

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks! As I have life and honour,
There shall he sit till noon.

Reg. Till noon! Till night, my lord; and all night too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,

You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same colour
Our sister speaks of. Come, bring away the stocks.

Glo. Let me beseech your Grace not to do so.
His fault is much, and the good king his master

Will check him for't: your purpos'd low correction

Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches
For pilferings and most common trespasses
Are punish'd with: the king must take it ill,
That he, so slightly valu'd in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrain'd.

Corn. I'll answer that.

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse

To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted,
For following her affairs. Put in his legs.

Come, my good lord, away.

[*Exeunt all but GLOUCESTER and KENT.*]

Glo. I am sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd: I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray, do not, sir. I have watch'd and travell'd hard;

Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels: Give you good morrow!

Glo. The duke's to blame in this; 'twill be ill taken.

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

Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
To the warm sun.

Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may

Peruse this letter. Nothing almost sees miracles
But misery: I know 'tis from Cordelia,

Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course; and shall find time

From this enormous state, seeking to give
Losses their remedies. All weary and o'er-

watch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.

Fortune, good night, smile once more; turn thy wheel!

[*He sleeps.*]

SCENE III.—A Part of the Heath.

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd;
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escap'd the hunt. No port is free; no place,

That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
Does not attend my taking. While I may 'scape

I will preserve myself; and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape

That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast; my face I'll grime with

filth,
Blanket my loins, elf all my hair in knots,
And with presented nakedness outface

The winds and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent

Of Bedlam beggars, who with roaring voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms

Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible object, from low farms,

Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes, and mills,
Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with

prayers,
Enforce their charity. Poor Turlygood! poor

Tom!
That's something yet: Edgar I nothing am.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—Before GLOUCESTER's Castle. KENT in the stocks.

Enter LEAR, FOOL, and Gentleman.

Lear. 'Tis strange that they should so depart
from home,

And not send back my messenger.
Gent. As I learn'd,

The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.

Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!
Lear. Ha!

Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?
Kent. No, my lord.

Fool. Ha, ha! he wears cruel garters. Horses
are tied by the head, dogs and bears by the neck,

monkeys by the loins, and men by the legs:
when a man is over-lusty at legs, then he wears

wooden nether-stocks.
Lear. What's he that hath so much thy place

mistook
To set thee here?

Kent. It is both he and she,
Your son and daughter.

Lear. No.
Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say.
Kent. I say, yea.

Lear. No, no; they would not.
Kent. Yes, they have.

Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no.
Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay.

Lear. They durst not do't;
They could not, would not do't; 'tis worse than

murder,
To do upon respect such violent outrage.

Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way
Thou mightst deserve, or they impose, this

usage,
Coming from us.

Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,

Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, there came a reeking post,

Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting
forth

From Goneril his mistress salutations;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,

Which presently they read: on whose contents
They summon'd up their meiny, straight took

horse;
Commanded me to follow, and attend

The leisure of their answer; gave me cold looks:
And meeting here the other messenger,

Whose welcome, I perceiv'd, had poison'd
mine,—

Being the very fellow which of late
Display'd so saucily against your highness,—

Having more man than wit about me,—drew:
He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries.

Your son and daughter found this trespass
worth

The shame which here it suffers.
Fool. Winter's not gone yet, if the wild geese

fly that way.
Fathers that wear rags

Do make their children blind,
But fathers that bear bags

Shall see their children kind.
Fortune, that arrant whore,

Ne'er turns the key to the poor.
But for all this thou shalt have as many colours

for thy daughters as thou canst tell in a year.
Lear. O! how this mother swells up toward

my heart;
Hystericapassio! down, thou climbing sorrow!

Thy element's below. Where is this daughter?
Kent. With the earl, sir: here within.

Lear. Follow me not; stay here.
Gent. Made you no more offence than what

you speak of?
Kent. None.

How chance the king comes with so small a
number?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' the stocks for
that question, thou hadst well deserved it.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant, to
teach thee there's no labouring i' the winter. All

that follow their noses are led by their eyes but
blind men; and there's not a nose among twenty

but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy
hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it

break thy neck with following it; but the great
one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after.

When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give
me mine again: I would have none but knaves

follow it, since a fool gives it.
That sir which serves and seeks for gain,

And follows but for form,
Will pack when it begins to rain,

And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry; the fool will stay,

And let the wise man fly:
The knave turns fool that runs away;

The fool no knave, perdy.
Kent. Where learn'd you this, fool?

Fool. Not i' the stocks, fool.

Re-enter LEAR, with GLOUCESTER.

