own Conduct, and exult with the Imagination that she had more Prudence than all her Sex beside. And it must be confessed, indeed, that she preserved an conomy in the management of this Intreague, beyond what almost any Woman but herself ever did: In the first Place, by making no Person in the World a Confident in it; and in the next, in concealing from Beauplaisir himself the Knowledge who she was; for though she let him know three or four Days in a Week, at that Lodging she had taken for that Purpose, yet as much as he employ’d her Time and Thoughts, she was never miss’d from any Assembly she had been accustomed to frequent. — The Business of her Love has engross’d her till Six in the Evening, and before Seven she has been dress’d in a different Habit,
and in another Place. — Slippers, and a Night-Gown loosely flowing, has been the Garb in which he has left the languishing Fantomina; — Lac’d, and adorn’d with all the Blaze of Jewels, has he, in less than an Hour after, beheld at the Royal Chapel, the Palace Gardens, Drawing-Room, Opera, or Play, the Haughty Awe-inspiring Lady — A thousand Times has he stood amaz’d at the prodigious Likeness between his little Mistress, and this Court Beauty; but was still as far from imagining they were the same, as he was the first Hour he had accosted her in the Playhouse, though it is not impossible, but that her Resemblance to this celebrated Lady, might keep his Inclination alive something longer than otherwise they would have been; and that it was to the Thoughts of this (as he supposed) unenjoy’d Charmer, she ow’d in great measure the Vigour of his latter Carresses.

[9] But he varied not so much from his Sex as to be able to prolong Desire, to any great Length after Possession: The rifled Charms of Fantomina soon lost their Poinancy, and grew tasteless and insipid; and when the Season of the Year inviting the Company to the Bath, she offer’d to accompany him, he made an Excuse to go without her. She easily perceiv’d his Coldness, and the Reason why he pretended her going would be inconvenient, and endur’d as much from the Discovery as any of her Sex could do: She dissembled it, however, before him, and took her Leave of him with the Shew of no other Concern than his Absence occasion’d: But this she did to take from him all Suspicion of her following him, as she intended, and had already laid a Scheme for. — From her first finding out that he design’d to leave her behind, she plainly saw it was for no other Reason, than that being tir’d of her Conversation, he was willing to be at liberty to pursue new Conquests; and wisely considering that Complaints, Tears, Swoonings, and all the Extravagancies which Women make use of in such Cases, have little Prevalence over a Heart inclin’d to rove, and only serve to render those who practise them more contemptible, by robbing them of that Beauty which alone can bring back the fugitive Lover, she resolved to take another Course; and remembering the Height of Transport she enjoyed when the agreeable Beauvaisir kneel’d at her Feet, imploring her first Favourites, she long’d to prove the same again. Not but a Woman of her Beauty and Accomplishments might have beheld a Thousand in that Condition Beauvaisir had been; but with her Sex’s Modesty, she had not also thrown off another Virtue equally valuable, tho’ generally unfortunate, Constancy: She loved Beauvaisir; it was only he whose Solicitations could give her Pleasure; and had she seen the whole Species despairing, dying for her sake, it might, perhaps, have been a Satisfaction to her Pride, but none to her more tender Inclination. — Her Design was once more to engage him, to hear him sigh, to see him languish, to feel the strenuous Pressures of his eager Arms, to be compelled, to be sweetly forc’d to what she wished with equal Ardour, was what she wanted, and what she had form’d a Stratagem to obtain, in which she promis’d herself Success.

[10] She no sooner heard he had left the Town, than making a Pretence to her Aunt, that she was going to visit a Relation in the Country, went towards Bath, attended but by two Servants, who she found Reasons to quarrel with on the Road and discharg’d: Clothing herself in a Habit she had brought with her, she forsook the Coach, and went into a Waggon, in which Equipage she arriv’d at Bath. The Dress she was in, was a round-ear’d Cap, a short Red Petticoat, and a little Jacket of Grey Stuff; all the rest of her Accoutrements were answerable to these, and join’d with a broad Country Dialect, a rude unpolish’d Air, which she, having been bred in these Parts, knew very well how to imitate, with her Hair and Eye-brows black’d, made it impossible for her to be known, or taken for any other than what she seem’d. Thus disguis’d did she offer herself to Service in the House where Beauvaisir lodg’d, having made it her Business to find out immediately where he was. Notwithstanding this Metamorphosis she was still extremely pretty; and the Mistress of the House happening at that Time to want a Maid, was very glad of the Opportunity of taking her. She was presently receiv’d into the Family; and had a Post in it, (such as she would have chose, had she been left at her Liberty,) that of making the Gentlemen’s Beds, getting them their Breakfasts, and waiting on them in their Chambers. Fortune in this Exploit was extremely on her side; there were no others of the Male-Sex in the House, than an old Gentleman, who had lost the Use of his Limbs with the Rheumatism, and had come thither for the Benefit of the Waters, and her belov’d Beauvaisir; so that she was in no Apprehensions of any Amorous Violence, but where she wish’d to find it. Nor were her Designs disappointed: He was fir’d with the first Sight of her; and tho’ he did not presently take any farther Notice of her, than giving her two or three hearty Kisses, yet she, who now understood that Language but too well, easily saw they were the Prelude to more substantial Joys. — Coming the next Morning to bring his Chocolate, as he had order’d, he catch’d her by the pretty Leg, which the Shortness of her Petticoat did not in the least oppose; then pulling her gently to him, ask’d her, how long she had been at Service? — How many Sweethearts she had? If she had ever been in Love? and many other such Questions, beflitting one of the Degree she appear’d to be: All which she answer’d with such seeming Innocence, as more enamil’d the amorous Heart of him who talk’d to her. He compell’d her to sit in his Lap; and gazing on her blushing Beauties, which, if possible, receiv’d Addition from her plain and rural Dress, he soon lost the Power of containing himself. — His wild Desires burst out in all his Words and Actions; he call’d her little Angel, Cherubim, swore he must enjoy her, though Death were to be the Consequence, devour’d her Lips, her Breasts with greedy Kisses, held to his burning Bosom her half-yielding, half-reluctant Body, nor suffer’d her to get loose, till he had ravaged all, and glutted each rapacious Sense with the sweet Beauties of the pretty Celia, for that was the Name she bore in this second Expedition. — Generous as Liberality itself to all who gave him Joy
His Stay at Bath exceeded not a Month; but in that Time his suppos’d Country Lass had persecuted him so much with her Fondness, that in spite of the Eagerness with which he first enjoy’d her, he was at last grown more weary of her, than he had been of Fantomina; which she perceiving, would not be troublesome, but quitting her Service, remained privately in the Town till she heard he was on his Return; and in that Time provided herself of another Disguise to carry on a third Plot, which her inventing Brain had furnished her with, once more to renew his twice-decay’d Ardours. The Dress she had order’d to be made, was such as Widows wear in their first Mourning, which, together with the most afflicted and penitential Countenance that ever was seen, was no small Alteration to her who us’d to seem all Gaiety. — To add to this, her Hair, which she was accus’tom’d to wear very loose, both when Fantomina and Celia, was now ty’d back so strait, and her Pinners coming so very forward, that there was none of it to be seen. In fine, her Habit and her Air were so much chang’d, that she was not more difficult to be known in the rude Country Girl, than she was now in the sorrowful Widow.

She knew that Beau plaisir came alone in his Chariot to the Bath, and in the Time of her being Servant in the House where he lodg’d, heard nothing of any Body that was to accompany him to London, and hop’d he wou’d return in the same Manner he had gone: She therefore hir’d Horses and a Man to attend her to an Inn about ten Miles on this side Bath, where having discharg’d them, she waited till the Chariot should come by; which when it did, and she saw that he was alone in it, she call’d to him that drove it to stop a Moment, and going to the Door saluted the Master with these Words:

The Distress’d and Wretched, Sir, (said she,) never fail to excite Compassion in a generous Mind; and I hope I am not deceiv’d in my Opinion that yours is such: — You have the Appearance of a Gentleman, and cannot, when you hear my Story, refuse that Assistance which is in your Power to give to an unhappy Woman, who without it, may be render’d the most miserable of all created Beings.