Lear. Deny to speak with me! They are sick!
they are weary,

They have travell'd hard to-night! Mere fetches,
The images of revolt and flying off.

Fetch me a better answer.
Glo. My dear lord,

You know the fiery quality of the duke;
How unremovable and fix'd he is

In his own course.
Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!

Fiery! what quality? Why, Gloucester, Gloucester,

I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his
wife.

Glo. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd
them so.

Lear. Inform'd them! Dost thou understand
me, man?

Glo. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall;
the dear father

Would with his daughter speak, commands her
service:

Are they inform'd of this? My breath and blood!
Fiery! the fiery duke! Tell the hot duke that—

No, but not yet; may be he is not well:
Infirmity doth still neglect all office

Whereto our health is bound; we are not our-
selves

When nature, being oppress'd, commands the
mind

To suffer with the body. I'll forbear;
And am fall'n out with my more headier will,

To take the indispos'd and sickly fit
For the sound man. Death on my state! [*Look-*

ing on KENT.] Wherefore
Should he sit here? This act persuades me

That this remotion of the duke and her
Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.

Go, tell the duke and's wife I'd speak with them
Now, presently: bid them come forth and hear

me,
Or at their chamber-door I'll beat the drum

Till it cry sleep to death.
Glo. I would have all well betwixt you.

[*Exit.*]

Lear. O, me! my heart, my rising heart! but,
down!

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to
the eels when she put 'em i' the paste alive; she

knapped 'em o' the coxcombs with a stick, and
cried, 'Down, wantons, down!' 'Twas her

brother that, in pure kindness to his horse,
battered his hay.

*Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOUCESTER,
and Servants.*

Lear. Good morrow to you both.
Corn. Hail to your Grace!

[*KENT is set at liberty.*]

Reg. I am glad to see your highness.
Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what

reason
I have to think so: if thou shouldst not be glad,

G g

I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb, 133
Sepulchring an adult'ress.—[To KENT.] O! are
you free?

Some other time for that. Beloved Regan,
Thy sister's naught: O Regan! she hath tied 136
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here:

[Points to his heart.]
I can scarce speak to thee; thou'lt not believe
With how depriv'd a quality—O Regan!

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience. I have
hope 140

You less know how to value her desert
Than she to scant her duty.

Lear. Say, how is that?

Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation: if, sir, perchance 144
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her!

Reg. O, sir! you are old; 148
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine: you should be rul'd and led
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore I pray you
That to our sister you do make return; 153
Say, you have wrong'd her, sir.

Lear. Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:
'Dear daughter, I confess that I am old; 156
Age is unnecessary: on my knees I beg

[Kneeling.]
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and
food.

Reg. Good sir, no more; these are unsightly
tricks:

Return you to my sister.

Lear. [Rising.] Never, Regan. 160
She hath abated me of half my train;
Look'd black upon me; struck me with her
tongue,

Most serpent-like, upon the very heart.
All the stor'd vengeance of heaven fall 164
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!

Corn. Fie, sir, fie!

Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blind-
ing flames

Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty, 168
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall and blast her pride!

Reg. O the blest gods! So will you wish
on me,

When the rash mood is on. 172

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my
curse:

Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness: her eyes are fierce, but
thine

Do comfort and not burn. 'Tis not in thee 176
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in: thou better know'st 180
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude;

Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.

Reg. Good sir, to the purpose. 184

Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks? 188
[Tucket within.]

Corn. What trumpet's that?

Reg. I know't, my sister's; this approves her
letter,
That she would soon be here. Is your lady come?

Enter OSWALD.

Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd
pride 188

Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.
Out, varlet, from my sight!

Corn. What means your Grace?

Lear. Who stock'd my servant? Regan, I
have good hope

Thou didst not know on't. Who comes here?
O heavens, 192

Enter GONERIL.

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause; send down and take my
part!

[To GONERIL.] Art not ashamed to look upon
this beard? 196

O Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand?

Gon. Why not by the hand, sir? How have
I offended?

All's not offence that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.

Lear. O sides! you are too tough;
Will you yet hold? How came my man i' the
stocks? 201

Corn. I set him there, sir; but his own dis-
orders

Deserv'd much less advancement.

Lear. You! did you?

Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.
If, till the expiration of your month, 205
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me:
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return to her? and fifty men dismiss'd!
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' the air; 212
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl,
Necessity's sharp pinch! Return with her!
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless
took

Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot. Return with her!
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom. [Pointing at OSWALD.]

Gon. At your choice, sir. 220

Lear. I prithee, daughter, do not make me
mad:

I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell.
We'll no more meet, no more see one another;
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my
daughter; 224

Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,

Which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide
thee; 228

Let shame come when it will, I do not call it:
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove.
Mend when thou canst; be better at thy
leisure: 232

I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,
I and my hundred knights.

Reg. Not altogether so:
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir, to my
sister; 236

For those that mingle reason with your passion
Must be content to think you old, and so—
But she knows what she does.

Lear. Is this well spoken?

Reg. I dare avouch it, sir: what! fifty fol-
lowers? 240

Is it not well? What should you need of more?
Yea, or so many, with that both charge and
danger

Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one
house,

Should many people, under two commands, 244
Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive
attendance

From those that she calls servants, or from
mine?

Reg. Why not, my lord? If then they chanc'd
to slack you 248

We could control them. If you will come to
me,—

For now I spy a danger.—I entreat you
To bring but five-and-twenty; to no more
Will I give place or notice. 252

Lear. I gave you all—

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Made you my guardians, my deposi-
taries,

But kept a reservation to be follow'd
With such a number. What! must I come to
you 256

With five-and-twenty? Regan, said you so?

Reg. And speak't again, my lord; no more
with me.

Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look
well-favour'd,

When others are more wicked; not being the
worst 260

Stands in some rank of praise. [To GONERIL.]
I'll go with thee:

Thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty,
And thou art twice her love.

Gon. Hear me, my lord.

What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five, 264
To follow in a house, where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?

Reg. What need one?

Lear. O! reason not the need; our basest
beggars

Are in the poorest things superfluous: 268
Allow not nature more than nature needs,

Man's life is cheap as beast's. Thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,

Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous
wear'st, 272

Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true
need,—

You heavens, give me that patience, patience I
need!

You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both! 276

If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,
And let not women's weapons, water-drops, 280
Stain my man's cheeks! No, you unnatural
hags,

I will have such revenges on you both
That all the world shall—I will do such things,—
What they are yet I know not,—but they shall
be 284

The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;
No, I'll not weep:

I have full cause of weeping, but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws 288
Or ere I'll weep. O fool! I shall go mad.

[Exeunt LEAR, GLOUCESTER, KENT, and Fool.]
Corn. Let us withdraw; 'twill be a storm.

[Storm heard at a distance.]

Reg. This house is little: the old man and
his people

Cannot be well bestow'd. 292

Gon. 'Tis his own blame; hath put himself
from rest,

And must needs taste his folly.

Reg. For his particular, I'll receive him
gladly,

But not one follower.

Gon. So am I purpos'd. 296

Where is my Lord of Gloucester?

Corn. Follow'd the old man forth. He is
return'd.

Re-enter GLOUCESTER.

Glo. The king is in high rage.

Corn. Whither is he going?

Glo. He calls to horse; but will I know not
whither. 300

Corn. 'Tis best to give him way; he leads
himself.

Gon. My lord, entreat him by no means to
stay.

Glo. Alack! the night comes on, and the
bleak winds

Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about 304
There's scarce a bush.

Reg. O! sir, to wilful men,
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your
doors;

He is attended with a desperate train, 308
And what they may incense him to, being apt
To have his ear abus'd, wisdom bids fear.

Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord; 'tis a
wild night:

My Regan counsels well: come out o' the storm.
[Exeunt.]

ACT III

SCENE I.—A Heath.

A storm, with thunder and lightning. Enter KENT and a Gentleman, meeting.

Kent. Who's here, beside foul weather?

Gent. One minded like the weather, most unquietly.

Kent. I know you. Where's the king?

Gent. Contending with the fretful elements;
Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea, 5
Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,
That things might change or cease; tears his white hair,

Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage, 8
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of;
Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.

This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch, 12

The lion and the belly-pinched wolf

Keep their fur dry, unbonnated he runs,

And bids what will take all.

Kent. But who is with him?

Gent. None but the fool, who labours to out-jest 16

His heart-struck injuries.

Kent. Sir, I do know you;
And dare, upon the warrant of my note,
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division, 20

Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;

Who have—as who have not, that their great stars

Thron'd and set high—servants, who seem no less,

Which are to France the spies and speculations

Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen, 25

Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes,
Or the hard rein which both of them have borne

Against the old kind king; or something deeper,
Whereof perchance these are but furnishings; 29

But, true it is, from France there comes a power
Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,

Wise in our negligence, have secret feet 32

In some of our best ports, and are at point
To show their open banner. Now to you:

If on my credit you dare build so far
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find 36

Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow

The king hath cause to plain.