It would not be very easy to represent the Surprise, so odd an Address created in the Mind of him to whom it was made. — She had not the Appearance of one who wanted Charity; and what other Favour she requir’d he cou’d not conceive: But telling her, she might command any Thing in his Power, gave her Encouragement to declare herself in this Manner: You may judge, (resumed she,) by the melancholy Garb I am in, that I have lately lost all that ought to be valuable to Womankind; but it is impossible for you to guess the Greatness of my Misfortune, unless you had known my Husband, who was Master of every Perfection to endear him to a Wife’s Affections. — But, notwithstanding, I look on myself as the most unhappy of my Sex in out-living him, I must so far obey the Dictates of my Discretion, as to take care of the little Fortune he left behind him, which being in the Hands of a Brother of his in London, will be all carry’d off to Holland, where he is going to settle; if I reach not the Town before he leaves it, I am undone for ever. — To which End I left Bristol, the Place where we liv’d, hoping to get a Place in the Stage at Bath, but they were all taken up before I came; and being, by a Hurt I got in a Fall, render’d incapable of travelling any long Journey on Horseback, I have no Way to go to London, and must be inevitably ruin’d in the Loss of all I have on Earth, without you have good Nature enough to admit me to take Part of your Chariot.

Here the feigned Widow ended her sorrowful Tale, which had been several Times interrupted by a Parenthesis of Sighs and Groans; and Beau plaisir, with a complaisant and tender Air, assur’d her of his Readiness to serve her in Things of much greater Consequence than what she desir’d of him; and told her, it would be an Impossibility of denying a Place in his Chariot to a Lady, who he could not behold without yielding one in his Heart. She answered the Compliments he made her but with Tears, which seem’d to stream in such abundance from her Eyes, that she could not keep her Handkerchief from her Face one Moment. Being come into the Chariot, Beau plaisir said a thousand handsome Things to perswade her from giving way to so violent a Grief, which, he told her, would not only be destructive to her Beauty, but likewise her Health. But all his Endeavours for Consoloment appear’d ineffectual, and he began to think he should have but a dull Journey, in the Company of one who seem’d so obstinately devoted to the Memory of her dead Husband, that there was no getting a Word from her on any other Theme: — But bethinking himself of the celebrated Story of the Ephesian Matron, it came into his Head to make Tryal, she who seem’d equally susceptible of Sorrow, might not also be so too of Love; and having began a Discourse on almost every other Topick, and finding her still in capable of answering, resolv’d to put it to the Proof, if this would have no more Effect to rouze her sleeping Spirits: — With a gay Air, therefore, though accompani’d with the greatest Modesty and Respect, he turned the Conversation, as though without Design, on that Joy-giving Passion, and soon discover’d that was indeed the Subject she was best pleas’d to be
entertained with; for on his giving her a Hint to begin upon, never any Tongue run more voluble than hers, on the prodigious Power it had to influence the Souls of those possess’d of it, to Actions even the most distant from their Intentions, Principles, or Humours. — From that she pass’d to a Description of the Happiness of mutual Affection; — the unspeakable Extasy of those who meet with equal Ardency; and represented it in Colours so lively, and disclos’d by the Gestures with which her Words were accompany’d, and the Accent of her Voice so true a Feeling of what she said, that Beauplaisir, without being as stupid, as he was really the contrary, could not avoid perceiving there were Seeds of Fire, not yet extinguish’d, in this fair Widow’s Soul, which wanted but the kindling Breath of tender Sighs to light into a Blaze. — He now thought himself as fortunate, as some Moments before he had the Reverse; and doubted not, but, that before they parted, he should find a Way to dry the Tears of this lovely Mourner, to the Satisfaction of them both. He did not, however, offer, as he had done to Fantomina and Celia, to urge his Passion directly to her, but by a thousand little softning Artifices, which he well knew how to use, gave her leave to guess he was enamour’d. When they came to the Inn where they were to lie, he declar’d himself somewhat more freely, and perceiving she did not resent it past Forgiveness, grew more encroaching still: — He now took the Liberty of kissing away her Tears, and catching the Sighs as they issued from her Lips; telling her if Grief was infectious, he was resolv’d to have his Share; protesting he would gladly exchange Passions with her, and be content to bear her Load of Sorrow, if she would as willingly ease the Burden of his Love. — She said little in answer to the strenuous Pressures with which at last he ventur’d to enfold her, but not thinking it Decent, for the Character she had assum’d, to yeild so suddenly, and unable to deny both his and her own Inclinations, she counterfeited a fainting, and fell motionless upon his Breast. — He had no great Notion that she was in a real Fit, and the Room they supp’d in happening to have a Bed in it, he took her in his Arms and laid her on it, believing, that whatever her Distemper was, that was the most proper Place to convey her to. — He laid himself down by her, and endeavou’rd to bring her to herself; and she was too grateful to her kind Physician at her returning Sense, to remove from the Posture he had put her in, without his Leave.

[16] It may, perhaps, seem strange that Beauplaisir should in such near Intimacies continue still deceiv’d: I know there are Men who will swear it is an Impossibility, and that no Disguise could hinder them from knowing a Woman they had once enjoy’d. In answer to these Scruples, I can only say, that besides the Alteration which the Change of Dress made in her, she was so admirably skill’d in the Art of feigning, that she had the Power of putting on almost what Face she pleas’d, and knew so exactly how to form her Behaviour to the Character she represented, that all the Comedians at both Playhouses are infinitely short of her Performances: She, could vary her very Glances, tune her Voice to Accents the most different imaginable from those in which she spoke when she appear’d herself. — These Aids from Nature, join’d to the Wiles of Art, and the Distance between the Places where the imagin’d Fantomina and Celia were, might very well prevent his having any Thought that they were the same, or that the fair Widow was either of them: It never so much as enter’d his Head, and though he did fancy he observed in the Face of the latter, Features which were not altogether unknown to him, yet he could not recollect when or where he had known them; — and being told by her, that from her Birth, she had never remov’d from Bristol, a Place where he never was, he rejected the Belief of having seen her, and suppos’d his Mind had been deluded by an Idea of some other, whom she might have a Resemblance of.

[17] They pass’d the Time of their Journey in as much Happiness as the most luxurious Gratification of wild Desires could make them; and when they came to the End of it, parted not without a mutual Promise of seeing each other often. — He told her to what Place she should direct a Letter to him; and she assur’d him she would send to let him know where to come to her, as soon as she was fixed in Lodgings.

[18] She kept her Promise; and charm’d with the Continuance of his eager Fondness, went not home, but into private Lodgings, whence to visit her the first Opportunity, and enquire for the Widow Bloomer. — She had no sooner dispatched this Billet, than she repair’d to the House where she had lodg’d as Fantomina, charging the People if Beauplaisir should come there, not to let him know she had been out of Town. From thence she wrote to him, in a different Hand, a long Letter of Complaint, that he had been so cruel in not sending one Letter to her all the Time he had been absent, entreated to see him, and concluded with subscribing herself his unalterably Affectionate Fantomina. She received in one Day Answers to both these. The first contain’d these Lines:

To the Charming Mrs. Bloomer, It would be impossible, my Angel! for me to express the thousandth Part of that Infinity of Transport, the Sight of your dear Letter gave me. — Never was Women form’d to charm like you: Never did any look like you, — write like you, — bless like you; — nor did ever Man adore as I do. — Since Yesterday we parted, I have seem’d a Body without a Soul; and had you not by this inspiring Billet, gave me new Life, I know not what by To-morrow I should have been. — I will be with you this Evening about Five: — O, 'tis an Age till then! — But the cursed Formalities of Duty oblige me to Dine with my Lord — who never rises from Table till that Hour; — therefore Adieu till then sweet lovely Mistress of the Soul and all the Faculties of
Your most faithful,
Beauplaisir.

[19] The other was in this Manner:

To the Lovely Fantomina. If you were half so sensible as you ought of your own Power of charming, you
would be assur'd, that to be unfaithful or unkind to you, would be among the Things that are in their
very Natures Impossibilities. — It was my Misfortune, not my Fault, that you were not persecuted every
Post with a Declaration of my unchanging Passion; but I had unluckily forgot the Name of the Woman at
whose House you are, and knew not how to form a Direction that it might come safe to your Hands. —
And, indeed, the Reflection how you might misconstrue my Silence, brought me to Town some Weeks
sooner than I intended. — If you knew how I have languish'd to renew those Blessings I am permitted
to enjoy in your Society, you would rather pity than condemn

Your ever faithful,
Beauplaisir.

P.S. I fear I cannot see you till To-morrow; some Business has unluckily fallen out that will engross my
Hours till then. — Once more, my Dear, Adieu.

[20] Traytor! (cry'd she.) as soon as she had read them, 'tis thus our silly, fond, believing Sex are serv'd when
they put Faith in Man: So had I been deceiv'd and cheated, had I like the rest believ'd, and sat down mourning in
Absence, and vainly waiting recover'd Tendernesses. — How do some Women (continued she) make their Life a
Hell, burning in fruitless Expectations, and dreaming out their Days in Hopes and Fears, then wake at last to all
the Horror of Dispair? — But I have outwitted even the most Subtle of the deceiving Kind, and while he thinks to
fool me, is himself the only beguiled Person.

[21] She made herself, most certainly, extremely happy in the Reflection on the Success of her Stratagems; and
while the Knowledge of his Inconstancy and Levity of Nature kept her from having that real Tenderness for him
she would else have had, she found the Means of gratifying the Inclination she had for his agreeable Person, in
as full a Manner as she could wish. She had all the Sweets of Love, but as yet had tasted none of the Gall, and
was in a State of Contentment, which might be envy'd by the more Delicate.

[22] When the expected Hour arriv'd, she found that her Lover had lost no part of the Fervency with which he had
parted from her; but when the next Day she receiv'd him as Fantomina, she perceiv'd a prodigious Difference;
which led her again into Reflections on the Unaccountableness of Men's Fancies, who still prefer the last
Conquest, only because it is the last. — Here was an evident Proof of it; for there could not be a Difference in
Merit, because they were the same Person; but the Widow Bloomer was a more new Acquaintance
than Fantomina, and therefore esteem'd more valuable. This, indeed, must be said of Beauplaisir, that he had a
greater Share of good Nature than most of his Sex, who, for the most part, when they are weary of an Intreague,
break it entirely off, without any Regard to the Despair of the abandon'd Nymph. Though he retain'd no more than
a bare Pity and Complaisance for Fantomina, yet believing she lov'd him to an Excess, would not entirely forsake
her, though the Continuance of his Visits was now become rather a Penance than a Pleasure.

[23] The Widow Bloomer triumph'd some Time longer over the Heart of this Inconstant, but at length her Sway
was at an End, and she sunk in this Character, to the same Degree of Tasteslessness, as she had done before in
that of Fantomina and Celia. — She presently perceiv'd it, but bore it as she had always done; it being but what
she expected, she had prepar'd herself for it, and had another Project in embrio, which she soon ripen'd into
Action. She did not, indeed, compleat it altogether so suddenly as she had done the others, by reason there must
be Persons employ'd in it; and the Aversion she had to any Confidents in her Affairs, and the Caution with which
she had hitherto acted, and which she was still determin'd to continue, made it very difficult for her to find a Way
without breaking thro' that Resolution to compass what she wish'd. — She got over the Difficulty at last, however,
by proceeding in a Manner, if possible, more extraordinary than all her former Behaviour: — Muffling herself up
in her Hood one Day, she went into the Park about the Hour when there are a great many necessitous Gentlemen,
who think themselves above doing what they call little Things for a Maintenance, walking in the Mall, to take
a Camelion Treat, and fill their Stomachs with Air instead of Meat. Two of those, who by their Physiognomy she
thought most proper for her Purpose, she beckon'd to come to her; and taking them into a Walk more remote from
Company, began to communicate the Business she had with them in these Words: I am sensible, Gentlemen,
said she, that, through the Blindness of Fortune, and Partiality of the World, Merit frequently goes unrewarded,
and that those of the best Pretentions meet with the least Encouragement: — I ask your Pardon, (continued she,) perceiving they seem'd surpris'd, if I am mistaken in the Notion, that you two may, perhaps, be of the Number of
those who have Reason to complain of the Injustice of Fate; but if you are such as I take you for, have a Proposal to make you, which may be of some little Advantage to you. Neither of them made any immediate Answer, but appear’d bury’d in Consideration for some Moments, At length, We should, doubtless, Madam, (said one of them,) willingly come into any Measures to oblige you, provided they are such as may bring us into no Danger, either as to our Persons or Reputations. That which I require of you, (resumed she,) has nothing in it criminal: All that I desire is Secrecy in what you are intrusted, and to disguise yourselves in such a Manner as you cannot be known, if hereafter seen by the Person on whom you are to impose. — In fine, the Business is only an innocent Frolick, but if blaz’d abroad, might be taken for too great a Freedom in me: — Therefore, if you resolve to assist me, here are five Pieces to drink my Health, and assure you, that I have not discours’d you on an Affair, I design not to proceed in; and when it is accomplish’d fifty more lie ready for your Acceptance. These Words, and, above all, the Money, which was a Sum which, ’tis probable, they had not seen of a long Time, made them immediately assent to all she desir’d, and press for the Beginning of their Employment: But Things were not yet ripe for Execution; and she told them, that the next Day they should be let into the Secret, charging them to meet her in the same Place at an Hour she appointed. ’Tis hard to say, which of these Parties went away best pleas’d; they, that Fortune had sent them so unexpected a Windfall; or she, that she had found Persons, who appeared so well qualified to serve her.

[24] Indefatigable in the Pursuit of whatsoever her Humour was bent upon, she had no sooner left her new-engag’d Emissaries, than she went in search of a House for the compleating her Project. — She pitch’d on one very large, and magnificently furnished, which she hir’d by the Week, giving them the Money before-hand, to prevent any Inquiries. The next Day she repaired to the Park, where she met the punctual ’Squires of low Degree; and ordering them to follow her to the House she had taken, told them they must condescend to appear like Servants, and gave each of them a very rich Livery. Then writing a Letter to Beauplaisir, in a Character vastly different from either of those she had made use of, as Fantomina, or the fair Widow Bloomer, order’d one of them to deliver it into his own Hands, to bring back an Answer, and to be careful that he sifted out nothing of the Truth. — I do not fear, (said she,) that you should discover to him who I am, because that is a Secret, of which you yourselves are ignorant; but I would have you be so careful in your Replies, that he may not think the Concealment springs from any other Reasons than your great Integrity to your Trust. — Seem therefore to know my whole Affairs; and let your refusing to make him Partaker in the Secret, appear to be only the Effect of your Zeal for my Interest and Reputation. Promises of entire Fidelity on the one side, and Reward on the other, being past, the Messenger made what haste he could to the House of Beauplaisir; and being there told where he might find him, perform’d exactly the Injunction that had been given him. But never Astonishment exceeding that which Beauplaisir felt at the reading this Billet, in which he found these Lines:

To the All-conquering Beauplaisir. I Imagine not that ’tis a new Thing to you, to be told, you are the greatest Charm in Nature to our Sex: I shall therefore, not to fill up my Letter with any impertinent Praises on your Wit or Person, only tell you, that I am infinite in Love with both, and if you have a Heart not too deeply engag’d, should think myself the happiest of my Sex in being capable of inspiring it with some Tenderness. — There is but one Thing in my Power to refuse you, which is the Knowledge of my Name, which believing the Sight of my Face will render no Secret, you must not take it ill that I conceal from you. — The Bearer of this is a Person I can trust; send by him your Answer; but endeavour not to dive into the Meaning of this Mystery, which will be impossible for you to unravel, and at the same Time very much disoblige me: — But that you may be in no Apprehensions of being impos’d on by a Woman unworthy of your Regard, I will venture to assure you, the first and greatest Men in the Kingdom, would think themselves blest to have that Influence over me you have, though unknown to yourself acquir’d. — But I need not go about to raise your Curiosity, by giving you any Idea of what my Person is; if you think fit to be satisfied, resolve to visit me To-morrow about Three in the Afternoon; and though my Face is hid, you shall not want sufficient Demonstration, that she who takes these unusual Measures to commence a Friendship with you, is neither Old, nor Deform’d. Till then I am,

Yours,
Incognita.