I am a gentleman of blood and breeding, 40

And from some knowledge and assurance offer
This office to you.

Gent. I will talk further with you.

Kent. No, do not.

For confirmation that I am much more 44

Than my out-wall, open this purse, and take
What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia,—

As doubt not but you shall,—show her this ring,
And she will tell you who your fellow is 48

That yet you do not know. Fie on this storm!

I will go seek the king.

Gent. Give me your hand. Have you no more to say?

Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet; 52

That, when we have found the king,—in which your pain

That way, I'll this,—he that first lights on him

Holla the other. [Exeunt severally.]

SCENE II.—Another Part of the Heath.
Storm still.

Enter LEAR and Fool.

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!
rage! blow!

You cataracts and hurricanes, spout

Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!

You sulphurous and thought-executing fires, 4

Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Sing me my white head! And thou, all-shaking

thunder,
Strike flat the thick rotundity o' the world!

Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once
That make ingrateful man! 9

Fool. O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry house is better than this rain-water out o' door.

Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughters' blessing;
here's a night pities neither wise man nor fool.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain! 14

Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;

I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription: then, let fall

Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man. 20

But yet I call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd

Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul. 24

Fool. He that has a house to put his head in has a good head-piece.

The cod-piece that will house
Before the head has any, 28

The head and he shall louse;
So beggars marry many.

The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make, 32

Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake.

For there was never yet fair woman but she made mouths in a glass. 36

Enter KENT.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience;
I will say nothing.

Kent. Who's there?

Fool. Marry, here's grace and a cod-piece;
that's a wise man and a fool. 41

Kent. Alas! sir, are you here? things that love night

Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies

Gallow the very wanderers of the dark, 44

And make them keep their caves. Since I was man

Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never

Remember to have heard; man's nature cannot carry 48

The affliction nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou

wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes, 52

Unwhipp'd of justice; hide thee, thou bloody hand;

Thou perjur'd, and thou simular of virtue
That art incestuous; caitiff, to pieces shake,

That under covert and convenient seeming 56

Hast practis'd on man's life; close pent-up
guilts,

Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man

More sinn'd against than sinning.

Kent. Alack! bare-headed!
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel; 61

Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest;

Repose you there while I to this hard house,—
More harder than the stone whereof 'tis rais'd,—

Which even but now, demanding after you, 65

Denied me to come in, return and force
Their scantied courtesy.

Lear. My wits begin to turn.
Come on, my boy. How dost, my boy? Art cold? 68

I am cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,

That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.

Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart 72

That's sorry yet for thee.

Fool. He that has a little tiny wit,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
Must make content with his fortunes fit, 76

Though the rain it raineth every day.

Lear. True, my good boy. Come, bring us to this hovel. [Exeunt LEAR and KENT.]

Fool. This is a brave night to cool a courtesan.

I'll speak a prophecy ere I go:
When priests are more in word than matter;

When brewers mar their malt with water;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors;

No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors; 84

When every case in law is right;
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight;

When slanders do not live in tongues;
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs; 88

When usurers tell their gold i' the field;
And bawds and whores do churches build;

Then shall the realm of Albion 92

Come to great confusion:
Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
That going shall be us'd with feet.

This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—A Room in GLOUCESTER'S Castle.

Enter GLOUCESTER and EDMUND.

Glo. Alack! Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing. When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house; charged me, on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

Edm. Most savage, and unnatural! 7

Glo. Go to; say you nothing. There is division between the dukes, and a worse matter than that. I have received a letter this night;

'tis dangerous to be spoken; I have locked the letter in my closet. These injuries the king now bears will be revenged home; there's part of a power already footed; we must incline to the king. I will seek him and privily relieve him; go you and maintain talk with the duke, that my charity be not of him perceived. If he ask for me, I am ill and gone to bed. If I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king, my old master, must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund; pray you, be careful. 21

[Exit.]

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke

Instantly know; and of that letter too:
This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me

That which my father loses; no less than all: 25

The younger rises when the old doth fall. [Exit.]

SCENE IV.—The Heath. Before a Hovel.

Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, enter:

The tyranny of the open night's too rough
For nature to endure. [Storm still.]

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Wilt break my heart? 4

Kent. I'd rather break mine own. Good my lord, enter.

Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm

Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to thee;
But where the greater malady is fix'd, 8

The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear;
But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea,

Thou'dst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the mind's free

The body's delicate; the tempest in my mind 12

Doth from my senses take all feeling else
Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!

Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
For lifting food to't? But I will punish home: 16

No, I will weep no more. In such a night
To shut me out! Pour on; I will endure.