[25] He had scarce come to the Conclusion, before he ask’d the Person who brought it, from what Place he came; — the Name of the Lady he serv’d: — if she were a Wife, or Widow, and several other Questions directly opposite to the Directions of the Letter; but Silence would have avail’d him as much as did all those Testimonies of Curiosity: No Italian Bravo, employ’d in a Business of the like Nature, perform’d his Office with more Artifice; and the impatient Enquirer was convinc’d, that nothing but doing as he was desir’d, could give him any Light into the Character of the Woman who declar’d so violent a Passion for him; and little fearing any Consequence which could ensue from such an Encounter, resolv’d to rest satisfy’d till he was inform’d of every Thing from herself, not imagining this Incognita varied so much from the Generality of her Sex, as to be able to refuse the Knowledge of
any Thing to the Man she lov’d with that Transcendency of Passion she profess’d, and which his many Successes with the Ladies gave him Encouragement enough to believe. He therefore took Pen and Paper, and answer’d her Letter in Terms tender enough for a Man who had never seen the Person to whom he wrote. The Words were as follows:

To the Obliging and Witty Incognita. Though to tell me I am happy enough to be lik’d by a Woman, such, as by your Manner of Writing, I imagine you to be, is an Honour which I can never sufficiently acknowledge, yet I know not how I am able to content myself with admiring the Wonders of your Wit alone: I am certain, a Soul like yours must shine in your Eyes with a Vivacity, which must bless all they look on. — I shall, however, endeavour to restrain myself in those Bounds you are pleas’d to set me, till by the Knowledge of my inviolable Fidelity, I may be thought worthy of gazing on that Heaven I am now but to enjoy in Contemplation. — You need not doubt my glad Compliance with your obliging summons: There is a Charm in your Lines, which gives too sweet an Idea of their lovely Author to be resisted. — I am all impatient for the blissful Moment, which is to throw me at your Feet, and give me an Opportunity of convincing you that I am,

Your everlasting Slave,
Beauplaisir.

[26] Nothing could be more pleas’d than she, to whom it was directed, at the Receipt of this Letter; but when she was told how inquisitive he had been concerning her Character and Circumstances, she could not forbear laughing heartily to think of the Tricks she had play’d him, and applauding her own Strength of Genius, and Force of Resolution, which by such unthought-of Ways could triumph over her Lover’s Inconstancy, and render that very Temper, which to other Women is the greatest Curse, a Means to make herself more bless’d. — Had he been faithful to me, (said she, to herself) either as Fantomina, or Celia, or the Widow Bloomer, the most violent Passion, if it does not change its Object, in Time will wither: Possession naturally abates the Vigour of Desire, and I should have had, at best, but a cold, insipid, husband-like Lover in my Arms; but by these Arts of passing on him as a new Mistress whenever the Ardour, which alone makes Love a Blessing, begins to diminish, for the former one, I have him always raving, wild, impatient, longing, dying. — O that all neglected Wives, and fond abandon’d Nymphs would take this Method! — Men would be caught in their own Snare, and have no Cause to scorn our easy, weeping, wailing Sex! Thus did she pride herself as if secure she never should have any Reason to repent the present Gaiety of her Humour. The Hour drawing near in which he was to come, she dress’d herself in as magnificent a Manner, as if she were to be that Night at a Ball at Court, endeavouring to repair the want of those Beauties which the Vizard should conceal, by setting forth the others with the greatest Care and Exactness. Her fine Shape, and Air, and Neck, appear’d to great Advantage; and by that which was to be seen of her, one might believe the rest to be perfectly agreeable. Beauplaisir was prodigiously charm’d, as well with her Appearance, as with the Manner she entertain’d him: But though he was wild with Impatience for the Sight of a Face which belonged to so exquisite a Body, yet he would not immediately press for it, believing before he left her he should easily obtain that Satisfaction. — A noble Collation being over, he began to sue for the Performance of her Promise of granting every Thing he could ask, excepting the Sight of her Face, and Knowledge of her Name. It would have been a ridiculous Piece of Affection in her to have seem’d coy in complying with what she herself had been the first in desiring: She yield’d without even a Shew of Reluctance: And if there be any true Felicity in an Amour such as theirs, both here enjoy’d it to the full. But not in the Heighth of all their mutual Raptures, could he prevail on her to satisfy his Curiosity with the Sight of her Face: She told him that she hop’d he knew so much of her, as might serve to convince him, she was not unworthy of his tenderest Regard; and if he cou’d not content himself with that which she was willing to reveal, and which was the Conditions of their meeting, dear as he was to her, she would rather part with him for ever, than consent to gratify an Inquisitiveness, which, in her Opinion, had no Business with his Love. It was in vain that he endeavour’d to make her sensible of her Mistake; and that this Restraint was the greatest Enemy imaginable to the Happiness of them both: She was not to be persuad’d, and he was oblig’d to desist his Solicitations, though determin’d in his Mind to compass what he so ardently desir’d, before he left the House. He then turned the Discourse wholly on the Violence of the Passion he had for her; and express’d the greatest Discontent in the World at the Apprehensions of being separated; — swore he could dwell for ever in her Arms, and with such an undeniable Earnestness press’d to be permitted to tarry with her the whole Night, that had she been less charm’d with his renew’d Eagerness of Desire, she scarce would have had the Power of refusing him; but in granting this Request, she was not without a Thought that he had another Reason for making it besides the Extremity of his Passion, and had it immediately in her Head how to disappoint him.

[27] The Hours of Repose being arriv’d, he begg’d she would retire to her Chamber; to which she consented, but oblig’d him to go to Bed first; which he did not much oppose, because he suppos’d she would not lie in her Mask, and doubted not but the Morning’s Dawn would bring the wish’d Discovery. — The two imagin’d Servants usher’d
him to his new Lodging; where he lay some Moments in all the Perplexity imaginable at the Oddness of this Adventure. But she suffer’d not these Cogitations to be of any long Continuance: She came, but came in the Dark; which being no more than he expected by the former Part of her Proceedings, he said nothing of; but as much Satisfaction as he found in her Embraces, nothing ever long’d for the Approach of Day with more Impatience than he did. At last it came; but how great was his Disappointment, when by the Noises he heard in the Street, the Hurry of the Coaches, and the Crys of Penny-Merchants, he was convinc’d it was Night no where but with him? He was still in the same Darkness as before; for she had taken care to blind the Windows in such a manner, that not the least Chink was left to let in Day. — He complain’d of her Behaviour in Terms that she would not have been able to resist yielding to, if she had not been certain it would have been the Ruin of her Passion: — She, therefore, answered him only as she had done before; and getting out of the Bed from him, flew out of the Room with too much Swiftness for him to have overtaken her, if he had attempted it. The Moment she left him, the two Attendants enter’d the Chamber, and plucking down the Implements which had skreen’d him from the Knowledge of that which he so much desir’d to find out, restored his Eyes once more to Day: — They attended to assist him in Dressing, brought him Tea, and by their Obsequiousness, let him see there was but one Thing which the Mistress of them would not gladly oblige him in. — He was so much out of Humour, however, at the Disappointment of his Curiosity, that he resolv’d never to make a second Visit. — Finding her in an outer Room, he made no Scruple of expressing the Sense he had of the little Trust she reposed in him, and at last plainly told her, he could not submit to receive Obligations from a Lady, who thought him incapable of keeping a Secret, which she made no Difficulty of letting her Servants into. — He resented, — he once more entreated, — he said all that Man could do, to prevail on her to unfold the Mystery; but all his Adjurations were fruitless; and he went out of the House determin’d never to re-enter it, till she should pay the Price of his Company with the Discovery of her Face, and Circumstances. — She suffer’d him to go with this Resolution, and doubted not but he would recede from it, when he reflected on the happy Moments they had pass’d together; but if he did not, she comforted herself with the Design of forming some other Stratagem, with which to impose on him a fourth Time.