In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all,— 20

O! that way madness lies; let me shun that;
No more of that.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Prithee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease:

This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. But I'll go in.
[To the Fool.] In, boy; go first. You houseless poverty,—

Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.

[Fool goes in.]
Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you

From seasons such as these? O! I have ta'en
Too little care of this. Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.

Edg. [Within.] Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor Tom!

[The Fool runs out from the hovel.]
Fool. Come not in here, nuncle; here's a spirit.

Help me! help me!

Kent. Give me thy hand. Who's there?
Fool. A spirit, a spirit: he says his name's poor Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i' the straw?
Come forth.

Enter EDGAR disguised as a madman.

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me!
Through the sharp hawthorn blow the winds.
Hum! go to thy cold bed and warm thee.

Lear. Didst thou give all to thy two daughters?

And art thou come to this?

Edg. Who gives anything to poor Tom?
whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, o'er bod and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor. Bless thy five wits! Tom's a-cold. O! do de, do de, do de. Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tomsome charity, whom the foul fiend vexes. There could I have him now, and there, and there again, and there.

[Storm still.]
Lear. What! have his daughters brought him to this pass?
Couldst thou save nothing? Didst thou give them all?

Fool. Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all shamed.

Lear. Now all the plagues that in the pendulous air

Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdu'd nature

To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters.

Is it the fashion that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh? 'twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill:
Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

Fool. This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o' the foul fiend. Obey thy parents; keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array. Tom's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A servingman, proud in heart and mind; that curled my hair, wore gloves in my cap, served the lust of my mistress's heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven; one that slept in the contriving of lust, and waked to do it. Wine loved I deeply, dice dearly, and in woman out-para-moured the Turk: false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to woman; keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend. Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind; says suum, mun ha no nonny. Dolphin my boy, my boy; sessa! let him trot by.

Lear. Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three on's are sophisticated; thou art the thing itself; unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! Come; unbutton here.

[Tearing off his clothes.]
Fool. Prithee, nuncle, be contented; 'tis a naughty night to swim in. Now a little fire in a wide field were like an old lecher's heart; a small spark, all the rest on's body cold. Look! here comes a walking fire.

Enter GLOUCESTER with a torch.

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet: he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the web and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the harelip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

Swihold footed thrice the old;
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight,
And her troth plight,
And aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

Kent. How fares your Grace?

Lear. What's he?

Kent. Who's there? What is't you seek?

Glo. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog; the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt, and the

water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipped from tithing to tithing, and stock-punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear;

But mice and rats and such small deer
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Beware my follower. Peace, Smulkin! peace, thou fiend.

Glo. What! hath your Grace no better company?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman; Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.

Glo. Our flesh and blood, my lord, is grown so vile,

That it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.

Glo. Go in with me. My duty cannot suffer To obey in all your daughters' hard commands: Though their injunction be to bar my doors, And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,

Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher. What is the cause of thunder?

Kent. Good my lord, take his offer; go into the house.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.

What is your study?

Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.

Kent. Importune him once more to go, my lord;

His wits begin to unsettle.

Glo. Canst thou blame him? [Storm still.] His daughters seek his death. Ah! that good Kent;

He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man! Thou sayst the king grows mad; I'll tell thee, friend,

I am almost mad myself. I had a son, Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,

But lately, very late; I lov'd him, friend, No father his son dearer; true to tell thee,

[Storm continues.]
The grief hath craz'd my wits. What a night's this!

I do beseech your Grace,—

Lear. O! cry you mercy, sir. Noble philosopher, your company.

Edg. Tom's a-cold.

Glo. In, fellow, there, into the hovel: keep thee warm.

Lear. Come, let's in all.

Kent. This way, my lord.

Lear. With him; I will keep still with my philosopher.

Kent. Good my lord, soothe him; let him take the fellow.

Glo. Take him you on.

Kent. Sirrah, come on; go along with us.

Lear. Come, good Athenian.

Glo. No words, no words: hush.

Edg. Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still, Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE V.—A Room in GLOUCESTER'S Castle.

Enter CORNWALL and EDMUND.

Corn. I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.

Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.

Corn. I now perceive it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a reproveable badness in himself.

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just! This is the letter he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens! that this treason were not, or not I the detector!

Corn. Go with me to the duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True, or false, it hath made thee Earl of Gloucester. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

Edm. [Aside.] If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully. I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. [Exeunt.]

SCENE VI.—A Chamber in a Farmhouse adjoining the Castle.

Enter GLOUCESTER, LEAR, KENT, Fool, and EDGAR.

Glo. Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can: I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits has given way to his impatience. The gods reward your kindness! [Exit GLOUCESTER.]

Edg. Frateretto calls me, and tells me Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman!

Lear. A king, a king!

Fool. No; he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son; for he's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits

Come hizzing in upon 'em,—

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He's mad that trusts in the tameness

of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath.

Lear. It shall be done; I will arraign them straight.

[*To EDGAR.*] Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer;

[*To the Fool.*] Thou, sapient sir, sit here. Now, you she foxes!

Edg. Look, where he stands and glares! wastest thou eyes at trial, madam?

Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me,—

Fool. Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak

Why she dares not come over to thee.

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. Hopdance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amaz'd:

Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first. Bring in their evidence.

[*To EDGAR.*] Thou robed man of justice, take thy place;

[*To the Fool.*] And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity,

Bench by his side. [*To KENT.*] You are o' the commission,

Sit you too.

Edg. Let us deal justly.

Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?

Thy sheep be in the corn;
And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,
Thy sheep shall take no harm.

Purr! the cat is grey.

Lear. Arraign her first; 'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

Fool. Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim

What store her heart is made on. Stop her there!

Arms, arms, sword, fire! Corruption in the place!

False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits!

Kent. O pity! Sir, where is the patience now that you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. [*Aside.*] My tears begin to take his part so much,

They'll mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them. Avaunt, you curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite;
Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
Hound or spaniel, brach or lym;

Or bobtail tike or trundle-tail;
Tom will make them weep and wail:

For, with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

Do de, de, de. Sessa! Come, march to wakes and fairs and market-towns. Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.

Lear. Then let them anatomize Regan, see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts? [*To EDGAR.*] You, sir, I entertain you for one of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your garments: you will say, they are Persian attire; but let them be changed.

Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here and rest awhile.

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains: so, so, so. We'll go to supper i' the morning: so, so, so.

Fool. And I'll go to bed at noon.

Re-enter GLOUCESTER.

Glo. Come hither, friend: where is the king my master?

Kent. Here, sir; but trouble him not, his wits are gone.

Glo. Good friend, I prithee, take him in thy arms;

I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him. There is a litter ready; lay him in't,

And drive toward Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet

Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master:

If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life, With thine, and all that offer to defend him, Stand in assured loss. Take up, take up;

And follow me, that will to some provision Give thee quick conduct.

Kent. Oppress'd nature sleeps: This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken sinews,

Which, if convenience will not allow,
Stand in hard cure.—[*To the Fool.*] Come, help to bear thy master;

Thou must not stay behind.

Glo. Come, come, away.

[*Exeunt KENT, GLOUCESTER, and the Fool, bearing away LEAR.*]

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,

We scarcely think our miseries our foes.

Who alone suffers suffers most i' the mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind;

But then the mind much sufferance doth o'er-skip,

When grief hath mates, and bearing fellow-ship.

How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend makes the king bow;

He childed as I father'd! Tom, away!
Mark the high noises, and thyself bewray

When false opinion, whose wrong thought de-fies thee,

In thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee.

What will hap more to-night, safe 'scape the king!
Lurk, lurk.

SCENE VII.—*A Room in GLOUCESTER'S Castle.*

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND, and Servants.

Corn. Post speedily to my lord your husband; show him this letter: the army of France is landed. Seek out the traitor Gloucester.

[*Exeunt some of the Servants.*]

Reg. Hang him instantly.

Gon. Pluck out his eyes.

Corn. Leave him to my displeasure. Edmund, keep you our sister company: the revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the duke, where you are going, to a most festinate preparation: we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister: farewell, my Lord of Gloucester.

Enter OSWALD.

How now? Where's the king?

Osw. My Lord of Gloucester hath convey'd him hence:

Some five or six and thirty of his knights,

Hot questrists after him, met him at gate;

Who, with some other of the lord's dependants, Are gone with him toward Dover, where they boast

To have well-armed friends.

Corn. Get horses for your mistress.

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

Corn. Edmund, farewell.

[*Exeunt GONERIL, EDMUND, and OSWALD.*]

Go seek the traitor Gloucester, Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.

[*Exeunt other Servants.*]

Though well we may not pass upon his life

Without the form of justice, yet our power Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men May blame but not control. Who's there?

The traitor?

Re-enter Servants, with GLOUCESTER.

Reg. Ingrateful fox! 'tis he.

Corn. Bind fast his corky arms.

Glo. What mean your Graces? Good my friends, consider

You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.