[28] She kept the House, and her Gentlemen-Equipage for about a Fortnight, in which Time she continu’d to write to him as Fantomina and the Widow Bloomer, and received the Visits he sometimes made to each; but his Behaviour to both was grown so cold, that she began to grow as weary of receiving his new insipid Caresses as he was of offering them: She was beginning to think in what Manner she should drop these two Characters, when the sudden Arrival of her Mother, who had been some Time in a foreign Country, oblig’d her to put an immediate Stop to the Course of her whimsical Adventures. — That Lady, who was severely virtuous, did not approve of many Things she had been told of the Conduct of her Daughter; and though it was not in the Power of any Person in the World to inform her of the Truth of what she had been guilty of, yet she heard enough to make her keep her afterwards in a Restraint, little agreeable to her Humour, and the Liberties to which she had been accustomed.

[29] But this Confinement was not the greatest Part of the Trouble of this now afflicted Lady: She found the Consequences of her amorous Follies would be, without almost a Mirracle, impossible to be concealed: — She was with Child; and though she would have found Means to have skreen’d even this from the Knowledge of the World, had she been at liberty to have acted with the same unquestionable Authority over herself, as she did before the coming of her Mother, yet now all her Invention was at a Loss for a Stratagem to impose on a Woman of her Penetration: — By eating little, lacing prodigious strait, and the Advantage of a great Hoop-Petticoat, however, her Bigness was not taken notice of, and, perhaps, she would not have been suspected till the Time of her going into the Country, where her Mother design’d to send her, and from whence she intended to make her escape to some Place where she might be deliver’d with Secrecy, if the Time of it had not happen’d much sooner than she expected. — A Ball being at Court, the good old Lady was willing she should partake of the Diversion of it as a Farewel to the Town. — It was there she was seiz’d with those Pangs, which none in her Condition are exempt from: — She could not conceal the sudden Rack which all at once invaded her; or had her Tongue been mute, her wildly rolling Eyes, the Distortion of her Features, and the Convulsions which shook her whole Frame, in spite of her, would have reveal’d she labour’d under some terrible Shock of Nature. — Every Body was surpris’d, every Body was concern’d, but few guessed at the Occasion. — Her Mother griev’d beyond Expression, doubted not but she was struck with the Hand of Death; and order’d her to be carried Home in a Chair, while herself follow’d in another. — A Physician was immediately sent for: But he presently perceiving what was her Distemper, call’d the old Lady aside, and told her, it was not a Doctor of his Sex, but one of her own, her Daughter stood in need of. — Never was Astonishment and Horror greater than that which seiz’d the Soul of this afflicted Parent at these Words: She could not for a Time believe the Truth of what she heard; but he insisting on it, and conjuring her to send for a Midwife, she was at length convinc’d of it — All the Pity and Tenderness she had been for some Moment before possess’d of, now vanish’d, and were succeed by an adequate Shame and Indignation: — She flew to the Bed where her Daughter was lying, and telling her what she had been inform’d of, and which she was now far from doubting, commanded her to reveal the Name of the Person whose Insinuations she had drawn her to this Dishonour. — It was a great while before she could be brought to confess any Thing, and much longer before she could be prevailed on to name the Man whom she so fatally had lov’d; but the Rack of
Nature growing more fierce, and the enraged old Lady protesting no Help should be afforded her while she persisted in her Obstinacy, she, with great Difficulty and Hesitation in her Speech, at last pronounc’d the Name of Beauplaisir. She had no sooner satisfy’d her weeping Mother, than that sorrowful Lady sent Messengers at the same Time, for a Midwife, and for that Gentleman who had occasion’d the other’s being wanted. — He happen’d by Accident to be at home, and immediately obey’d the Summons, though prodigiously surpris’d what Business a Lady so much a Stranger to him could have to impart. — But how much greater was his Amazement, when taking him into her Closet, she there acquainted him with her Daughter’s Misfortune, of the Discovery she had made, and how far he was concern’d in it? — All the Idea one can form of wild Astonishment, was mean to what he felt: — He assur’d her, that the young Lady her Daughter was a Person whom he had never, more than at a Distance, admir’d: — That he had indeed, spoke to her in publick Company, but that he never had a Thought which tended to her Dishonour. — His Denials, if possible, added to the Indignation she was before enflam’d with: — She had no longer Patience; and carrying him into the Chamber, where she was just deliver’d of a fine Girl, cry’d out, I will not be impos’d on: The Truth by one of you shall be reveal’d. — Beauplaisir being brought to the Bed side, was beginning to address himself to the Lady in it, to beg she would clear the Mistake her Mother was involv’d in; when she, covering herself with the Cloaths, and ready to die a second Time with the inward Agitations of her Soul shriek’d out, Oh, I am undone! — I cannot live, and bear this Shame! — But the old Lady believing that now or never was the Time to dive into the Bottom of this Mystery, forcing her to rear her Head, told her, she should not hope to Escape the Scrutiny of a Parent she had dishonour’d in such a Manner, and pointing to Beauplaisir, Is this the Gentleman, (said she,) to whom you owe your Ruin? or have you deceiv’d me by a fictitious Tale? Oh! no, (resum’d the trembling Creature,) he is, indeed, the innocent Cause of my Undoing: — Promise me your Pardon, (continued she,) and I will relate the Means. Here she ceas’d, expecting what she would reply; which, on hearing Beauplaisir cry out, What mean you, Madam? I your Undoing, who never harbour’d the least Design on you in my Life, she did in these Words, Though the Injury you have done your Family, (said she,) is of a Nature which cannot justly hope Forgiveness, yet be assur’d, I shall much sooner excuse you when satisfied of the Truth, than while I am kept in a Suspence, if possible, as vexatious as the Crime itself is to me. Encouraged by this she related the whole Truth. And ’tis difficult to determine, if Beauplaisir, or the Lady, were most surpris’d at what they heard; he, that he should have been blinded so often by her Artifices; or she, that so young a Creature should have the Skill to make use of them. Both sat for some Time in a profound Revery; till at length she broke it first in these Words: Pardon, Sir, (said she,) the Trouble I have given you: I must confess it was with a Design to oblige you to repair the supposed Injury you had done this unfortunate Girl, by marrying her, but now I know not what to say: — The Blame is wholly her’s, and I have nothing to request further of you, than that you will not divulge the distracted Folly she has been guilty of. — He answered her in Terms perfectly polite; but made no Offer of that which, perhaps, she expected, though I could not, now inform’d of her Daughter’s Proceedings, demand. He assured her, however, that if she would commit the new-born Lady to his Care, he would discharge it faithfully. But neither of them would consent to that; and he took his Leave, full of Cogitations, more confus’d than ever he had known in his whole Life. He continued to visit there, to enquire after her Health every Day; but the old Lady perceiving there was nothing likely to ensue from these Civilities, but, perhaps, a Renewing of the Crime, she entreated him to refrain; and as soon as her Daughter was in a Condition, sent her to a Monastery in France, the Abbess of which had been her particular Friend. And thus ended an Intreague, which, considering the Time it lasted, was as full of Variety as any, perhaps, that many Ages has produced.

Finis.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In this unit we look at an example of an “amatory” prose work, Eliza Haywood’s Fantomina. In its story focused on the love life of a female protagonist, it is among the precursors of both romance fiction (the thematic content) and a novel (the long-form of prose storytelling).