Corn. Bind him, I say. [*Servants bind him.*]

Reg. Hard, hard. O filthy traitor!

Glo. Unmerciful lady as you are, I'm none.

Corn. To this chair bind him. Villain, thou shalt find—

[*REGAN plucks his beard.*]

Glo. By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done To pluck me by the beard.

Reg. So white, and such a traitor!

Glo. Naughty lady,

These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,

Will quicken, and accuse thee: I am your host: With robbers' hands my hospitable favours

You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?

Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?

Reg. Be simple-answer'd, for we know the truth.

Corn. And what confederacy have you with the traitors

Late footed in the kingdom?

Reg. To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king?

Speak.

Glo. I have a letter guessingly set down, 48 Which came from one that's of a neutral heart, And not from one oppos'd.

Cunning.

Reg. And false.

Corn. Where hast thou sent the king?

Glo. To Dover.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charg'd at peril—

Corn. Wherefore to Dover? Let him answer that.

Glo. I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover?

Glo. Because I would not see thy cruel nails Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.

The sea, with such a storm as his bare head In hell-black night endur'd, would have buoy'd up,

And quench'd the stelled fires;

Yet, poor old heart, he help the heavens to rain. If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that durn time, Thou shouldst have said, 'Good porter, turn the key.'

All cruels else subscrib'd: but I shall see The winged vengeance overtake such children.

Corn. See't shalt thou never. Fellows, hold the chair.

Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.

Glo. He that will think to live till he be old, Give me some help! O cruel! O ye gods!

[*GLOUCESTER'S eye put out.*]

Reg. One side will mock another; the other too.

Corn. If you see vengeance—

First Serv. Hold your hand, my lord: I have serv'd you ever since I was a child,

But better service have I never done you Than now to bid you hold.

Reg. How now, you dog!

First Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,

I'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?

Corn. My villain!

First Serv. Nay then, come on, and take the chance of anger.

[*Draws. They fight.*]

CORNWALL is wounded.

Reg. Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus!

[*Takes a sword and runs at him behind.*]

First Serv. O! I am slain. My lord, you have one eye left.

To see some mischief on him. O!

[*Dies.*]

Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it. Out, vile jelly!

Where is thy lustre now? 84
Glo. All dark and comfortless. Where's my son Edmund?

Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature To quit this horrid act.

Reg. Out, treacherous villain! Thou call'st on him that hates thee; it was he That made the overture of thy treasons to us, 89 Who is too good to pity thee.

Glo. O my follies! Then Edgar was abus'd. Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him! 92

Reg. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell

His way to Dover. [Exit one with GLOUCESTER.] How is't, my lord? How look you?

Corn. I have receiv'd a hurt. Follow me, lady.

Turn out that eyeless villain; throw this slave Upon the dunghill. Regan, I bleed apace: 97 Untimely comes this hurt. Give me your arm.

[Exit CORNWALL led by REGAN.]
Sec. Serv. I'll never care what wickedness I do If this man come to good.

Third Serv. If she live long, 100 And, in the end, meet the old course of death, Women will all turn monsters.

Sec. Serv. Let's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam

To lead him where he would: his roguish madness 104

Allows itself to any thing.

Third Serv. Go thou; I'll fetch some flax, and whites of eggs,

To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help him! [Exeunt severally.]

ACT IV

SCENE I.—The Heath.

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. Yet better thus, and known to be contempt'd,

Than still condemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst, The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,

Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear: 4 The lamentable change is from the best;

The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then, Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace:

The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst Owes nothing to thy blasts. But who comes here?

Enter GLOUCESTER, led by an old Man.

My father, poorly led? World, world, O world! But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee, Life would not yield to age.

Old Man. O my good lord! 12 I have been your tenant, and your father's tenant,

These fourscore years.

Glo. Away, get thee away; good friend, be gone;

Thy comforts can do me no good at all; 16 Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. You cannot see your way.

Glo. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;

I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 'tis seen, Our means secure us, and our mere defects 20 Prove our commodities. Ah! dear son Edgar,

The food of thy abused father's wrath; Might I but live to see thee in my touch,

I'd say I had eyes again.

Old Man. How now! Who's there? 24

Edg. [Aside.] O gods! Who is't can say, 'I am at the worst?'

I am worse than e'er I was.

Old Man. 'Tis poor mad Tom.

Edg. [Aside.] And worse I may be yet; the worst is not,

So long as we can say, 'This is the worst.' 28

Old Man. Fellow, where goest?

Glo. Is it a beggar-man?

Old Man. Madman and beggar too.

Glo. He has some reason, else he could not beg.