The resource readings talk more about both of these.
Alternative Versions of Text

UPenn Digital Library's ebook of *Fantomina*

Online e-text available from University of Pennsylvania Digital Library

UC Santa Barbara’s ebook of *Fantomina*

A PDF imaged version of a print text is available from the Early Modern Center of the English Department at the University of California at Santa Barbara (warning: this is imaged from an old book and the style of printing may be hard to read).

Background and Interpretation

CUNY Brooklyn’s article on “The Novel”

Brief overview of the development of the novel from the Brooklyn College English Department.

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TRANSITIONS TO ROMANTICISM

TRANSITIONS FROM AUGUSTAN LITERATURE TO THE ROMANTICS

The Transition between the Augustan period and the Romantic period was a drastic shift in literary ideals. The Augustans followed the works of former classical writers, such as Horace, Virgil, and Homer. To them this was the proper and only way to write. They followed the views of Aristotle, which led them to an empirical way of teaching.

The beginning of the romantic period was marked by the writers, William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge. In 1798, when they published *Lyrical Ballads*. This started the idea that it was intuition within the writer that made them a good poet. The romantics saw writers to be similar to the common man, but with a higher sense of the natural world. They threw out the manuals and empirical way of teaching that was once set in place by the Augustan writers and found that using imagination and deep thought, one could find the truth in the world.

Some characteristics of Augustan poetry are:
- response against rival authors
- the concept of individualism versus society
- the imitation of the classics
- politics and social issues
- satire and irony
- empiricism
- comedy

Some characteristics of Romantic poetry are:
- prominent role of the poet
- the importance of the imagination nature
- the use of emotion
- ordinary subjects
- interest in the spiritual or supernatural

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THE RESTORATION AND THE 18TH CENTURY

The King openly proclaimed his love of parliaments, his devotion to the immemorial constitution of balance and moderation, his Protestant fervor, and his pious hopes for a national church.
—The Longman Anthology of British Literature

Those RULES of old discover’d, not devis’d,
Are Nature still, but Nature Methodiz’d.
—Alexander Pope

Background: The Augustans and the Age of Reason

The Restoration refers to the restoration of the monarchy when Charles II was restored to the throne of England following an eleven-year Commonwealth period during which the country was governed by Parliament under the direction of the Puritan General Oliver Cromwell. This political event coincides with (and to some extent is responsible for) changes in the literary, scientific, and cultural life of Britain.

During this time, a premium was placed on the importance of human reason and on an empirical philosophy that held that knowledge about the world was through the senses and by applying reason to what we take in through our senses. Reason was an unchanging, uniquely human characteristic that served as a guide for man. Thus this time is often also called the Age of Reason or Enlightenment. Characteristics of this period included observing human nature and nature itself which were considered unchanging and constant.

The age is also known as the Neoclassical period. Writers of the time placed great emphasis on the original writings produced by classical Greek and Roman literature. The literature of this period imitated that of the age of Caesar Augustus, writers such as Horace and Virgil, with classical influences appearing prevalent in poetry with the use of rhyming, and in prose with its satirical form. The Augustans deemed classical literature as natural, that these works were the idealized models for writing. The Neoclassical “ideals of order, logic, restraint, accuracy, ‘correctness,’ decorum,. . . would enable the practitioners of various arts to imitate or reproduce the structures or themes of Greek or Roman originals” (Victorian Web). Alexander Pope furthers this idea as he says “Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem; To copy Nature is to copy them” (Essay on Criticism). The way to study nature is to study the ancients; the styles and rules of classical literature. Closely allied with the emphasis placed on the classics and the unchanging rules of nature was the belief that reason was an unchanging and unique human quality that served as a guide for man.

An Age of Satire

Literature during this period was often considered a tool for the advancement of knowledge. Writers were often found observing nature in their attempts to express their beliefs. Human nature was considered a constant that observation and reason could be applied to for the advancement of knowledge. Within these circumstances, the Age of Satire was born. Satire was the most popular literary tool that was utilized by writers of the time. With the help of satire, writers were better able to educate the public through literature. Its function was to acknowledge a problem in society and attempt to reform the problem in a comical manner while still educating the public. Its effectiveness can be seen in literary pieces by Jonathan Swift such as A Modest Proposal where he addresses and criticizes the problem of a growing famine in Ireland. Playwrights of the time were also known to incorporate satire in their plays. Through the use of satire, they were able to expose and critique social injustices. “Over the thirty years of its triumphs, Restoration comedy, in an astounding fugue of excesses and depravities, laid bare the turbulence and toxins of this culture” (Longman). Satire was a highly successful literary tool that worked to promote social awareness through literature, the theater and periodicals of the time.
Timeline

- 1660: Restoration—Charles II, Stuart monarchy
- 1662: Royal Society established
- 1685: James, Duke of York, succeeds his brother Charles II
- 1688: Glorious Revolution—James II deposed, William and Mary share the English throne
- 1689: Bill of Rights—limits crown, affirms supremacy of Parliament
- 1689: Toleration Act—religious freedom for dissenters
- 1690: John Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*
- 1707: Act of Union—England and Scotland for Great Britain
- 1745: Last Jacobite uprising

For more details see *Restoration Politics*

Cultural and Literary Contexts

- Newspapers and Periodicals
- The Coffeehouse Culture
- The Novel
- Classical Education in the Eighteenth Century
- Eighteenth-Century Grammars
- Religion, Politics, and the Glorious Revolution of 1688
- Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Drama
- The Royal Society and the Enlightenment
- Social and Family Life in the Late 17th & Early 18th Centuries

Authors

- Jonathan Swift
- Alexander Pope
- Samuel Johnson
- Henry Fielding
- Oliver Goldsmith
- Thomas Gray
- John Dryden

References


ODE TO EVENING

by William Collins

If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales,
O nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,
As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,
Whose numbers stealing through thy dark'ning vale
May not unseemly with its stillness suit,
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return!

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circket, at his warning lamp
The fragrant hours, and elves
Who sleept in buds the day,
And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge
And sheds the fresh'ning dew, and lovelier still,
The pensive pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene,
Or find some ruin 'midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.
Or if chill blust'ring winds or driving rain
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut
That from the mountain's side
Views wilds and swelling floods
And hamlets brown and dim-discovered spires,
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.
While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve;
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;
While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves;
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train
And rudely rends thy robes;
So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall fancy, friendship, science, smiling peace,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And love thy favourite name!

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

by Thomas Gray

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:
Save that, from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!
Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise;
Where, through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust?
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre:

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscrib'd alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Even from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Even in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate,
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

"One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

"The next, with dirges due in sad array,
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH.
Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown;
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heaven did a recompense as largely send;
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear;
He gain'd from Heaven (t'was all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)  
The bosom of his Father and his God.

FOR I WILL CONSIDER MY CAT JEOFFRY, FROM JUBILATE AGNO

by Christopher Smart

lines 695-768 from Part B of Jubilate Agno

For I will consider my Cat Jeoffry.
For he is the servant of the Living God, duly and daily serving him.
For at the first glance of the glory of God in the East he worships in his way.
For is this done by wreathing his body seven times round with elegant quickness.
For then he leaps up to catch the musk, which is the blessing of God upon his prayer.
For he rolls upon prank to work it in.
For having done duty and received blessing he begins to consider himself.
For this he performs in ten degrees.
For first he looks upon his forepaws to see if they are clean.
For secondly he kicks up behind to clear away there.
For thirdly he works it upon stretch with the forepaws extended.
For fourthly he sharpens his paws by wood.
For fifthly he washes himself.
For sixthly he rolls upon wash.
For seventhly he fleas himself, that he may not be interrupted upon the beat.
For eighthly he rubs himself against a post.
For ninthly he looks up for his instructions.
For tenthly he goes in quest of food.
For having considered God and himself he will consider his neighbor.
For if he meets another cat he will kiss her in kindness.
For when he takes his prey he plays with it to give it a chance.
For one mouse in seven escapes by his dallying.
For when his day’s work is done his business more properly begins.
For he keeps the Lord’s watch in the night against the adversary.
For he counteracts the powers of darkness by his electrical skin and glaring eyes.
For he counteracts the Devil, who is death, by brisking about the life.
For in his morning orisons he loves the sun and the sun loves him.
For he is of the tribe of Tiger.
For the Cherub Cat is a term of the Angel Tiger.
For he has the subtlety and hissing of a serpent, which in goodness he suppresses.
For he will not do destruction if he is well-fed, neither will he spit without provocation.
For he purrs in thankfulness when God tells him he’s a good Cat.
For he is an instrument for the children to learn benevolence upon.
For every house is incomplete without him, and a blessing is lacking in the spirit.
For the Lord commanded Moses concerning the cats at the departure of the Children of Israel from Egypt.
For every family had one cat at least in the bag.
For the English Cats are the best in Europe.
For he is the cleanest in the use of his forepaws of any quadruped.
For the dexterity of his defense is an instance of the love of God to him exceedingly.
For he is the quickest to his mark of any creature.
For he is tenacious of his point.
For he is a mixture of gravity and waggery.
For he knows that God is his Saviour.
For there is nothing sweeter than his peace when at rest.
For there is nothing brisker than his life when in motion.
For he is of the Lord’s poor, and so indeed is he called by benevolence perpetually—Poor Jeoffry! poor Jeoffry! the rat has bit thy throat.
For I bless the name of the Lord Jesus that Jeoffry is better.
For the divine spirit comes about his body to sustain it in complete cat.
For his tongue is exceeding pure so that it has in purity what it wants in music.
For he is docile and can learn certain things.
For he can sit up with gravity, which is patience upon approbation.
For he can fetch and carry, which is patience in employment.
For he can jump over a stick, which is patience upon proof positive.
For he can spraggle upon waggle at the word of command.
For he can jump from an eminence into his master’s bosom.
For he can catch the cork and toss it again.
For he is hated by the hypocrite and miser.
For the former is afraid of detection.
For the latter refuses the charge.
For he camels his back to bear the first notion of business.
For he is good to think on, if a man would express himself neatly.
For he made a great figure in Egypt for his signal services.
For he killed the Icneumon rat, very pernicious by land.
For his ears are so acute that they sting again.
For from this proceeds the passing quickness of his attention.
For by stroking of him I have found out electricity.
For I perceived God’s light about him both wax and fire.
For the electrical fire is the spiritual substance which God sends from heaven to sustain the bodies both of man and beast.
For God has blessed him in the variety of his movements.
For, though he cannot fly, he is an excellent clamberer.
For his motions upon the face of the earth are more than any other quadruped.
For he can tread to all the measures upon the music.
For he can swim for life.
For he can creep.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT, DROWNED IN A TUB OF GOLDFISHES

‘Twas on a lofty vase’s side,
Where China’s gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow;
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclin’d,
Gaz’d on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declar’d:
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat, that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw; and purr’d applause.

Still had she gaz’d; but midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream:
Their scaly armour’s Tyrian hue
Through richest purple to the view
Betray’d a golden gleam.

The hapless nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first, and then a claw,
With many an ardent wish,
She stretch’d in vain to reach the prize.
What female heart can gold despise?
What Cat’s averse to fish?

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent
Again she stretch’d, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between.
(Malignant Fate sat by, and smil’d.)
The slippery verge her feet beguil’d,
She tumbled headlong in.

Eight times emerging from the flood,
She mew’d to every watery God,
Some speedy aid to send.
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr’d:
Nor cruel Tom, nor Susan heard.
A favourite has no friend!

From hence, ye beauties, undeceiv’d,
Know, one false step is ne’er retriev’d,
And be with caution bold.
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts is lawful prize,
Nor all that glisters gold.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Background and Interpretation

*Britannica's article on “William Collins”*
Brief biography of William Collins from Britannica.

*Britannica's article on “Thomas Gray”*
Brief biography of Thomas Gray from Britannica.

*Britannica's article on “Christopher Smart”*
Brief biography of Christopher Smart from Britannica.

Audio Files

Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/pr97KeBFNDY
Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/EKT3yAPDxJU

Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/mJAmSOq9ITk

Watch this video online: https://youtu.be/bPPq9dsnRyw
Whenever you incorporate outside sources into your own writing, you must provide both in-text citations (within the body of the paper) and full citations (in the works cited page). The in-text citations point your reader toward the full citations in the works cited page.

That’s why the first bit of information in your in-text citation (generally, the author’s name; if no name is provided, the title of the article/book/webpage) should directly match up with the beginning of your works cited entry for that source. For further information about in-text citations, please read “Formatting In-Text Citations.”

For example, let’s say I have a quote from Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* in my research paper. Within the body of the paper, following the quote, I include the following in-text citation: (Anderson 56). This information points to the book’s entry in my works cited page:


When your reader sees the in-text citation in your essay, she may decide that the source might be valuable for her own research. When she looks at the works cited page, she can easily locate the source (because the works cited page is alphabetized and because she has the in-text citation as her referent) and then can use the full citation to retrieve a copy of the source for her own research. But aside from providing the reader with resources for her own research, the works cited page serves another function: it establishes the writer’s credibility. If a writer fails to include in-text citations and/or a works cited page, that writer has plagiarized because he or she has neglected to provide the publication information of the source. In addition, when a reader locates undocumented information in an essay, she will likely think that the information was made up by the writer or that the information was stolen from a source, or plagiarized. And when a reader peruses a writer’s works cited page, she can see the types of sources used by the writer, assessing those sources in terms of their credibility. For instance, if a reader reads my works cited page and sees I cite sources from university presses such as Oxford UP and Cambridge UP, she will know that I’ve incorporated credible sources into my research paper. Thus, including both in-text citations and a works cited page in a research paper provides the writer with ethos, or credibility.

Now let’s take a look at how to properly format a works cited page according to MLA guidelines:
According to MLA style guidelines, the works cited page should appear after the body of your paper and any accompanying endnotes. It should begin on a new page, and the pagination should continue from the body of the paper. In the above example, the works cited page begins on page 38, which means that the essay concluded on page 37.

General format

The works cited page should be double-spaced throughout. The first line of each entry should be flush with the left margin; if the entry extends more than one line, ensuing lines should be indented 1/2 inch from the left margin. The first page of the works cited list should have the title “Works Cited,” not “Bibliography.” The works cited title should appear in the same manner as the paper’s title: capitalized and centered—not bolded, within quotation marks, italicized, underlined, or in a larger font.

Entries

The entries should be alphabetized based on the author’s last name. According to MLA guidelines, author names come first in an entry, then titles, then the publication information (city of publication, publisher, and date of publication).
publication), and then the type of media—the details for different types of sources vary, but this is the general structure followed. Note that if the city is not “well-known” and there is more than one city with that name, unlike New York and London, then the state or territory should be included after the city, e.g., “Roswell, GA: 2006.” If no name is provided for a given source, the title of the work/webpage will take the place of the author’s last name and should still be placed in its proper alphabetical location. Also note that “university” and “press” are always abbreviated “U” and “P” in works cited entries.

Here are some guidelines for commonly used sources:

**Single-Authored Book**

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date of Publication. Type of media.

Example:


**Book with Multiple Authors**

Last Name, First Name (of first author listed), and First Name Last Name (of second author, etc.). *Title of Book*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date of Publication. Type of media.

Example:


**Article or Chapter in an Edited Collection (or Textbook)**

Last Name, First Name. “Article Title.” *Title of Book*. Ed. First Name Last Name (of Editor). Place of Publication: Publisher, Date of Publication. Page Range of Article. Type of Media.

Example:


**Article in a Print Journal**

Last Name, First Name. “Article Title.” *Title of Journal*. Volume #.Issue # (Date of publication): Page Range of Article. Print.

Example:


**Journal Article Accessed Using an Electronic Database**


Example:

FORMATTING IN-TEXT CITATIONS (MLA)

How might you format your in-text citations so that they're more compliant with MLA guidelines?