I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw, 32 Which made me think a man a worm: my son Came then into my mind; and yet my mind Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard more since.

As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods; 36 They kill us for their sport.

Edg. [Aside.] How should this be? Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,

Angering itself and others.—[To GLOUCESTER.] Bless thee, master!

Glo. Is that the naked fellow?

Old Man. Ay, my lord.

Glo. Then, prithee, get thee gone. If, for my sake, 41

Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain, I' the way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;

And bring some covering for this naked soul 44 Who I'll entreat to lead me.

Old Man. Alack, sir! he is mad.

Glo. 'Tis the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind.

Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure; 48 Above the rest, be gone.

Old Man. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,

Come on't what will. [Exit.]

Glo. Sirrah, naked fellow,—

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold. [Aside.] I cannot daub it further. 52

Glo. Come hither, fellow.

Edg. [Aside.] And yet I must. Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.

Glo. Know'st thou the way to Dover? 55

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path. Poor Tom hath been scared out of his good wits: bless thee, good man's son, from the foul fiend! Five fiends have been in poor Tom at once; of lust, as Obidicut; Hobbididance, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; and Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing; who since possesses chambermaids and waiting-women. So, bless thee, master! 64

Glo. Here, take this purse, thou whom the heavens' plagues

Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched Makes thee the happier: heavens, deal so still! Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man, 68 That slaves your ordinance, that will not see Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;

So distribution should undo excess, And each man have enough. Dost thou know Dover? 72

Edg. Ay, master.

Glo. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head

Looks fearfully in the confined deep; Bring me but to the very brim of it, 76 And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear With something rich about me; from that place I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm: Poor Tom shall lead thee. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—Before the DUKE OF ALBANY'S Palace.

Enter GONERIL and EDMUND.

Gon. Welcome, my lord; I marvel our mild husband

Not met us on the way. [Enter OSWALD.] Now, where's your master?

Osw. Madam, within; but never man so chang'd.

I told him of the army that was landed; 4 He smil'd at it: I told him you were coming; His answer was, 'The worse:' of Gloucester's treachery,

And of the loyal service of his son, When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot, 8 And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out: What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him;

What like, offensive.

Gon. [To EDMUND.] Then, shall you go no further.

It is the cowish terror of his spirit 12 That dares not undertake; he'll not feel wrongs Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way

May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;

Hasten his musters and conduct his powers: 16 I must change arms at home, and give the distaff

Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant Shall pass between us; ere long you are like to hear,

If you dare venture in your own behalf, 20 A mistress's command. Wear this; spare speech;

Decline your head: this kiss, if it durst speak, Would stretch thy spirits up into the air. 24 Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon. My most dear Gloucester! [Exit EDMUND.]

O! the difference of man and man! To thee a woman's services are due: My fool usurps my bed.

Osw. Madam, here comes my lord. [Exit.]

Enter ALBANY.

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.

Alb. O Goneril! 29 You are not worth the dust which the rude wind

Blows in your face. I fear your disposition: That nature, which contemns its origin, 32 Cannot be border'd certain in itself;

She that herself will sliver and disbranch From her material sap, perforce must wither And come to deadly use. 36

Gon. No more; the text is foolish.

Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile;

Filths savour but themselves. What have you done?

Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd? A father, and a gracious aged man, 41 Whose reverence the head-lugg'd bear would lick, Most barbarous, most degenerate! have you madded.

Could my good brother suffer you to do it? 44 A man, a prince, by him so benefited! If that the heavens do not their visible spirits Send quickly down to tame these vile offences, It will come, 48 Humanity must perforce prey on itself, Like monsters of the deep.

Gon. Milk-liver'd man! That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs;

Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning 52 Thine honour from thy suffering; that not know'st

Fools do those villains pity who are punish'd Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy drum?

France spreads his banners in our noiseless land, 56 With plumed helm thy slayer begins threats, Whilst thou, a moral fool, sitt'st still, and criest 'Alack! why does he so?'

Alb. See thyself, devil! Proper deformity seems not in the fiend 60 So horrid as in woman.

Gon. O vain fool!

Alb. Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame,

Be-monster not thy feature. Were't my fitness To let these hands obey my blood, 64 They are apt enough to dislocate and tear Thy flesh and bones; howe'er thou art a fiend, A woman's shape doth shield thee.

Gon. Marry, your manhood.—Mew! 68

Enter a Messenger.

Alb. What news?

Mess. O! my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's dead;

Slain by his servant, going to put out The other eye of Gloucester.

Alb. Gloucester's eyes! 72

Mess. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,