You already know why MLA formatting guidelines are an important part of an academic paper, but let's face it—who can remember all those rules about when and where certain citation information is requisite and when and where particular punctuation is appropriate? Thankfully, memorizing all of MLA's formatting guidelines is not
necessary! MLA style guides can be found easily online or in texts like *The MLA Handbook*, and writers can refer to these resources when they are unclear about a particular MLA style guideline.

Nonetheless, as you create multiple drafts of your composition papers, there are some MLA conventions that you will need to call on time and time again. In particular, as you integrate source material masterfully into your work, you will be required to call on proper in-text citation guidelines repeatedly. It is therefore important that you take the time to memorize the MLA guidelines for in-text citations.

Because the use of in-text citations will be so integral to your writing processes, being able to instantly craft correct citations and identify incorrect citations will save you time during writing and will help you avoid having unnecessary points taken off for citation errors.

Here is the standard correct in-text citation style according to MLA guidelines:

“Quotation” (Author’s Last Name Page Number).

Take a moment to carefully consider the placement of the parts and punctuation of this in-text citation. Note that there is no punctuation indicating the end of a sentence inside of the quotation marks—closing punctuation should instead follow the parentheses. There is also no punctuation between the author’s last name and the page number inside of the parentheses. The misplacement of these simple punctuation marks is one of the most common errors students make when crafting in-text citations.

So, let’s say we have the following quote, which comes from page 100 of Elizabeth Gaskell’s *North and South*:

“Margaret had never spoken of Helstone since she left it.” [1]

The following examples show incorrect MLA formatting:

| “Margaret had never spoken of Helstone since she left it.” (Gaskell 100) | Incorrect because the period falls within the quotation marks |
| “Margaret had never spoken of Helstone since she left it” (Gaskell, 100). | Incorrect because of the comma separating the author’s last name and the page number |
| “Margaret had never spoken of Helstone since she left it” (Elizabeth Gaskell 100). | Incorrect because the author’s full name is used instead of just her last name |
| “Margaret had never spoken of Helstone since she left it” (*North and South* 100). | Incorrect because the title of the work appears, rather than the author’s last name; the title should only be used if no author name is provided |

The following example shows correct MLA formatting:

“Margaret had never spoken of Helstone since she left it” (Gaskell 100).

However, there are exceptions to the above citation guideline. Consider the following format of an in-text citation, which is also formed correctly.

Elizabeth Gaskell’s narrator makes it clear that “Margaret had never spoken of Helstone since she left it” (100).

Do you notice the difference between this citation format and the format of the first example? Unlike the first example, this citation does not list the author’s last name inside the parentheses. This is because the last name is included in quotation’s introduction, which makes the identity of the author clear to the reader. Including the author’s last name again inside of the parenthesis would be thus redundant and is not required for MLA citation.

The same rule about inclusion of the author’s last name applies for paraphrased information, as well, as shown in the following example:
Elizabeth Gaskell’s narrator makes it clear that her protagonist does not speak of her home once she is in Milton (100).

In this paraphrase, the author’s last name precedes the paraphrased material, but as in the case of quotation integration, if the author’s last name is not described in the paraphrase then it is required inside of the parentheses before the page number.

Being more compliant with MLA in-text citation guidelines will become easier if you review these examples and the citation rules on which they rely.


**Exercise: Formatting In-text Citations in MLA Style**

“Formatting In-text Citations” was written by Jennifer Yirinec and Lauren Cutlip

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**MLA CHECKLIST**

- Is the heading in the upper left-hand corner of the first page?
- Does the heading include:
  - Your name?
  - Your instructor’s name?
  - The course name?
  - The date?
- Does the paper have an original title (other than something like “Final Paper”)?
  - Is the title presented without being bolded, italicized, or placed in quotation marks?
- Does the paper have 1” margins on all sides?
- Is the paper written in Times New Roman (or another standard font your professor allows) and in 12-pt. font?
- Is everything double-spaced (including any notes and the works cited page)?
- Are your last name and the page number in the upper right-hand corner of each page (0.5” from the top, or inserted using the “header” function in Word)?
- If you’ve used outside sources, do you have a works cited page? Is it titled “Works Cited” (without the quotation marks)? Does it have a page number (that follows the last page of your paper) and your last name?
- Are the entries in your list of works cited in alphabetical order by the author’s last name?
- Are all sources properly cited?
  - Does each source have an entry on the works cited page?
  - Are all direct quotes in quotation marks?
  - Do all paraphrases and summaries clearly indicate that they come from other sources?
  - Does each in-text reference include a parenthetical citation that includes the author’s last name (unless it is obvious from the context of the sentence who you are referencing) and the page number from which the information was taken?
  - If a quotation is 4 lines or more, is it block-quoted? (i.e. double-spaced, indented 1 inch from the left margin)
  - Have you clearly indicated where you found all information you did not previously know?
  - Does your works cited page conform to MLA format?
INTRODUCE EVIDENCE

“Introduce Evidence” was written by Jennifer A. Yirinec.

Can the reader distinguish between your ideas and those of your sources?

You don’t want to take credit for the ideas of others (that would be plagiarism), and you certainly don’t want to give outside sources the credit for your own ideas (that would be a waste of your time and effort). So, as a writer, you should distinguish between your ideas and those of your sources before quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing. In order to help the reader see who’s writing what, it’s important to introduce your evidence. Here are some helpful hints to consider when introducing your sourced material (note that while MLA style is used in these examples, you should use whatever formatting style is required by your instructor):

• When incorporating a source into your paper for the first time, reference not only the author’s full name (if provided) but also the title of the publication.

For instance, if I wanted to use a quote from Homi Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* and I had not referenced this source yet in my paper, I would want to give it a full introduction:

In *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha discusses the effect of mimicry upon the cultural hybrid, claiming that mimicry renders “the colonial subject . . . a ‘partial’ presence” (123).[1]

Before quoting, the author provides the reader with both the author (Homi Bhabha) and the title of the publication (*The Location of Culture*). That way, going forth, unless the author introduces a different book or article, the reader knows that all references to Bhabha come from *The Location of Culture*.

• When incorporating a source into your paper for the second time (or any other time following the initial introduction of that source), provide the reader with only the author’s last name.

For instance, if I’m still working with Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*, I might do something like this:

As Bhabha writes, “[Mimicry] is a form of colonial discourse that . . . [exists] at the crossroads of what is known and permissible and that which though known must be kept concealed” (128).

Since you’ve already provided the reader with Bhabha’s full name (Homi Bhabha), there’s no need to give it again. All later references thus only require Bhabha’s last name. If pulling material from a different work of Bhabha’s, though, you’ll need to introduce the quote (or paraphrase or summary) by specifying this new title (though you’ll still only need to provide Bhabha’s last name).

*Sidenote*: Never refer to an author by his or her first name. Either reference the author by his or her full name or by his or her last name, depending upon whether or not you’ve previously mentioned the author’s full name in your piece of writing.
• When incorporating a source into your paper for the second time (or any other time following the initial introduction of that source), you may want to place the idea or direct quote within one of your sentences; if so, provide the author’s last name and a page number or page range for the referenced material in an in-text citation.

This method can be quite tricky, because you don’t want your quote to appear “dropped in.” Here are a few ideas about how to effectively incorporate quotes into sentences:

• You may choose to use a dash (two hyphens) or a colon to introduce the quoted material:

The child crosses this bar when he enters into language, as he can never again access the Real—a realm that now may “only [be] approach[ed] through language” (Price Herndl 53).

This can be tricky, depending upon the excerpt you’re using, because you may have to rework the wording within the quote to suit the sentence structure.

Side note: Whenever you change or add/delete anything—anything at all, even a capitalization—within a quote, you must bracket [] the change, addition, or deletion.

• You may choose to change the wording within a quote (and bracket accordingly) so that it works within your sentence structure:

The child crosses this bar when he enters into language, as he can never again access the Real, for “[he] can only approach it through language” (Price Herndl 53).

Note that the excerpted material must make sense within the context of your sentence, and the reader still must be able to distinguish between your ideas and those of your source.